



THE UGLY DUCKLING



A Tale from Hans Christian Andersen
Retold and illustrated by
Lorinda Bryan Cauley





It was lovely out in the country in the summer. The cornfields were yellow, the oats were green, and the hay stood in stacks in the meadows. All around the fields were great forests, and in the middle of these forests lay deep lakes. In a sunny spot stood an old manor house with a deep moat around it. Great burdock leaves grew along its walls down to the water. It was under one of these leaves that a duck was sitting on her nest. Her ducklings were taking such a long time to hatch that she was beginning to lose patience. She hardly ever had a visitor because the other ducks would rather swim around the moat than sit and gossip with her.

At last one egg after another began to crack. "Piep! Piep!" cried little ducklings, poking their heads through their shells.

"Quack! Quack!" said the mother duck as they all came tumbling out.

"How big the world is!" the ducklings said, for certainly there was more room under the burdock leaf than there was inside an egg.





"You don't think *this* is all the world?" said their mother. "It stretches all the way to the other side of the garden, right into the parson's field. Though I have never been that far!" She got up to see if all the eggs were hatched. The largest egg was still there.

"Oh dear, how long is this one going to take? I'm so very tired of sitting," she said with a sigh. And she sat down again.

\$7.00

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Voyager Books
Harcourt, Inc.

525 B Street, San Diego, CA 92101
15 East 26th Street, New York, NY 10010

Manufactured in China

ISBN 0-15-692528-1



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