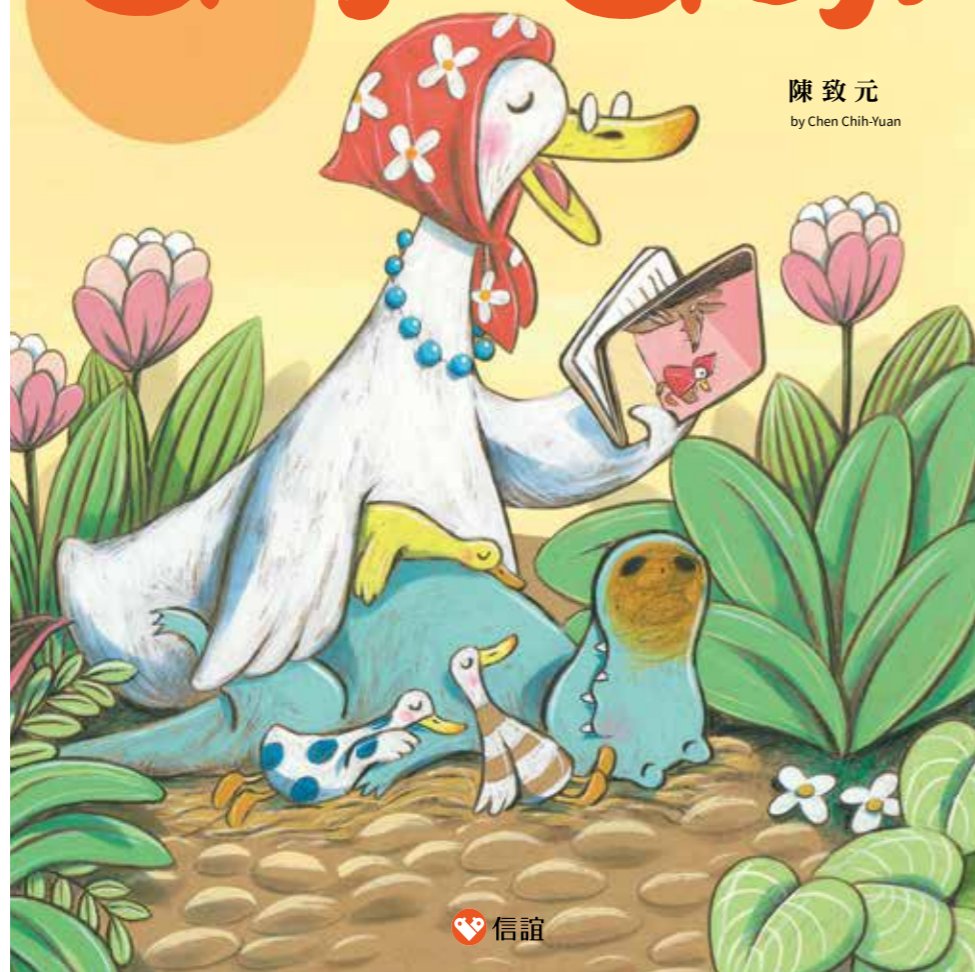


Guji-Guji

陳致元
by Chen Chih-Yuan

Duck Lake Story: Guji-Guji

鴨子湖故事：Guji-Guji

Author: Chen Chih-Yuan | Illustrator: Chen Chih-Yuan | Publisher: Hsin Yi

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Awards: 2003 The 44th Good Books Everyone Reads Award, Best Children's and Youth Book Award

BFT2.0 Translator: Michelle Kuo

Guji Guji is a crocodile raised by a family of ducks, and he believes he is one of them. One day, he encounters three crocodiles who reveal that he's actually one of them and ask for his help in trapping the ducks. Guji Guji is then faced with a difficult decision: Who is he, what is he, and what truly matters?



Chen Chih-Yuan

Born in 1975, Chen Chih-Yuan has had a passion for drawing since childhood. His works have become bestsellers in numerous countries and earned a wide range of prestigious awards both internationally and domestically. His accolades include the Peter Pan Prize from Sweden, Best Children's Book of the Year from the National Teachers Association and Publishers Weekly in the United States, Annual Selected Books by the Japan Library Association, the Bologna Prize in Italy, the Feng Zikai Award, the Best Illustration Award from the Golden Tripod Awards, the Gold Award from the Golden Butterfly Awards, and First Prize from the Yushan Children's Literature Award.

Chen's notable works include *Guji Guji*, *The Little Fish*, *Little Pigs Be Good*, *Baldy Chicken*, *City Little Heroes*, *A Day with No Presents*, *Daddy Bear Works in Another City*, *Adi and Julie*, and *The Very Slow Snail*. His book *Guji Guji*, first published in 2003, has been licensed in 14 countries and adapted into a stage play, performed in New Zealand, Sweden, and Spain. His work has been listed in the Top 10 of The New York Times Best-Selling Children's Books, recommended as a top Christmas gift by CNN, and praised by National Public Radio (NPR). It has also ranked in the Top 10 of South Korea's Annual Children's Book Bestsellers. In addition, Chen received Honorable Mention in the 15th Hsin-Yi Children's Literature Award for Picture Book Creation.

Born a Crocodile and Raised by Ducks: *Guji Guji* is a Delight to Behold

by Michelle Kuo

When an egg rolls into a duck's nest, it hatches into a greenish-blue creature that looks nothing like the other three ducklings. But Mother Duck is delighted—her fourth and final egg has finally hatched. She raises this little one as her own, naming him Guji Guji after the funny sound he made from inside the egg. Every night before bed, she tells her four ducklings, “No matter what you look like, you're all my babies.”

One day, while playing at a lake, Guji Guji encounters three animals that closely resemble him—crocodiles. Grinning, they show off their fangs and taunt, “Look! What a silly crocodile. He's learning how to walk like a delicious duck!”

Guji Guji responds, “I'm not a crocodile. I'm a duck.” The crocodiles laugh and

invite him to join their plan to eat all the ducks—Guji Guji's family. “Why should I listen to you?” asks Guji Guji.

The crocodiles reply simply: “Because we are all crocodiles and should help each other.”

The philosophy proposed by the crocodiles—that one is born into an identity, and that identity dictates one's actions—lies at the heart of this book. To be sure, this idea isn't necessarily wrong; forms of group identity, from religious to political, can and often do serve to motivate us. But the point is that each person (or here, an anthropomorphic crocodile-duck) should have the autonomy to define what their identity contains. This process of choosing who we become—and whom we wish to

defend or help—is central to developing our individuality and moral conscience. It deserves reflection, solitude, and consideration.

So Guji Guji goes to a lake and literally looks at his reflection. He makes faces into the water. He thinks. Guji Guji ceases claiming he's fully a duck, but he also refuses to embrace the logic of the crocodiles.

Instead, he invents a new identity—a croco-duck—and makes a decision: he will rescue the family he loves and reject those whose actions are contrary to his values. It's marvelous to see such complex concepts explored in such a concrete way.

Every night before bed, Mother Duck says to her four ducklings, “No matter what you look like, you're all my babies.”

Of course, at the end of the story, Guji Guji saves the day—but not without the help of his siblings. This beautiful book is joyfully and colorfully illustrated. Created by Chen Chih-Yuan, one of Taiwan's most celebrated artists, it is an imaginative tale that will resonate with readers of all ages and backgrounds, making it an instant classic.

Michelle Kuo is the editor-in-chief of Books from Taiwan and the author of Reading with Patrick.



The three crocodiles laughed wickedly.

“We know you live with a bunch of delicious fat ducks.

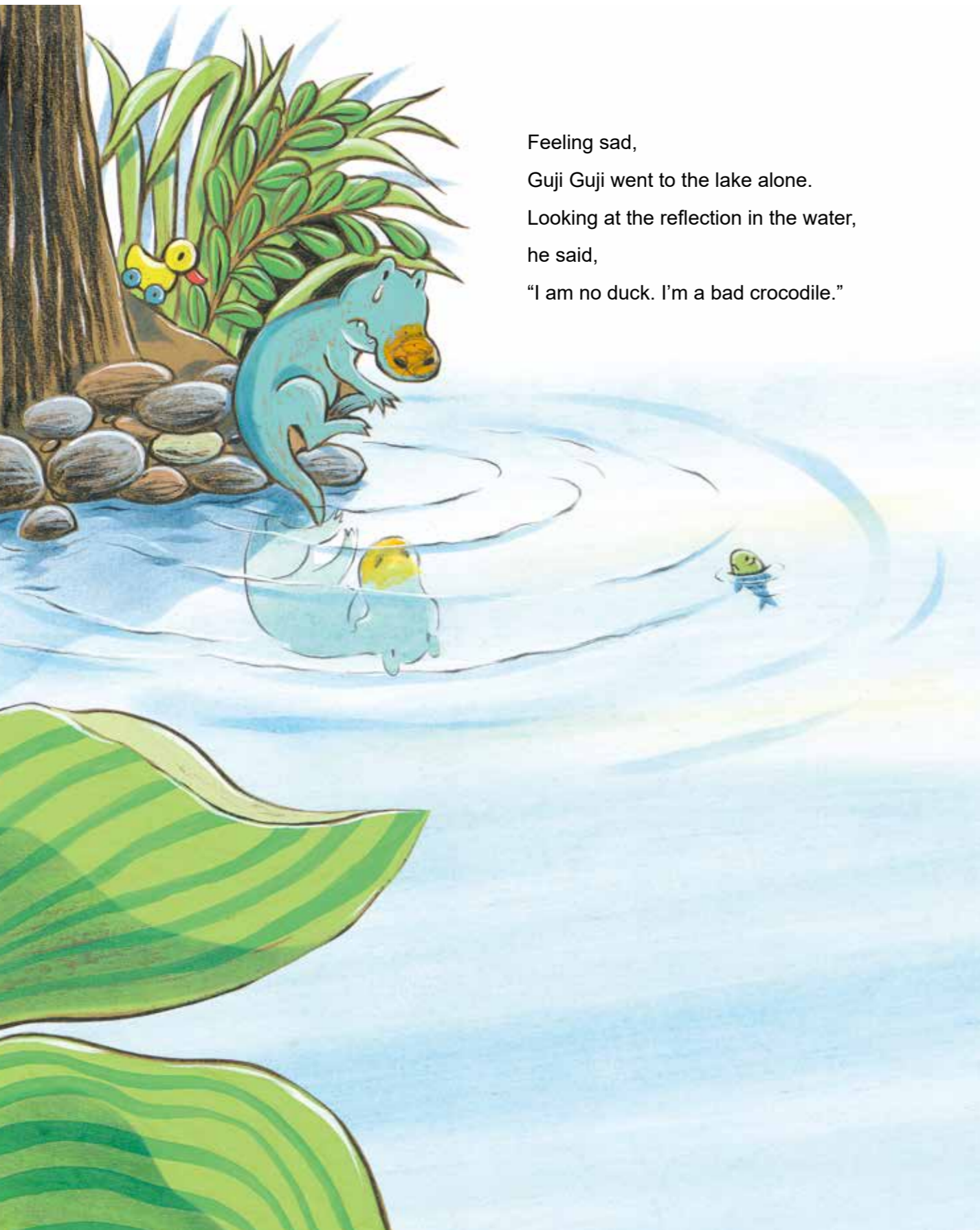
Tomorrow, bring them to the slide.

We’ll wait below with our mouths wide open.”

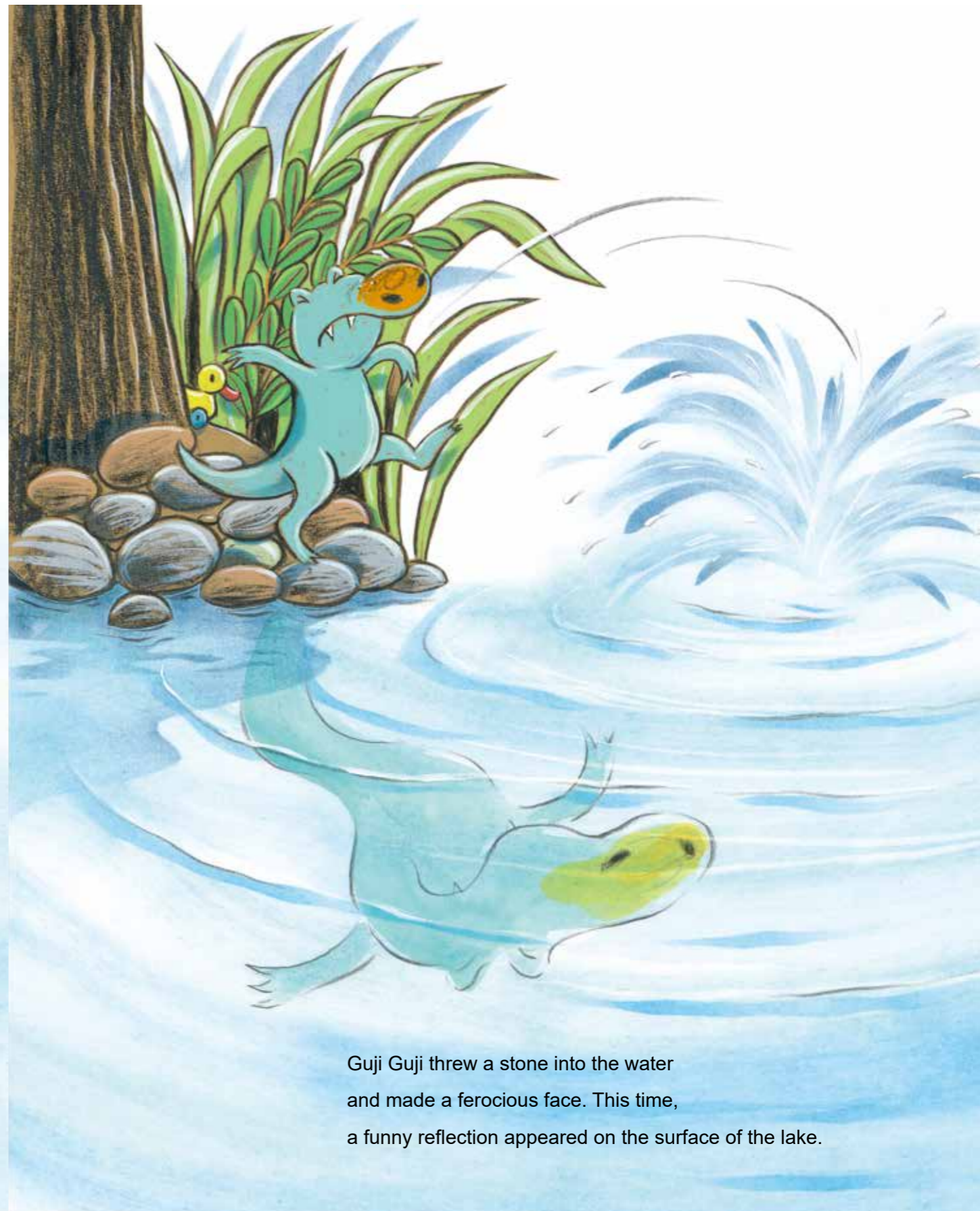
Guji Guji asked, “Why should I listen to you?”

“Because we are all crocodiles and should help each other.”

After saying that, the three bad crocodiles disappeared into the grass.



Feeling sad,
Guji Guji went to the lake alone.
Looking at the reflection in the water,
he said,
“I am no duck. I’m a bad crocodile.”



Guji Guji threw a stone into the water
and made a ferocious face. This time,
a funny reflection appeared on the surface of the lake.



Looking at his reflection on the lake,
Guji Guji laughed. He said,
"I am neither crocodile nor duck.
I am a crocodile duck."