

The Ugly Duckling

In the duck's nest was one big egg that was not a duck egg. A big ugly duckling came out of the big egg. All the other baby ducks laughed at the ugly duckling because he looked different. "Is he a turkey?" the mother duck asked. The mother duck taught all her ducklings to say, "Quack." But the ugly duckling could only say, "Honk. Honk."

None of the ducks wanted him around. He was so sad that he ran away. When he saw his face in the water, he thought he was ugly, too. He cried. Now, he was alone. Wild ducks asked him what kind of duck he was, but he didn't know. Even the hunter's dogs were scared of how ugly he was, and they ran away. Then an old woman found him and thought he was a chicken. She waited for the ugly duckling to lay an egg, but he couldn't.

He missed swimming in the water. So the ugly duckling went back to the lake. At the lake, he saw something new and strange. He saw swans! They were white with long graceful necks. He wanted to meet the beautiful birds, but he was afraid they would tease him. When the swans saw the ugly duckling, they clapped their wings happily. "Why are you so happy?" the ugly duckling asked the swans. "Because you are a swan. You will be beautiful when you grow up, just like us!" Now the ugly duckling was happy because he had found his family. When the ugly duckling grew up, he was the most beautiful swan of all.