**The Very, Very, Ugly Duck/699**

Once upon a time, there was a mother duck who had seven eggs. One of the eggs looked different. Six of the eggs were white. One of the eggs was brown with blue spots and a little bigger than the rest. Three weeks passed and one of the white eggs started shaking. It had a crack. Out came a cute, fluffy yellow duckling. Another egg started shaking, and another, and another, and another and another. They all grew cracks. And out came five more cute, fluffy yellow ducklings. One of them barfed up an egg yoke and one pooped on one of its brothers. They were kind of gross.

The mother went to grab food. She came back with a mouthful of crawfish. All the ducklings ate the crawfish. It started getting dark. The mother quacked to the ducklings to get in the nest. The mother tried to settle on top of them to keep them warm. They were supposed to go to sleep, but didn’t. They ran around chasing each other in the nest. They were kind of naughty.

In the morning, while the mother was still sleeping, all the ducklings started biting the mother. They were kind of mean. The ducklings then heard a rattle. They peeked around under the mother and saw the brown egg with blue spots shaking. It grew a big crack. And out came an ugly, featherless greyish-pink duckling with a big old black beak.

The mother duck woke up and saw the ugly duckling. She was slightly disgusted, but after a while, she protected it. All the little yellow ducklings teased the ugly duckling and called it names. They were kind of bullies. The mother duck quacked at her ducklings to stop teasing it because it could grow up to be a beautiful swan, just like the fairytales. The ducklings were mad because the mother duck told them to stop teasing the ugly duckling. They all sat in the nest and glared at the ugly duckling.

Weeks passed and the ducklings were almost full grown. The six yellow ducklings grew up to be beautiful ducks, as white as clouds and as smooth as snow. On the other hand, the ugly duckling grew up to be even more ugly. He had black feathers and a featherless neck and head that were bright red and wrinkly. He had a massive yellow beak with a giant lump that made it look like he was wearing a red and orange helmet on its head. It was hard for him to walk because his head was so heavy. Even though the ugly duck was bigger than the other ducks, they still teased him. When he tried getting in the water to swim with the other ducks, he just sank to the bottom. All the other ducks laughed.

One day, the seven ducks were out adventuring. They saw something giant and loud fly over them, but they didn’t care. The ugly duck tried to convince them to hide because it could be something dangerous. They didn’t listen.

A few days later, they heard a big boom.

The ducks said, “What’s that?”

The ugly duck said, “We should hide.”

But the ducks didn’t listen and flew back to their pond. The ugly one followed. When they got to the pond, they saw tall, two-legged creatures wearing something that looked like leaves.

The ducks said, “We should stay here a bit longer and watch what happens.”

The ugly duck said, “We should run and hide.”

But they didn’t listen.

Then the tall, two-legged creatures pointed long stick looking things at the ducks.

“Boom!”

He heard five more booms.

The ugly duck watched his siblings fall.

Then, one of the tall, two-legged creatures said, “Don’t shoot the ugly one mate. It is a Helmeted Hornbill. They are endangered.”

The ugly duck realized he wasn’t a duck at all, and he flew away as fast as he could. He flew deep into the jungle and saw another bird that looked just like him. Then he saw a bunch more sitting in trees. He flew toward them. He landed on a branch.

The other birds said, “Wow, you are one ugly Helmeted Hornbill.”