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Dramatic Publishing



THE UGLY DUCKLING

(Touring version)

Adapted by
RIC AVERILL

From the story by
HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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(THE UGLY DUCKLING - touring version manuscript)

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THE UGLY DUCKLING

CHARACTERS

MOTHER DUCK	DOG
NEIGHBOR DUCK (FERN)	CAT
BROTHER DUCK (HOMER)	HEN
BABY BROTHER DUCK (BEAU)	OLD LADY
UGLY DUCKLING (UDRICH)	SWAN 1
BOY (GILBERT)	CHILD
TURKEY (TOM)	MAN
GOOSE	SWAN 2

CAST DOUBLINGS

ACTOR 1: m or f - UGLY DUCKLING – same actor throughout

ACTOR 2: m - NEIGHBOR DUCK, BABY BROTHER DUCK, BOY, CAT, SWAN 1
or CHILD*

ACTOR 3: m - BROTHER DUCK, TURKEY, DOG, OLD LADY, MAN, SWAN 2

ACTOR 4: f - MOTHER DUCK, GOOSE, HEN, SWAN 1 or CHILD*

** NOTE: CHILD can be male or female. It plays nicely for SWANS to be mother and father but either doubling works.*

MUSICAL NUMBERS (*melodies at end of manuscript*)

1. Opening Theme
2. Swimming Song
3. Turkey Song
4. Goose Song
5. Dog's Life
6. Belong Song
7. Cat and Hen Song
8. Swan Incidental Music
9. First Swan Song
10. S'Lovely Cold
11. Stay and Play
12. Swan Song

THE UGLY DUCKLING

SCENE ONE

(Early spring. The seasons are indicated by lights and the revolving three-sided flats that depict first spring then a summer/fall look and finally a winter look.

OPENING THEME music is heard as lights come up on **MOTHER DUCK** [ACTOR 4] sitting calmly on top of three very large “eggs.” She looks off to the right, then the left.)

MOTHER DUCK

Hello. Hellooo! Anybody want to bring me a nice juicy worm? Or some fresh fish? Hello. Humph. Just as soon as you sit your brood, your friends fly away fast. My mother warned me. She did. “Do you really want to have eggs, my dear?” she said, wisely. Of course I said right back, “You really wanted me, didn’t you, Mama?” And she cried.

(Looks around. Cries.)

Nobody told me it would be this hard or this lonely!

(A sound is heard, like pecking.)

What was that?

(She looks down. She gets up, walks around the eggs.)

Oh, it’s nothing. If only...no, can’t live on “if onlys,” that’s what my father always said and he was a noble Drake, he was.

(Another sound. She leaps up.)

I think I heard it! I’m sure, I’m sure.

(Looks closely at the eggs.)

Sweet, sweet thing, are you hatching? I’m sure you are. Go on. Wait, you need a little more warmth, I’ll bet. Uh-huh.

(She hops back on eggs and grits her teeth and grins.)

I wish I were even warmer. Urrrggghhh!

(She tries to be warmer.)

Urrrggghhh! Come on, hatch, you! Urrrggghhh! Gosh, I’m hungry. Urrrggghhh!

(She stops in her tracks as big NEIGHBOR DUCK FERN [ACTOR 2] comes waddling on.)

NEIGHBOR DUCK

Saffron, I heard you clear across the pond. Aren't your eggs done yet?

MOTHER DUCK

(Embarrassed.)

I don't know what you're talking about, Fern No, the eggs are not done. I'm letting them take their time.

NEIGHBOR DUCK

Yeah? Bet you're hungry.

(Holds up a worm.)

MOTHER DUCK

Hmmm, give me that.

NEIGHBOR DUCK

Say, please.

MOTHER DUCK

Don't be so mean, Fern. I wasn't mean when you hatched your eggs.

NEIGHBOR DUCK

Oh, all right. Here!

(Tosses the worm in the air. MOTHER DUCK lunges for it, coming off her eggs.)

MOTHER DUCK

I am sooo hungry.

NEIGHBOR DUCK

Don't let your eggs get cold.

(MOTHER eats the worm, sighs.)

MOTHER DUCK

Now, where was I?

(Moves back toward the nest. NEIGHBOR notices the large egg in the middle.)

NEIGHBOR DUCK

Whoa, that's very strange. Something's wrong.

MOTHER DUCK

Is not!

NEIGHBOR DUCK

No, no. I've never, ever, seen an egg that size.

MOTHER DUCK

What size?

NEIGHBOR DUCK

Oh, it's probably nothing. You shouldn't worry just because one of your eggs is monstrously big.

MOTHER DUCK

Monstrously big?

NEIGHBOR DUCK

Yeah, it's nothing. Don't be nervous. No one has hatched a dinosaur around here in a long, long time. A really long time.

MOTHER DUCK

Dinosaur?

NEIGHBOR DUCK

Maybe not dinosaur big, but, well, that egg is pretty big. REALLY big.

MOTHER DUCK
(*To NEIGHBOR DUCK.*)

REALLY big?

NEIGHBOR DUCK

Maybe the biggest the world has ever known. You could put up a sign, let people come and pay to see it! They could place bets on what's going to come out of there.

MOTHER DUCK

Fern!

NEIGHBOR DUCK

Well, that's what I'd do—but I'm an entrepreneur.

MOTHER DUCK

Well, I'm just a Mother Duck and I'm not going to make some kind of "sideshow" out of my special egg. Is it really that big?

NEIGHBOR DUCK

I'm afraid so. But I wouldn't worry. Perhaps it's just a Turkey egg. That's how I was bamboozled once. Turkeys are always trying to think of a way to outsmart Thanksgiving. But the true test is this: Turkeys can't swim.

MOTHER DUCK

Neither can eggs. Swim.

NEIGHBOR DUCK

I just meant when...

(There are pecking sounds.)

Oh, it's happening. I'm getting out of here. Newborns are so...messy!

(Exits. More pecking sounds. Suddenly one of the large eggs pops open and BROTHER DUCK [ACTOR 3] staggers out from behind it.)

BROTHER DUCK

Quack, cheep, quack.

(More pecking. BROTHER DUCK looks around.)

Wow, so this is what the world looks like. Incredible. And you must be...?

(BROTHER DUCK looks at MOTHER.)

Mommy?

(Runs to her and hugs her.)

I have a Mommy—I sure am a lucky Duck! What's my name?

MOTHER DUCK

Well, my darling lucky Duck, I shall name you Homer.

BROTHER DUCK

Homer, that's a great name. Homer—'cause I'll stay close to home. Cheep, cheep! Quack!

(More pecking. The second egg breaks open and BABY BROTHER DUCK [ACTOR 2] stumbles out.)

BROTHER DUCK

Hello, Baby Brother Duck. I'm Homer, your brother.

(Gives BABY a push, laughs.)

BABY BROTHER DUCK

Yeouch! Not nice. Quack!

(Looks around, then back at BROTHER.)

Mommy?

BROTHER DUCK

Ewww, no, I'm not your mommy, especially when you're acting up or messy. She's your mommy.

(Pushes BABY to MOTHER.)

MOTHER DUCK

What a sweetheart you are. I'll call you Beau because you're such a pretty baby.

BABY BROTHER DUCK

I am? Let me look at my reflection in the pond. Cheep.

(Looks.)

I am pretty.

BROTHER DUCK

Pretty ugly.

BABY BROTHER DUCK

Pretty pretty!

BROTHER DUCK

(Looks.)

Well, I'm pretty, too.

MOTHER DUCK

You two quit quarreling. Beau, this is your brother Homer.

BABY BROTHER DUCK

Oh, 'cause he's homely?

BROTHER DUCK

Homer! Hey, when's our other brother gonna hatch?

BABY BROTHER DUCK

Better be a sister, I wanna be the *only* Baby Brother!

BROTHER DUCK

Hey, I was a baby before you were.

MOTHER DUCK

I don't know how I'll handle another, you two are a handful as it is. Now settle down and let me see if I can hatch this egg. *(Sits on egg.)*

BROTHER DUCK

Come on, Mom.

BABY BROTHER DUCK

We don't wanna wait all day.

MOTHER DUCK

Hurry up, child! It's time to hatch.

(BROTHER and BABY BROTHER tap their feet impatiently.)

BROTHER DUCK

Come on, Mom. We want to go into the wide world.

BABY BROTHER DUCK

Yeah, we want to learn how to eat stuff. We're hungry.

BROTHER DUCK

Yeah, and we want to learn how to swim.

MOTHER DUCK

I'm working. I'm working. Urrrggghhh!

(There is more pecking, and more, and more.)

BABY BROTHER DUCK

Gosh, that's sure a loud egg.

BROTHER DUCK

And slow.

MOTHER DUCK

Come on!

(There is a huge cracking sound and the egg splits and out from behind the flats comes the UGLY DUCKLING [ACTOR 1], very awkward and slightly bigger than the others.)

MOTHER DUCK

Oh, my.

BROTHER DUCK

He is big.

BABY BROTHER DUCK

And awkward.

BROTHER DUCK

And ugly.

MOTHER DUCK

Shh.

BABY BROTHER DUCK

What you going to name him, Mother?

MOTHER DUCK

I think I'll name him Udrich.

BROTHER DUCK

Udrich, the Ugly Duckling.

UGLY DUCKLING

Uh, hello. Mother?

MOTHER DUCK

Yes, I am, I think, I mean, you're my egg, my darling boy, my, uh, Drake. My, uh...

BROTHER DUCK

Ugly brother.

BABY BROTHER DUCK

Are you sure you're a Duck?

UGLY DUCKLING

I don't know. I was just born. I don't really know anything.

BROTHER DUCK

Oh, knowing is easy. Just *act* like you know, that's how I've gotten along all this time.

BABY BROTHER DUCK

You were just born, too.

BROTHER DUCK

Yeah, but he doesn't know that.

MOTHER DUCK

Now, listen, you three. You've hatched and I'm hungry.

(Looks at UDRICH.)

Udrich, you're not a Turkey, are you?

UGLY DUCKLING

I don't think so. But I've never seen a Turkey so I guess I really don't know.

MOTHER DUCK

Only one way to tell. Come along, children, we'll go down to the pond and swim.

(To UDRICH.)

If you can't swim, best speak up now and save us all the embarrassment.

UGLY DUCKLING

Swimming sounds great.

BABY BROTHER DUCK

It'll come to you. It's all instinct, baby, uh, Big Brother.

MOTHER DUCK

Let's go!

(Late spring, early summer, lights change as they go to swim downstage they sing: SWIMMING SONG.)

MOTHER DUCK

**SWIMMING, SWIMMING, ROUND WE GO,
FOLLOW WHERE THE WATERS FLOW,
FISH AND INSECTS WE WILL EAT,
BOBBING FOR A WORMY TREAT!**

BROTHER DUCK

(Speaks as music continues.)

He is a Duck!

BABY BROTHER DUCK

Yep, a natural swimmer.

MOTHER DUCK

Such grace in the water.

UGLY DUCKLING

Gee, thanks.

ALL DUCKS

(They sing again.)

SWIMMING IN THE SUMMER LAKE,

MOTHER DUCK

WINKING AT A HANDSOME DRAKE.

BOY DUCKS

**LOVING ALL THE SUMMER SOUNDS,
AS WE SWIM AROUND AND ROUND.**

(They tease UDRICH.)

BROTHER DUCK

YOU'RE ANNOYING, YOU ARE DUMB.

BABY BROTHER DUCK

YOU ARE SPOILING ALL OUR FUN.

UGLY DUCKLING

TELL ME WHAT DID I DO WRONG?

BOY DUCKS

NOTHING YOU JUST DON'T BELONG!

MOTHER DUCK

WHY CAN'T YOU THREE GET ALONG?

UGLY DUCKLING

MOMMY, WHY DON'T I BELONG?

BOY DUCKS

COME, LET'S RACE ACROSS THE LAKE!

MOTHER DUCK
OH, THERE GOES A HANDSOME DRAKE.

(All are leaving UDRICH alone.)

BROTHER DUCK
 Quit looking at the Drakes, Ma, we wanna play.

MOTHER DUCK
 There's no reason you children can't play.

(She swims away as DUCKLINGS play.)

BABY BROTHER DUCK
 Let's play leapfrog.

UGLY DUCKLING
 What's a leapfrog.

BROTHER DUCK
 Not what's a leapfrog. A frog's that green thing, croaks by the edge of the pond. And he leaps. Like this.
(Does a leap.)

UGLY DUCKLING
 This?
(Tries and fails completely.)

BABY BROTHER DUCK
 Nope—this.
(Leaps perfectly.)

UGLY DUCKLING
 I get it.
(Tries, fails again.)

BABY BROTHER DUCK
 No, you don't. You should stick to swimming.

BROTHER DUCK
 Besides, for the game, you have to leapfrog over each other. Come on, Baby Brother, let's show him.