

Ruby in Her Own Time

What will Ruby learn as she grows?

Once upon a time upon a nest beside a lake, there lived two ducks - a mother duck and a father duck.

There were five eggs in the nest. Mother Duck sat upon the nest, all



day and all night . . . through howling wind and driving rain, looking after the eggs - all five of them. Then, one bright morning, the eggs began to hatch. One, two, three, four little beaks poked out into the sunlight. One, two, three, four little ducklings shook their feathers in the breeze.

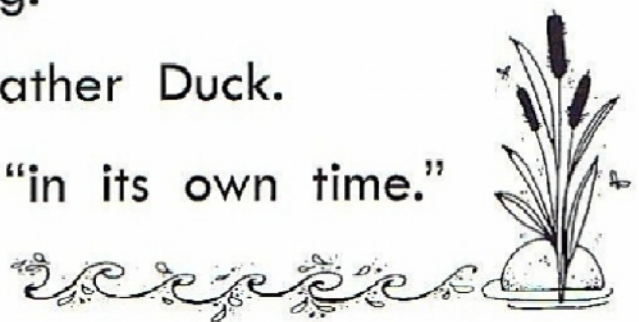
“We’ll call them Rufus, Rory, Rosie, and Rebecca,” said Father Duck. And Mother Duck agreed.

But the fifth egg did nothing.

“Will it ever hatch?” said Father Duck.

“It will,” said Mother Duck. “in its own time.”

And - sure enough - it did.



“She’s very small,” said Father Duck.



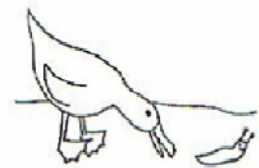
“What shall we call her?”

“We’ll call her Ruby,” said Mother Duck,

“because she’s small and precious.”

Rufus, Rory, Rosie, and Rebecca ate whatever they were given. They ate anything and everything.

But Ruby ate nothing.



“Will she ever eat?” said Father Duck.

“She will,” said Mother Duck, “in her own time.”

And - sure enough - she did.

Ruby, Rory, Rosie, and Rebecca swam off whenever they were able. They swam anywhere and everywhere. But Ruby swam nowhere.

“Will she ever swim?” said Father Duck.

“She will,” said Mother Duck, “in her own time.” And - sure enough - she did.



Rufus, Rory, Rosie, and Rebecca grew bigger.

And Ruby grew bigger too. Her feathers grew out, and her wings grew broad and beautiful.

And when Rufus, Rory, Rosie, and Rebecca began to fly . . . Ruby flew too! Rufus, Rory, Rosie, and Rebecca flew far and wide. They flew out across the water. They flew up among the trees.

But Ruby flew farther and wider.

She flew out beyond the water.

She flew up above the trees.

She flew anywhere and everywhere.

She stretched out her beautiful wings and soared high among the clouds.

Mother Duck and Father Duck watched Ruby flying off into the distance.

“Will she ever come back?” said Mother Duck.

“She will,” said Father Duck, “in her own time.”

And - sure enough - she did.

