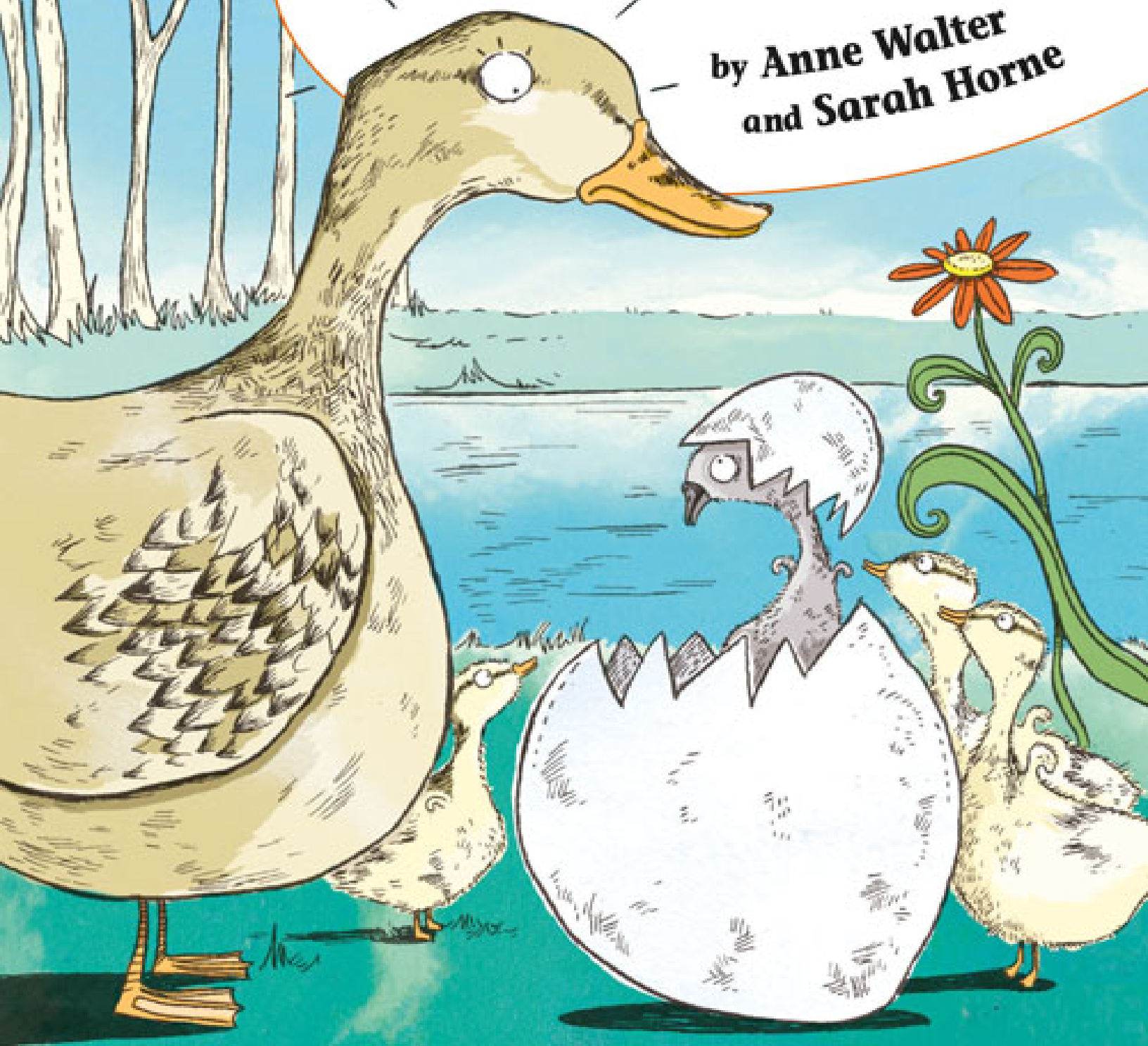




The Ugly Duckling

by Anne Walter
and Sarah Horne





The Ugly Duckling



Retold by Anne Walter
Illustrated by Sarah Horne

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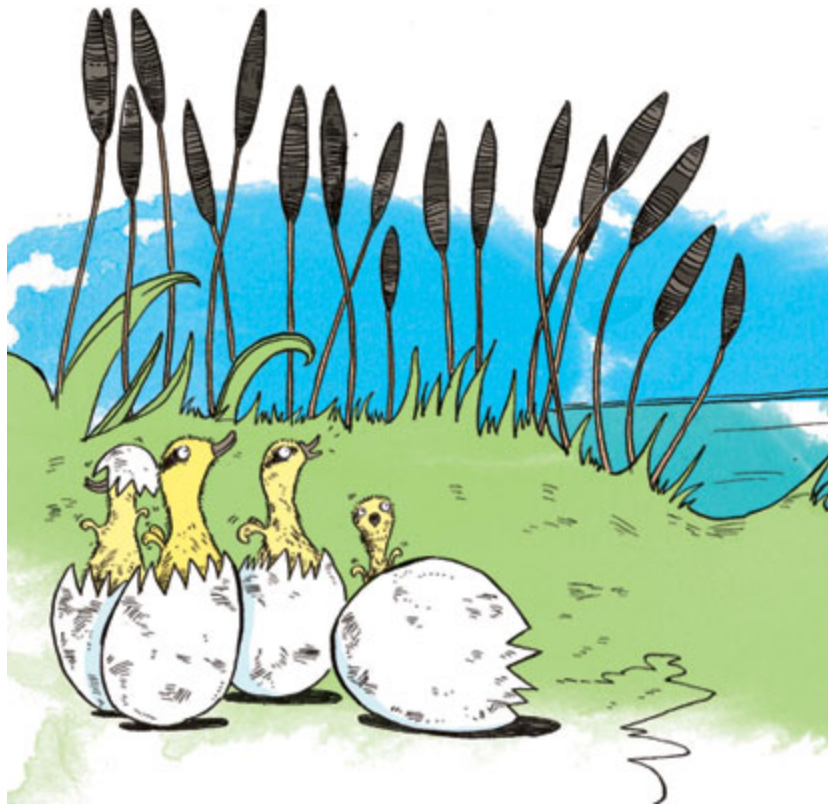
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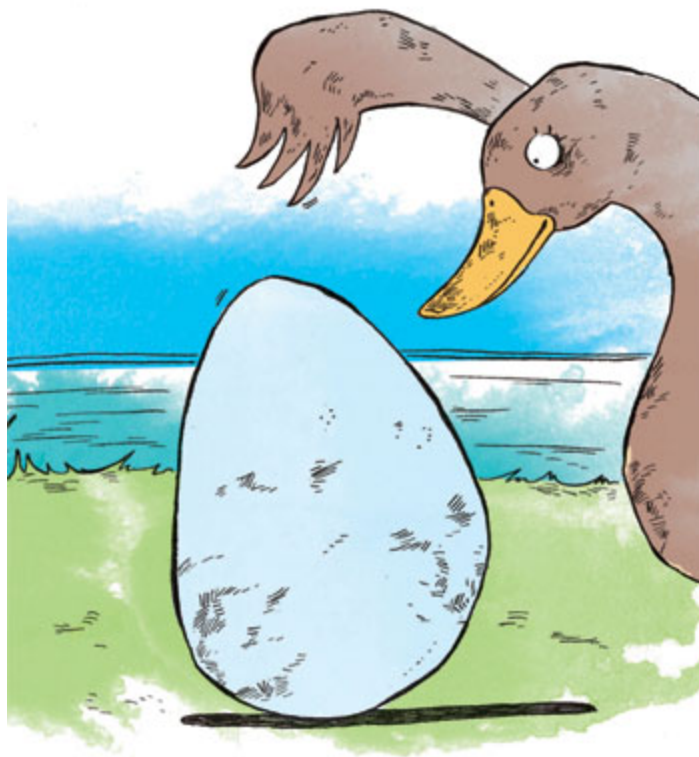
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Once upon a time, Mother Duck sat waiting for her eggs to hatch.

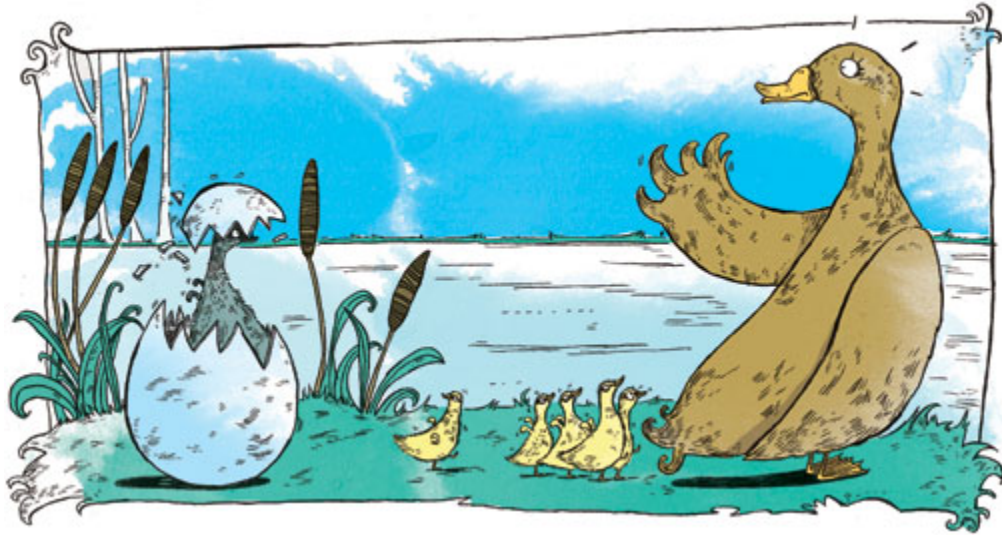




The eggs soon hatched and tiny, fluffy ducklings came peeping out of the shells.

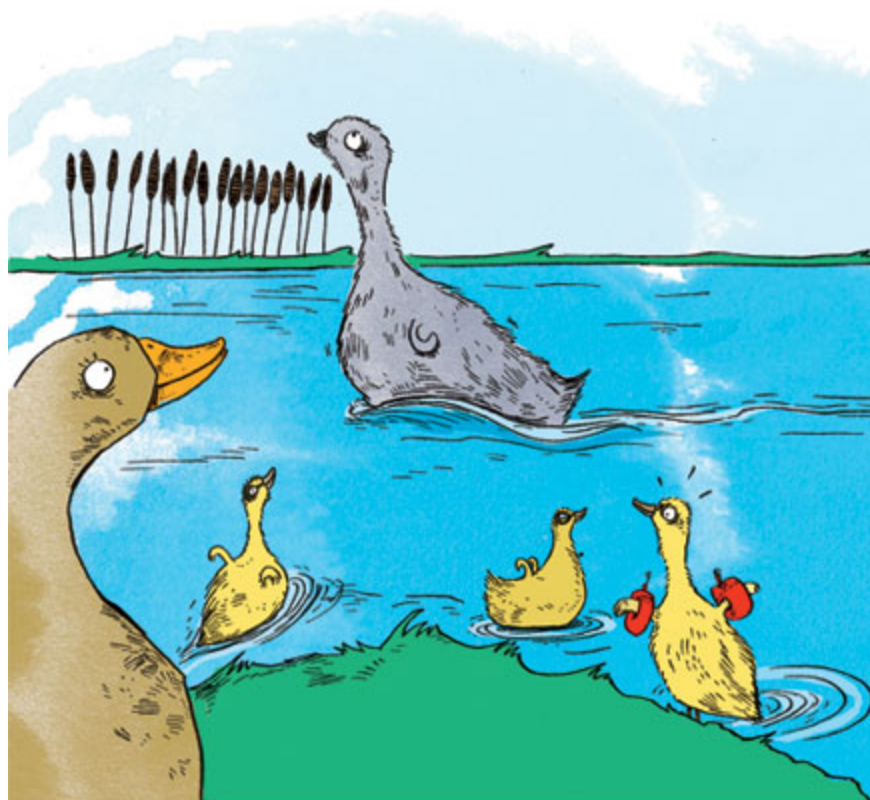


But the biggest egg still would not hatch. “Hurry up!” quacked Mother Duck, tapping the shell.



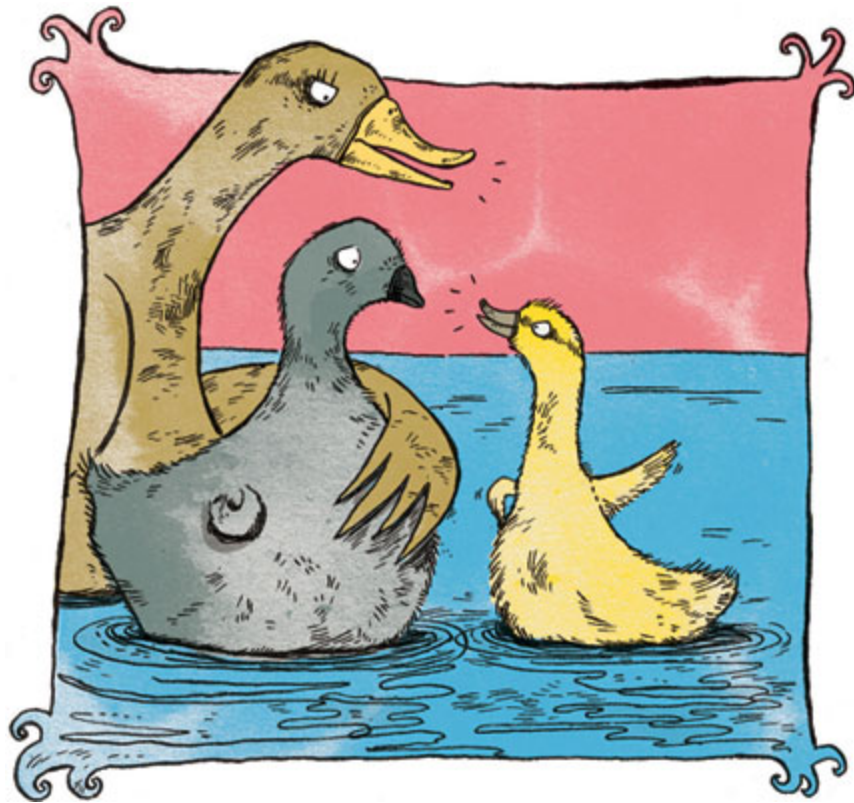
At last, the biggest egg hatched. Out came a very large, very ugly duckling. “Oh!” said Mother Duck in surprise. “Never mind. Now, ducklings it’s time to swim!”

Mother Duck took her ducklings to the pond. They all dived in and the large, ugly duckling was the best swimmer of all.

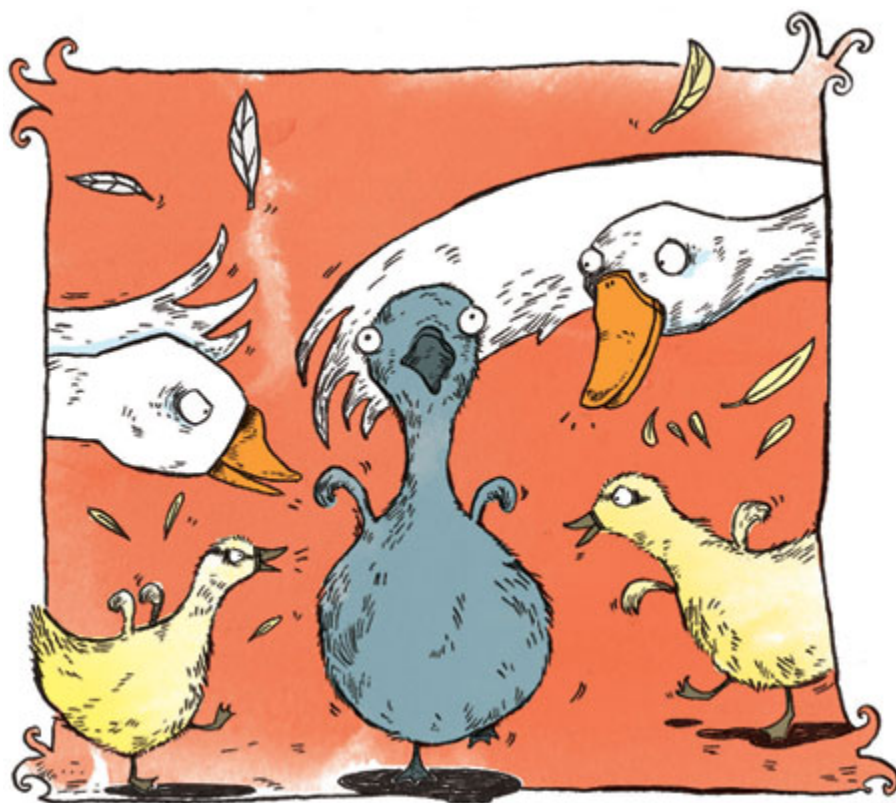




But because he was so ugly, all the other birds laughed at him.



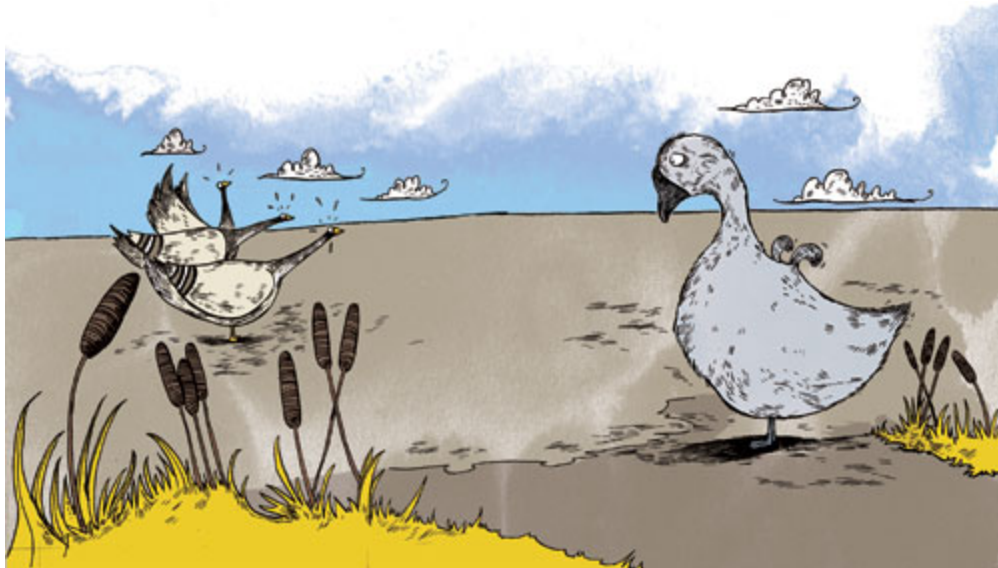
“You are too ugly to stay on this farm!” quacked one nasty duck. “Leave him alone. He can swim better than any of you!” said Mother Duck.



But the other ducks quacked and pecked at the poor duckling. He ran away as fast as he could.

The ugly duckling ran all the way to a marsh. There he met some geese.
“What kind of bird are you?” they laughed.

The ugly duckling was sad. “Will everybody think I’m ugly?” he wondered.



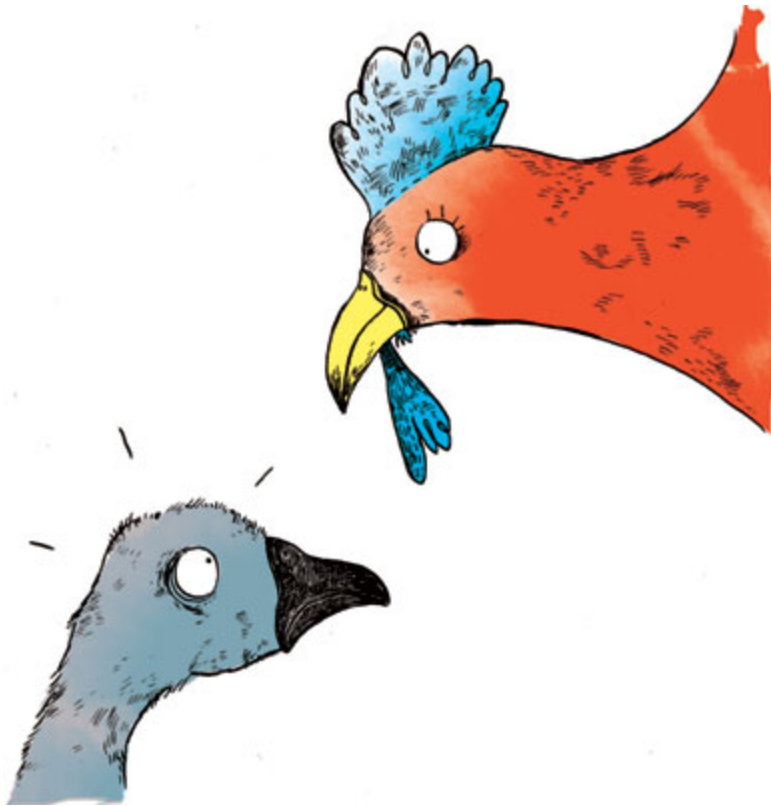
The ugly duckling ran away again until he found a tiny cottage. He was so tired that he lay down to rest.





Next morning, he was woken up by a clucking hen.

“Can you lay eggs?” she asked.



“No,” said the ugly duckling.

“Then there is no home for you here. Go away!” clucked the hen.



The ugly duckling ran until he came to a quiet riverbank. One day, as he hid there, he looked up in the sky.



He saw three beautiful, white birds flying above him. “I wish I were like them,” he thought. “Then nobody would call me ugly.”

Soon, autumn came and the leaves fell from the trees.





Then winter came. The snow fell and the river iced over. The ugly duckling was cold, hungry, and very lonely.

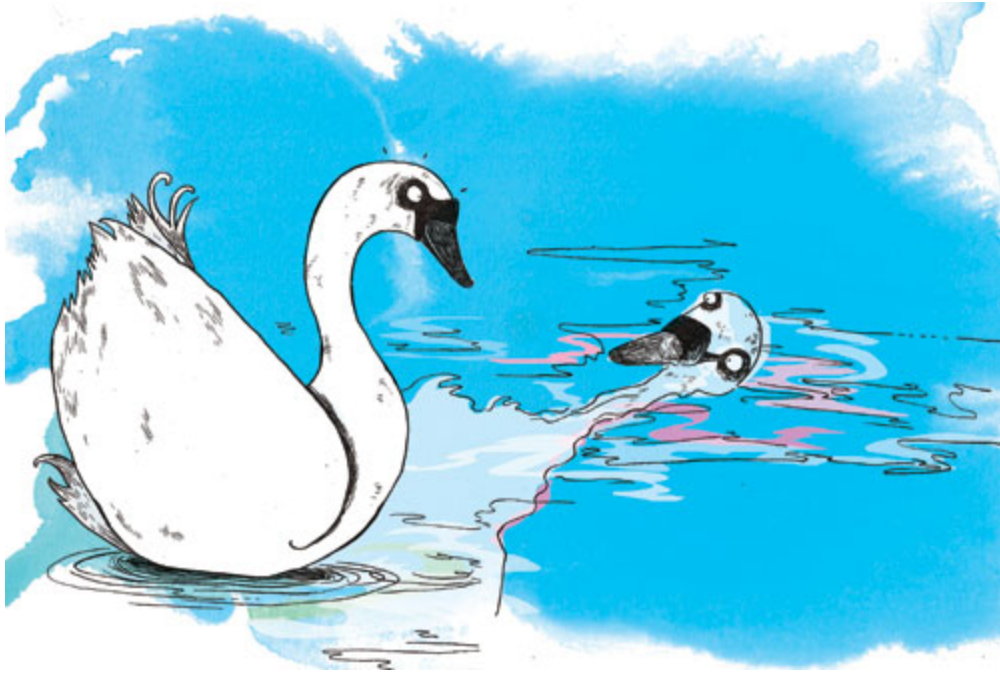


By the time spring arrived, the ugly duckling was so lonely that he swam up the river to a pond.

On the pond were three beautiful white birds.

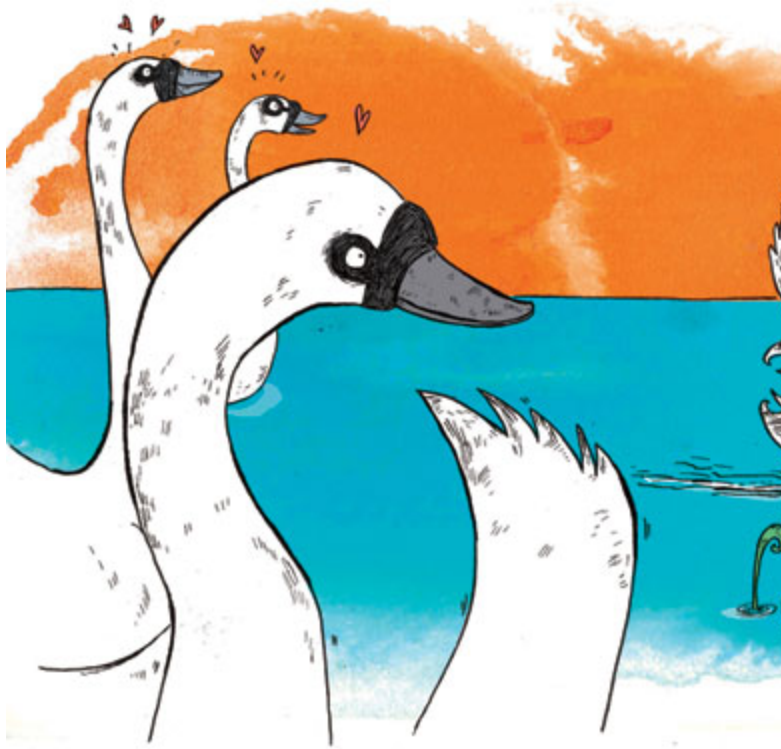


“I’m going to say hello to those birds!” thought the ugly duckling bravely.
“Even if they just tell me to go away.”



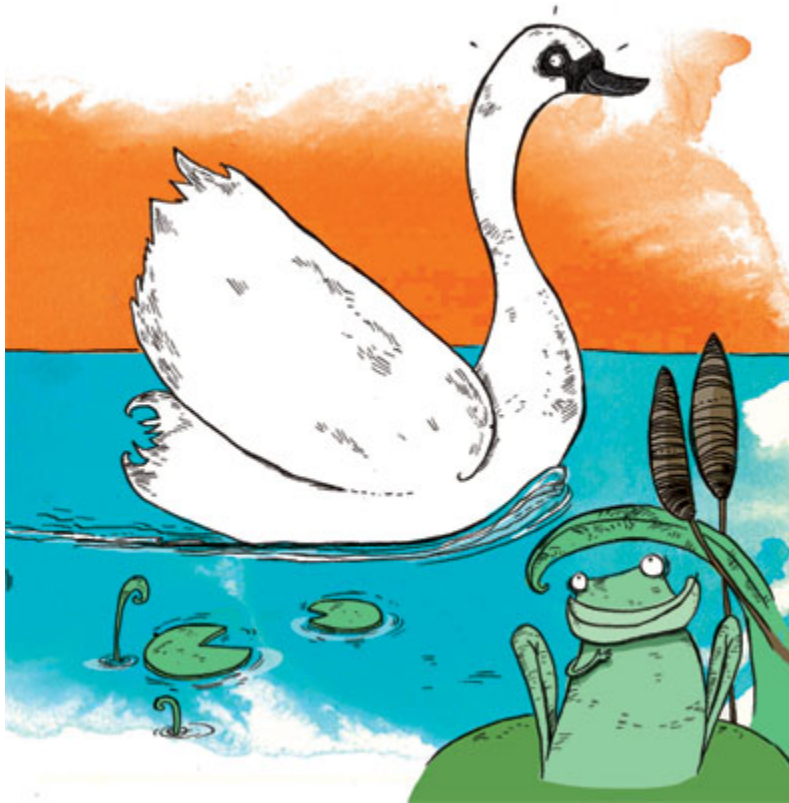
He took a deep breath, looked down and saw his reflection.

“Is that me?” he gasped. He was a beautiful white bird, too!



“What a beautiful swan you are!” said the three white birds.

“Why don’t you stay with us?”



“I’m really a swan!” said the ugly duckling, happily. And he was never called ugly again.



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