Aunt Fox

The Ugly Duckling



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Synopsis

A different-looking egg hatches in a duck's nest, revealing a gray, awkward-looking chick.



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AGE	CATEGORY	READING TIME
3-6 years	Adventure	3 min

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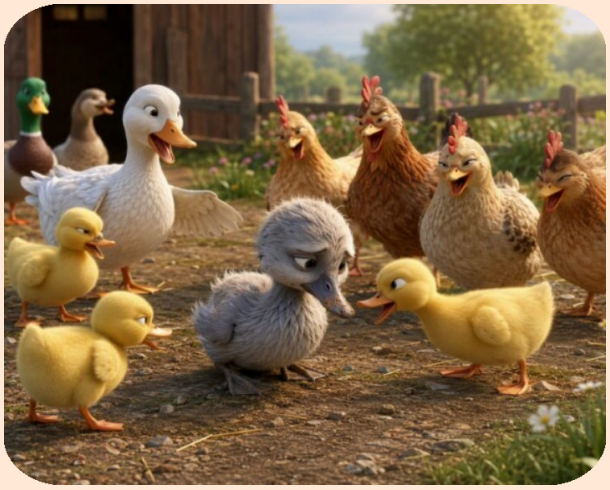
By the edge of the pond, a mother duck was patiently sitting on her eggs. One by one, yellow ducklings emerged from their shells, much to their mother's delight. However, the last egg—much larger than the others—took a long time to crack. When it finally opened, it revealed a large, gray, and rather clumsy-looking bird.





The mother took her brood to meet the other farm animals. Instead of a warm welcome, the new chick was met with suspicious glances and snickers. The other ducks pecked at him, the chickens teased him, and even his own siblings shunned him. Everyone called him the "ugly duckling" because of his unusual appearance.





Hurt by the insults and finding no affection, the duckling decided to run away from the barn during the night. He crossed the fence and ran aimlessly through the fields. He arrived at a marsh inhabited by wild ducks, but even they found him odd. Feeling completely alone in the world, he continued his uncertain journey.



Autumn arrived, bringing cold winds and dry leaves. One day, the duckling spotted a flock of large, beautiful white birds flying south across the sky. He was fascinated, though he didn't understand why he felt such admiration. Shortly after, he had to flee from hunters and dogs that were frightening the forest animals.



A harsh winter froze the pond's waters. The duckling had to swim constantly to avoid getting trapped in the ice, but he eventually became exhausted and froze. A passing farmer found him, pulled him from the ice, and took him home. The children wanted to play with him, but he got scared and ran back out into the snow.



During the coldest months, the little survivor endured hunger, biting winds, and isolation in a cave. He hid from everything and everyone, believing himself to be an imperfect creature unworthy of affection. Only the hope of warmer days kept him strong through those long, lonely nights.



With the arrival of spring, the sun warmed the earth once more, and the ice melted. The duckling spread his wings and realized they were stronger and broader. He flew to a large lake with crystal-clear waters, where he once again spotted those beautiful white birds swimming gracefully toward him.



Fearing rejection yet again, the duckling lowered his head in humiliation. When he looked at his reflection in the water, he was startled: he was no longer an ugly, gray bird, but an elegant white swan. The other birds welcomed him with joy, and he finally discovered who he truly was.



THE END

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