THE GROUCHY LADYBUG

By: Eric Carle
It was night and some fireflies danced around the moon.

At five o’clock in the morning, the sun came up. A friendly ladybug flew in from the left. It saw a leaf with many aphids on it, and decided to have them for breakfast. But just then a grouchy ladybug flew in from the right. It, too, saw the aphids and wanted them for breakfast.

“Good morning,” said the friendly ladybug.

“Go away!” shouted the grouchy ladybug. “I want those aphids.”

“We can share them,” suggested the friendly ladybug.
“No. They’re mine, all mine,” screamed the grouchy ladybug. “Or do you want to fight me for them?”

“If you insist,” answered the friendly ladybug sweetly. It looked at the other bug straight in the eye. The grouchy ladybug stepped back. It looked less sure of itself.

“Oh, you’re not big enough for me to fight,” it said.

“Then why don’t you pick on somebody bigger?”

“I’ll do that!” screeched the grouchy ladybug.

“I’ll show you!” It puffed itself up and flew off.
At six o’clock, it met a yellow jacket. “Hey you,” said the grouchy ladybug. “Want to fight?”

“If you insist,” said the yellow jacket, showing its stinger.

“Oh, you’re not big enough,” said the grouchy ladybug and flew off.

At seven o’clock, it met a stag beetle. “Hey you,” said the grouchy ladybug. “Want to fight?”

“If you insist,” said the stag beetle,” opening its jaws.

“Oh, you’re not big enough,” said the grouchy ladybug and flew off.
At eight o’clock, it came across a praying mantis. “Hey you,” said the grouchy ladybug. “Want to fight?”

“If you insist,” said the praying mantis reaching out with its front legs.

“Oh, you’re not big enough,” said the grouchy ladybug and flew off.

At nine o’clock, it almost flew into a sparrow. “Hey you,” said the grouchy lady bug. “Want to fight?”

“If you insist,” said the sparrow opening its sharp beak.

“Oh, you’re not big enough,” said the grouchy ladybug and flew off.
At eleven o’clock, it bumped into a skunk. “Hey you,” said the grouchy ladybug. “Want to fight?”

“If you insist.” said the skunk, starting to lift its tail. “Oh, you’re not big enough,” said the grouchy ladybug and flew off.

At twelve noon, it spotted a boa constrictor. “Hey you,” said the grouchy ladybug. “Want to fight?”

“If you insists-s-s-t,” said the snake, “right after lunch.” “Oh, you’re not big enough,” said the grouchy ladybug and flew off.
At one o’clock, it happened upon a hyena.

“Hey you,” said the grouchy ladybug. “Want to fight?”

“If you insist,” said the hyena, laughing and showing its teeth.

“Oh you’re not big enough,” said the grouchy ladybug and flew off.

At two o’clock, it met a gorilla.

“Hey you,” said the grouchy ladybug.

“Want to fight?”

“If you insist,” said the gorilla beating its chest.

“Oh you’re not big enough,” said the grouchy ladybug and flew off.
At three o’clock, it ran into a rhinoceros.

“Hey you,” said the grouchy lady bug. “Want to fight?”

“If you insist,” said the rhinoceros lowering its horn. “Oh you’re not big enough,” said the grouchy ladybug and flew off.

At four o’clock, it encountered an elephant. “Hey you,” said the grouchy ladybug. “Want to fight?”

“If you insist,” said the elephant, raising its big tusks. “Oh, you’re not big enough,” said the grouchy ladybug and flew off.
At five o’clock, it met a whale. “Hey you,” said the grouchy ladybug. “Want to fight?” But the whale did not answer at all. “You’re not big enough anyway,” said the grouchy ladybug and flew off.

At five fifteen, the grouchy ladybug said to one of the whale’s flippers, “Hey you, want to fight?” But it got no answer. So it flew away.
At five thirty the grouchy ladybug said to the whale’s fin, “Hey you, want to fight?” But got no answer so it flew away.

At six o’clock, the grouchy ladybug arrived right back where it had started from.

At a quarter to six the grouchy ladybug said to the whale’s tail, “Hey you, want to fight?” And the whale’s tail gave the grouchy ladybug such a SLAP... that it flew across the sea and across the land.
“Ah, here you are again,” said the friendly ladybug. “You must be hungry. There are some aphids left. You can have them for dinner.”

“Oh, thank you,” said the wet, tired, and hungry ladybug. Soon all the aphids were gone. “Thank you,” said the leaf. “You are welcome,” answered both ladybugs, and they went to sleep.

The fireflies, who had been sleeping all day, came out to dance around the moon.
1. What is the story about?
2. What happened when the two ladybugs landed on the same leaf? Why?
3. Why did the grouchy ladybug fly away?
4. If you were the grouchy ladybug, what would have you done?
5. Why does the ladybug want to fight?
6. What did the grouchy ladybug do that day?
7. What does the ladybug say to the animals? Why?
8. How can you describe the ladybug?
9. What happened when the ladybug met the whale?
10. What did the ladybug say to the whale?
At ten o’clock, it saw a lobster. “Hey you,” said the grouchy ladybug. “Want to fight?”
“If you insist,” said the lobster stretching its claws.

“Oh, you’re not big enough,” said the grouchy ladybug and flew off.
11. What did the ladybug do when the whale would not answer her?
12. Do you think the whale could hear the ladybug? Why not?
13. What happened when the ladybug reached the whale’s fin?
14. Where do we find the ladybug at the end of the story?
15. What do you think will happen to the grouchy ladybug after the day?