

HONK! Dialogue Audition Pieces

EXTRACT 1 - Ugly

Cat: Hello, Ducky!
Ugly: Who are you?
Cat: I'm your friend.
Ugly: I haven't got any friends. Everyone hates me because I'm ugly.
Cat: Oh, they are too, too, too-too cruel. I think you look delicious.
Ugly: What did you say?
Cat: I said, poultry can be so malicious. Look at them guzzling that bread.
Ugly: It's supposed to be really nice. It's French.
Cat: Mmm. À L'orange. Do you mean to say that they didn't let you have any?
Ugly: Not a crumb.
Cat: Well, that settles it then. Lunch is in...on me.
Ugly: Do you mean it? You really are a friend.
Cat: Of course I am. Now, just follow me.
Ugly: I'd better tell my mother.
Cat: Oh no, you mustn't.
Ugly: I really think I should.

EXTRACT 2 - Ugly and Penny

Penny: Help me! Please, help me! I'm caught.
Ugly: Who...who are you?
Penny: I'm Penny. Please, do you think you can untangle me?
Ugly: I'll...I'll try. Wh...what are you?
Penny: A swan. Ooh, mind you don't hurt yourself on that hook. No point in us both getting damaged.
Ugly: A swan.
Penny: Typical me, my first migration and what happens...?
Ugly: Your first what?
Penny: Migration. The cold weather is setting in and we are leaving today for the warm lands.
Ugly: Leaving?
Penny: You're a funny one. All these questions.
Ugly: Sorry.
Penny: What's your name?
Ugly: Everyone calls me Ugly.
Penny: Oh, don't listen to them. It's a stage we all go through. You should hear some of the things they called me before the moult. Penny-dreadful. Penny-plain. Penny-dropping.
Ugly: Pretty Penny? How could anyone call you names?
Penny: Well...like I say, it's just a stage we all have to go through.
Ugly: Excuse me. Could you lift your wing up?
Penny: My mother always warned me to avoid the fishing line the people leave behind.
Ugly: So did mine. She used to tell me when we were out swimming. There...just one more loop around your leg.
Penny: Oh, thank you. I thought I was going to be left behind and this is no place to spend the winter alone. Where's your flock?
Ugly: I don't know. I'm lost. I was separated from my family and the more I look for them, the further it seems I wander away.
Penny: That's dreadful. When did you last see them?
Ugly: In the Spring.
Penny: In the Spring! You've been lost since Spring? You poor thing. You can't stay here for the winter, you'll freeze.
Ugly: No, I'll be alright.
Mother Swan: Penny.
Penny: Come with me! the others won't mind and then, next Spring we'll return together and I'll help you find your family.
Ugly: Oh, I couldn't possibly...
Penny: Of course you could. Come on, or we'll never catch up.
Ugly: Oh, Penny, I'd love to, I'd really love to, but I can't...I can't fly, at least not well enough to go with you.
Penny: It doesn't matter if you're not as strong as the others. I'll stay back with you and fly at your pace.
Ugly: It sounds wonderful, but I must keep going. I have to find my mother. I'm sure she can't be far away. Maybe when you come back in the Spring we can meet up again.
Penny: I'd like that. Are you sure you'll be alright?
Ugly: I'm sure.

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EXTRACT 3 - Cat

Cat: Hello, Ducky!
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Cat: Oh, they are too, too, too-too cruel. I think you look delicious.
Ugly: What did you say?
Cat: I said, poultry can be so malicious. Look at them guzzling that bread.
Ugly: It's supposed to be really nice. It's French.
Cat: Mmm. À L'orange. Do you mean to say that they didn't let you have any?
Ugly: Not a crumb.
Cat: Well, that settles it then. Lunch is in...on me.
Ugly: Do you mean it? You really are a friend.
Cat: Of course I am. Now, just follow me.
Ugly: I'd better tell my mother.
Cat: Oh no, you mustn't.
Ugly: I really think I should.

EXTRACT 4 - Cat

Cat: Quack! Quack!
Ugly: Oh, no! What are you doing here?
Cat: Thought I'd cooked my goose, eh? Is that any way to greet your long lost feather...father?
Lowbutt: Your father? Ugliness certainly runs in the family.
Ugly: He's not my father. Don't listen to him.
Cat: He is overcome. Son...hug your daddy. Your mother and I have been worried sick.
Ugly: Don't let him near me. Does he look like a duck?
Lowbutt: Now, now, dear. Folk who live in glass houses shouldn't call the kettle black...or something like that.
Ugly: He's a cat.
Cat: Ah, ha, ha, ha, children will have their fun. I'm sorry if he has caused you any inconvenience and I'm most grateful that you've...kept him in one piece. Come along, Ducky, thank the nice poultry for looking after you.
Ugly: He's a cat, I tell you. A sly, treacherous, double-crossing...
Cat: ...hungry...
Ugly: ...no good, conniving tom cat.
Queenie: It's no good, the line's engaged.
Cat: Well, hello!
Queenie: Mercy – another duck. What's the matter? Haven't you got a pond to go to?
Cat: Meeoow!
Lowbutt: Shouldn't you be getting back? You said his mother was sick with worry.
Cat: Meeoow! Meeoow!

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EXTRACT 5 - Drake

- Ida: Drake! Drake! It's no good paddling away. I've seen you...and it doesn't do for a duck to look sheepish, it confuses the other animals.
- Drake: How's it going Ida? You still sitting? I dunno, it's alright for some.
- Ida: Well, if you like the sound of it so much, why don't you take a turn on the nest?...and wipe your webs! I just did the floor this morning.
- Drake: Oh, Ida, I'd love to have a crack at sitting on the eggs for a bit, but you look so comfortable up there, it seems a shame to disturb you.
- Ida: Huh!...and what about the extension you promised to build on the nest? It's going to be very cramped when the little ones arrive – especially with that one big egg in the clutch. Goodness knows what size that chick is going to be.
- Drake: You know, I reckon that might be a turkey's egg.
- Ida: Oh, Drake!
- Drake: I had the same problem with my ex.
- Ida: Huh, here we go.
- Drake: We had a whole pack of troubles with the young ones I can tell you. They're afraid of the water. She had me running up and down the bank shouting "Bernard Matthews" and they still wouldn't go in!
- Ida: Drake, how would a turkey egg get to be in my nest? Must be your side of the family.
- Drake: We'll just have to wait and see who he takes after, won't we, dear?
- Ida: Yes, dear.
- Drake: Anyway, must fly. I promised Rooster that I'd help him count his chickens..Shall I see you back here?
- Ida: Well, where else do you suppose I'm going to be?

EXTRACT 6 - Greylag

- Greylag: Now where have they got to? Shabby Flock. I do wish they would keep up. No discipline, that's the trouble with the goslings of today.
- Dot: They're probably tired, dear. We have been marching for an awfully long time.
- Greylag: Popycock. Would you prefer that we fly? With a shoot on the marsh? I think not, my sweet. This way.
- Ugly: Excuse me. I wonder if you could help.
- Greylag: Keep walking, dear. Eyes front. UFO at four o'clock.
- Ugly: You see I'm lost.
- Greylag: No excuse for bad navigation. A bird who gets off his flight path doesn't deserve his wings. That's what I always say, isn't it, dear?
- Dot: Always, dear.
- Ugly: But I can't even fly yet. I've got lost on foot.
- Greylag: Bah! Infantry, eh? Messy business.
- Dot: He's only a youngster. Maybe we should direct him. Give him his marching orders.
- Greylag: Bah! Very well. We're geese. Migrants, you know. Birds of passage. Run a tight fleet. Wouldn't do for us to lose our way, what?
- Dot: Well, dear, there was that one time when we ended up in the Wayward Islands.
- Greylag: Windward, dear, Windward. And that was a different matter entirely. Weak thermals, strong headwinds, blown off course.
- Dot: So, how come my sister managed to get to Slimbridge?
- Greylag: Yes, yes, yes, quite.
- Dot: Where were you trying to get to?
- Ugly: Back to my mother, on the lake. I think it must be in that direction. I saw some ducks flying over a few minutes ago.
- Greylag: Well, if you did, it was probably their last flying mission, what?
- Ugly: What do you mean?
- Greylag: Haven't you heard the ground to air? Bang, bang, pop, pop, what? Gun dogs. They must be starting the shoot again. Time for manoeuvres. I had hoped it wouldn't come to this, but I have no option. Alright, at ease. Company, fall in! We are about to face our most perilous mission to date. I need hardly tell you of the risks involved or of the ultimate price that we may have to pay. As we fly on to glory, I want you to know how very proud I am of this squadron. Keep a stiff upper beak, men and remember our motto, "*Semper victorium non pate de fois gras*".

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EXTRACT 7 - Bullfrog

Bullfrog: Ribbit, ribbit, whoops, pardon me.

Ugly: Leave me alone.

Bullfrog: Sorry, Feathers, I didn't mean to make you jump. Not that there's anything wrong with jumping, of course – it sort of runs in the family, or jumps in the family depending on which way you...

Ugly: What do you want?

Bullfrog: Want?

Ugly: Well, go on, you might as well get it off your chest – tell me how ugly I am.

Bullfrog: Ugly?

Ugly: There. I hope you feel better now.

Bullfrog: Woa, woa, woa. Hang on a minute. Do you mind if I hop off and come back on again? --- I mean, have a word with yourself, Feathers. Who am I to call you ugly? Look at me... there, see. I mean, join the dots. If we're talking 'ugly', they don't come much more aesthetically challenged than me. I know what your trouble is – you've been preening yourself too much.

Ugly: What do you mean?

Bullfrog: You've got down in the mouth. Woo, ha, ha, ha. --- Nothing, I'm getting nothing.

Ugly: I want to be left on my own.

Bullfrog: Now that's just downright anti-social. Hang on. (*clears his throat*) I've got a human in my throat. Woo, ha, ha, ha, haaa... Oh well, I know how you feel, but you mustn't let it depress you. I started out as a blob of jelly and it's been downhill ever since. I say to myself, "I'm just a handsome prince in frog's clothing and one day someone's going to come along and kiss me and release my inner beauty". --- And then I say to myself, "Nah, get real, who wants to snog a frog?". You know what our trouble is?

Ugly: No.

Bullfrog: Our 'image' isn't vogue. That's all. It's a question of taste. But you mark my words, one day 'ugly' will be 'in'.

EXTRACT 8 - Turkey

Drake: Oi! Turkey. You been messing around with my missus?

Turkey: What do you mean? I look nothing like him. I'm a self-basting, self-boasting, fine, prime specimen with wonderful spurs. As for that, well, I wouldn't use it to stuff a duvet with.

Ida: Talking of stuffing, I don't suppose you will be quite so full of yourself come Christmas.

Turkey: Ooh, I hate that word.

Maureen: You have to try this French bread. It's much better than the usual stuff – even the crusts are nice.

Drake: I'll give it a dabble.

Turkey: I'm sure I have room for a little gobble-gobble.

Henrietta: I ought to try some, my ancestors were French, you know – from the Twelve Days of Christmas.

Turkey: Stop saying that word.

Henrietta: What? French?

Drake: No. Christmas.

Turkey: Ooh, not again.

EXTRACT 9 - Turkey

Turkey: Oh yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.

ALL: What?

Turkey: I made it through Christmas!!

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EXTRACT 10 - Ida and Maureen

Maureen: Morning, Ida.

Ida: Morning, Maureen.

Maureen: How is the mother-to-be?

Ida: She'd be better is the father-who-was was better at being the father-who-is. I sometimes think I'd have been better off pairing with a decoy duck.

Maureen: I'm sure Drake will make a marvellous dad when the family arrives.

Ida: Not him. Duck by name and duck by nature – ducking out of his responsibilities. Ooh! I say if bums were meant for sitting on eggs all day, then they should have been designed with whopping great dimples in them.

Maureen: Ooh, Ida, the very thought. How much longer do you have to go?

Ida: Well, by my reckoning they should be out by now. I went to all of my ante-natal hatching classes, run by that self-satisfied Stork and she said about a fortnight, but two weeks is up.

Maureen: Oh, well, the best things come to those who wait.

Ida: I don't know. Why do we put ourselves through it? Every spring it's exactly the same.

Maureen: But just think of the rewards – all those lovely little ducklings.

Ida: All those beaks to feed.

Maureen: Waking you up at all hours.

Ida: Getting into deep water.

Maureen: Attracting unwanted admirers...

BOTH: ...like the Cat. Why do we put ourselves through it?

EXTRACT 11 - Ida

Ida: Honey?...Oh, no...My baby! No, not like this. Not after all this time. You poor little thing. What was it all for? What was the point of your little life? It can't end like this. It can't...

Father Swan: Nor will it, my dear.

Ida: But he's dead. My baby is dead. It's all my fault. He wandered away from the nest last spring. I should have gone after him, but I had his brothers and sisters to rear. I couldn't just leave them. And now, now I'm too late.

Mother Swan: Cry. Cry, my dear. For the warmth of a mother's tears can thaw the stoniest frost.

Ida: Oh, if only I could believe that.

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EXTRACT 12 - Dot

Dot: He's only a youngster. Maybe we should direct him. Give him his marching orders.

Greylag: Bah! Very well. We're geese. Migrants, you know. Birds of passage. Run a tight fleet. Wouldn't do for us to lose our way, what?

Dot: Well, dear, there was that one time when we ended up in the Wayward Islands.

Greylag: Windward, dear, Windward. And that was a different matter entirely. Weak thermals, strong headwinds, blown off course.

Dot: So, how come my sister managed to get to Slimbridge?

Greylag: Yes, yes, yes, quite.

Dot: Where were you trying to get to?

Ugly: Back to my mother, on the lake. I think it must be in that direction. I saw some ducks flying over a few minutes ago.

Greylag: Well, if you did, it was probably their last flying mission, what?

Ugly: What do you mean?

Greylag: Haven't you heard the ground to air? Bang, bang, pop, pop, what?

Ugly: No.

Dot: There's a shoot on the marsh, dear. It's very dangerous.

Ugly: What's a shoot?

Dot: Well, it's a people sport. One group of men move through the marsh scaring ducks into the air, while a second group, with guns, shoot them back out of the air again.

Ugly: The Cat warned me about people.

Greylag: The Cat?

Ugly: Yes, you see I went off with this Cat.

Greylag: Ho, his parents probably wanted to get rid of the ugly blighter.

Dot: Didn't your mother tell you how dangerous a cat is?

Ugly: Well, yes, she did, but...

Greylag: The enemy. Nasty piece of work. Pull your wishbone soon as look at you.

Ugly: But the Cat said he was my friend.

Dot: You don't want friends like that, dear. Your mother was right to warn you.

EXTRACT 13 - Dot

Dot: Good afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen. My name is Dot. I am your Senior Flight Attendant and, on behalf of Captain Greylag, I would like to welcome you to this afternoon's flight from Boggy Marshland to some far-flung farm. We will be cruising at an altitude of several feet and flying in a rather attractive 'V' formation. In the unlikely event of an emergency landing, we ask that you observe the safety procedures that we've been through so many, many times before. We hope you have a pleasant journey and thank you for choosing Goose Air – "The Fluffy Skies".

EXTRACT 14 - Grace

Grace: Congratulations, Ida, they're delightful.

Ida: Thank you, your Grace.

Grace: Tell me, that big chappie at the back, whatever happened there? He's not exactly your classic Beatrix Potter is he?

Ida: I wish the others wouldn't pick on him so. He'll turn out alright as he gets older.

Grace: Well, the others are a triumph, my dear. I only wish I could have produced a brood of my own this year.

Ida: I was so sorry to hear about that, your Grace, you must miss him terribly.

Grace: He was a fine duck, the mandarin, but, alas, he became crispy and aromatic before his time. Still, life goes on. Now, where has Maureen got to with that French bread?

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EXTRACT 15 - Lowbutt and Queenie

- Queenie: What's that? There's a dirty footprint on the shagpile.
- Lowbutt: It's always in a place where it shows. Some people are so thoughtless – why can't they step on the patterned bit like civilised folk?
- Queenie: Never mind where they stepped, my point is that someone has stepped at all...in our house.
- Lowbutt: And look, there, whoever it was burst one of the pillows.
- Ugly: I'm...I'm not a burst pillow.
- Lowbutt: Oh, my word, it speaks.
- Queenie: What are you, animal, vegetable or mineral?
- Ugly: Duckable...I mean duck, duck, I'm a duckling.
- Lowbutt: Are you sure? Was your mother a duck?
- Ugly: Yes.
- Lowbutt: Well, she must have been sick as a parrot when she saw you!
- Queenie: A-ha-ha-ha oh, Lowbutt, that's terribly good.
- Lowbutt: Thank you, dear. I don't believe I've ever seen such an ugly duckling.
- Queenie: What are you doing in our house?
- Ugly: I was sheltering from the cold. I saw the door was left open and didn't think it would hurt to step inside.
- Queenie: Not hurt, not hurt? The marks you've left on the carpet will drive the old woman round the Berber twist.
- Lowbutt: Steady, Queenie, don't upset yourself. He's obviously going through the moult. Hormones running amok, irrational behaviour, mood swings.
- Ugly: What of it?
- Lowbutt: I don't think I like your tone, young poultry-my-lad. And mind that! You'll be marking the antimacassar next!
- Ugly: What's an antimacassar?
- Queenie: I don't know, but it obviously works – there hasn't been a macassar in the house for as long as I can remember.
- Lowbutt: A-ha-ha-ha, oh, Queenie, that's awfully good, you are a funny cat.
- Queenie: Thank you, dear.
- Ugly: Cat? Are...are you a cat?
- Queenie: Of course I'm a cat.
- Ugly: So...so are you going to eat me?
- Queenie: Don't be disgusting. The very thought! I've never been into the bird butchering business. Couldn't be doing with all those feathers – it's like eating a meal and flossing your teeth at the same time. No, the old woman poaches me a fresh fish.
- Ugly: But the old woman is a person, doesn't she hurt you? And you, you're a chicken, why is she keeping you shut inside? Don't you prefer it out in the yard?
- Lowbutt: You must be crazy. All that scratching and scraping. I live on the settee, thank you very much. Queenie and I are domesticated, you see.

EXTRACT 16 - All Other Male and Female Adult Speaking Roles

- TV Reporter: ...six months on and still no sighting of the duckling, who, as you will remember from the photograph released at the time, has what can best be described as a rather unforgettable appearance. Now, our experts believe that he may already have undergone certain changes and they have put together this photofit of what they believe he might look like today. Some viewers may find this image disturbing. Yes, once again, viewers, we are appealing to you if you have any information. The number is coming up on your screen.

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EXTRACT 17 - Billy, Beaky, Downy and Fluff (young)

Maureen: Alright. Auntie Maur-Maur is off now. I'll see you later.
Beaky: Auntie Maur-Maur? What a weird name.
Fluff: What a big world it is.
Billy: Yeah, far out.
Downy: I was getting scrambled inside that egg.
Ida: Don't go thinking that this is the whole world! It stretches far beyond the other side of the lake - right into the vicarage - though I've never been that far myself.
Beaky: Wicked! Let's explore.
Ida: Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, There are one or two nest rules before you paddle off. Number One - no wet webs in the nest; Number Two- you must feather your own nest every morning; Number Three - no quacking after sunset; Number Four - no plankton between meals; Number Fi...wait a minute, you're not all here.
Fluff: Hey guys, there's going to be another member of the gang.
Ida: Oh, quack! And it's the big one.
Billy: Look at the shell on that!
Fluff: Egg-cellent!
Beaky: How come he got such a big egg?
Billy: Yeah, we all got cramped into a regular shell, but that one got a queen-sized ostrich job.
Downy: It's not fair, Mama.
Beaky: No, Mama, it's not fair.

EXTRACT 18 - Billy, Beaky, Downy and Fluff (older)

Drake: And what sort of time do you call this?
Fluff: We sort of lost track of the time.
Beaky: The owl didn't give a hoot.
Drake: Well, your father does.
Downy: Mum would've let us stay out.
Drake: Mum's not here - you're grounded.
Billy: Oh, guano!
Drake: And where did you pick up language like that? I told you not to hang around with that kingfisher... he's so blue.
Billy: Well, you say it.
Drake: That's different. I say it in a mature, adult and grown up way.
Billy: Still means the same thing.
Fluff: When's Mum coming back?
Drake: I dunno, honey. And have you all preened your feathers today?
Beaky: We haven't got onto that yet.
Drake: What do you mean you haven't got onto it yet? What do they teach you these days? You know what happens to ducks that don't preen? They sink.
Fluff: But she is coming back?
Drake: I dunno, honey. --- And did you eat the pondweed I packed for you?
Downy: The moorhens don't have pondweed.
Drake: No, the moorhens wouldn't.
Fluff: Will she find Ugly?
Drake: I dunno, honey. I...I dunno. Now, come along gang, it's time to roost. Make sure you brush your beaks and don't take all the water, my bill's big enough!