

Folk & Fairy Tale  
EASY READERS™

# The Ugly Duckling

A retelling by Violet Findley • Illustrated by Susan Chapman



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# Guided Reading Level

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Once upon a time, five eggs began to hatch. Crack! Crack! Crack! Crack! Crack!



Out popped five little ducklings. Four were fluffy and cute. One was gray and ugly.





The cute ducks were mean to their ugly brother. They pecked at him. They said, "You are ugly. Go away!"



One day, the ugly duckling did go away.  
He swam and swam. After a while, he met  
some geese.



But the geese were just as mean as the ducks. They pecked at him.  
They said, "You are ugly. Go away!"





Once again, the ugly duckling did go away. He swam and swam. After a while, he met some herons.



But the herons were just as mean as the geese. They pecked at him. They said, "You are ugly. Go away!"



Once again, the ugly duckling did go away. He swam and swam. After a while, he came upon some swans. They were the most beautiful birds he had ever seen.



When the swans swam near, the ugly duckling hid his face and cried. He did not want them to see how ugly he was.



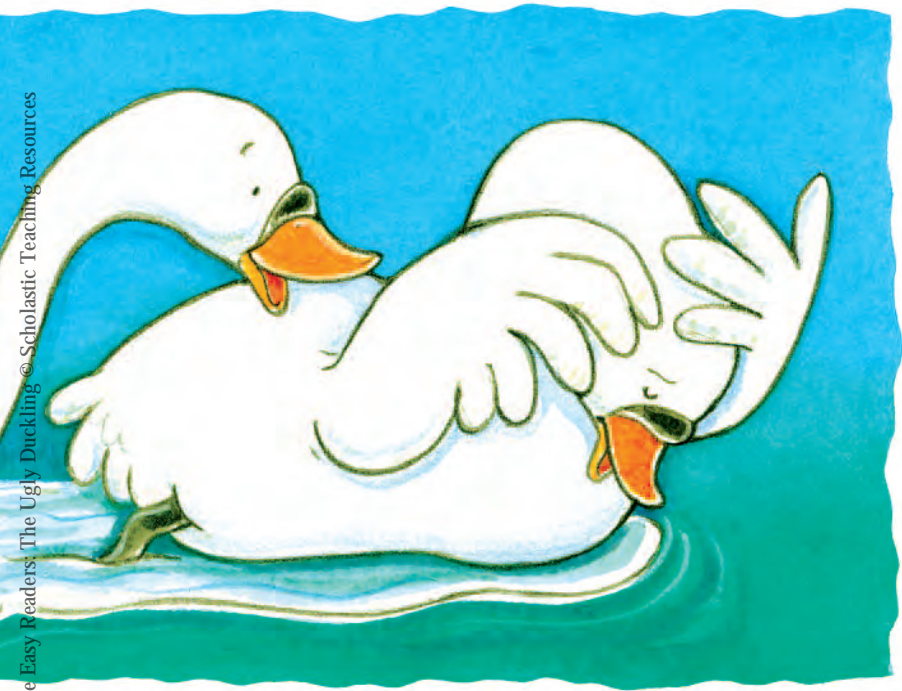


Life went on like this for many months. The ugly duckling stayed by himself. He also grew and grew.

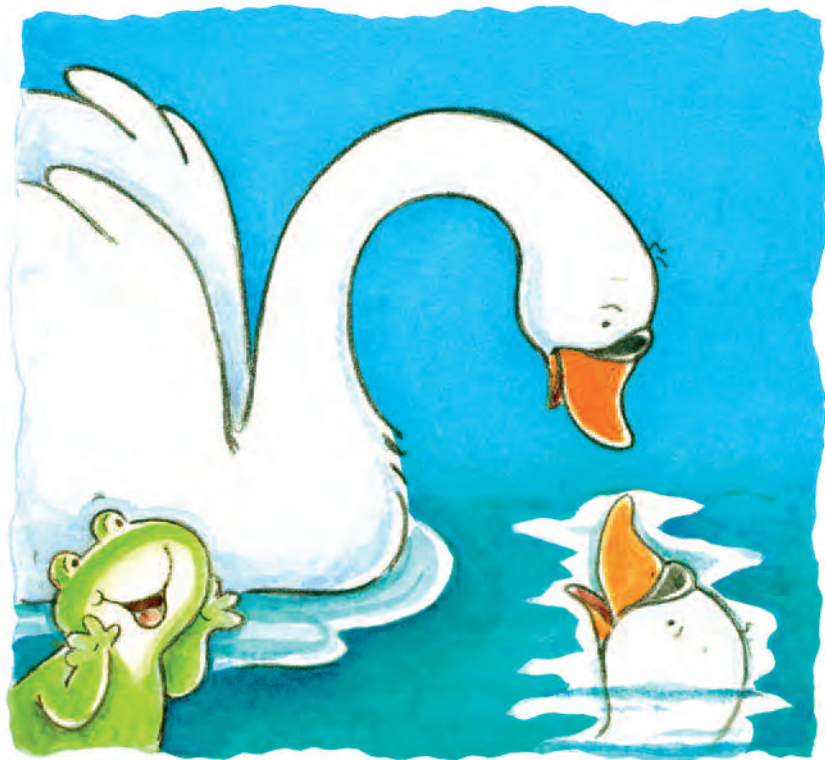




One day, a swan swam over and spoke to him.  
"Why are you so shy?" he asked.  
"Because I am ugly," said the ugly duckling.



The swan laughed, "Have you looked in a mirror lately?"



That made the ugly duckling curious.  
He looked into the shiny water.



Wow! He had grown into a beautiful swan,  
just like them!



From that day on, the once ugly duckling lived happily ever after. And he was always kind to all living things, from peacocks to potato bugs.



# Glossary

**curious** wanting to find out more about something

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**geese**



more than one goose

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**heron**



a bird with a long beak and long legs that lives near water

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**pecked**



picking at with a beak

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