


By the author of *The Gruffalo*  
Julia Donaldson

Illustrated by  
Lydia Monks

# What the Ladybird Heard





Two crafty robbers, one tiny ladybird,  
and a whole farmyard of fun!

Hefty Hugh and Lanky Len have a cunning plan  
to steal the farmer's fine prize cow.  
But they reckon without the tiniest, quietest  
creature of all: she has a plan of her own.

From the bestselling creators of  
*Sharing a Shell* and  
*The Princess and the Wizard*.

"Bursting with colour and verve"  
*Daily Telegraph*

"A terrific and witty adventure"  
*Guardian*







For New End Primary School ~ JD  
For Noah and Eva ~ LM



First published 2009 by Macmillan Children's Books  
This revised edition published 2009 by Macmillan Children's Books  
a division of Macmillan Publishers Limited  
20 New Wharf Road, London N1 9NN  
Basingstoke and Oxford  
Associated companies throughout the world  
[www.pamcmillan.com](http://www.pamcmillan.com)

ISBN 978-0-130-51185-2  
Text copyright © Julia Donaldson 2009  
Illustrations copyright © Lydia Monks 2009

The right of Julia Donaldson and Lydia Monks to be identified  
as the author and illustrator of this work has been asserted by them  
in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system,  
or transmitted in any form, or by any means, (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise)  
without the prior written permission of the publisher. Any person who does any unauthorised act in relation  
to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

1 5 5 7 9 6 4 2

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed in China

Julia Donaldson

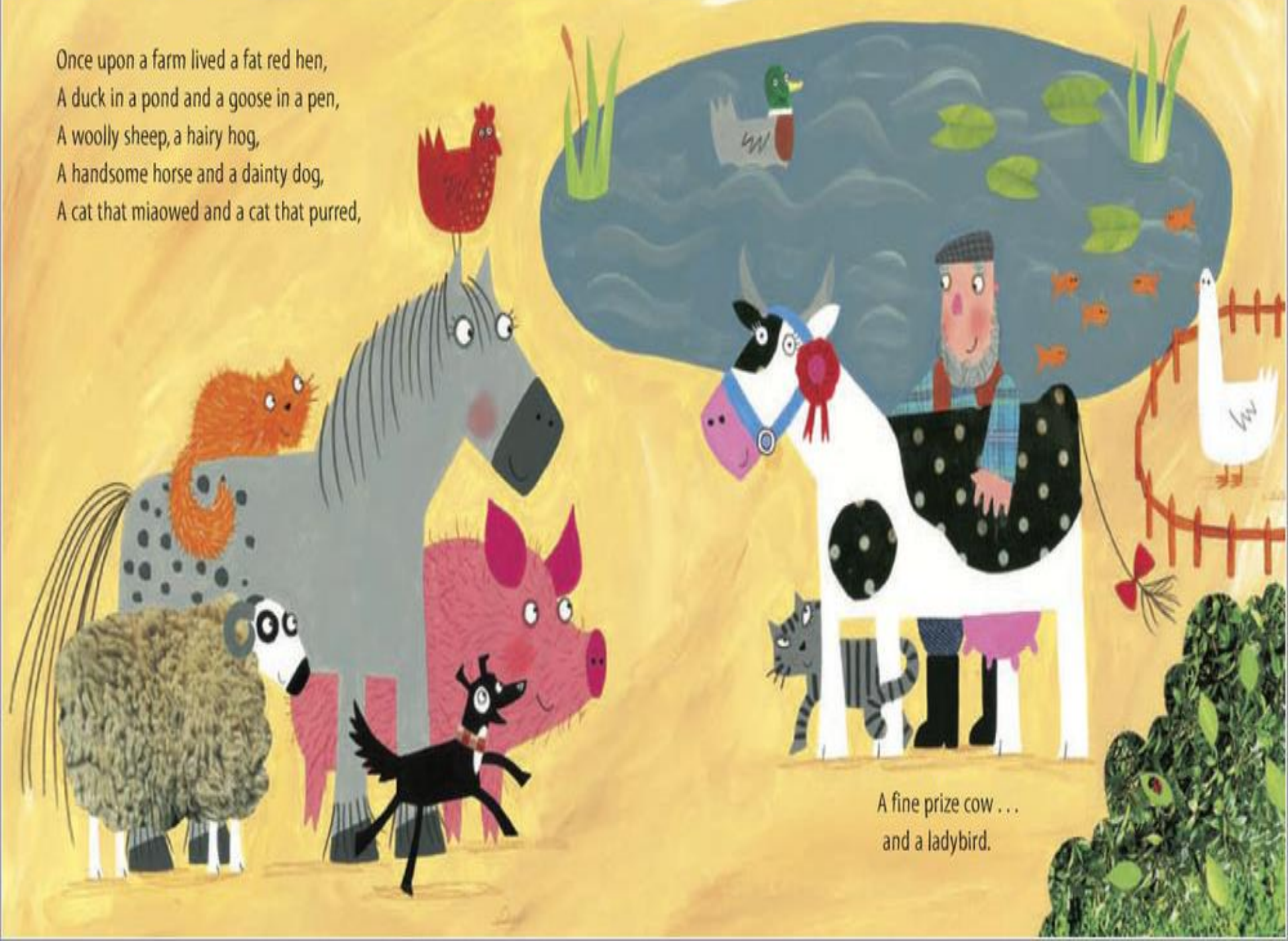
# What the Ladybird Heard

Illustrated by  
Lydia Monks

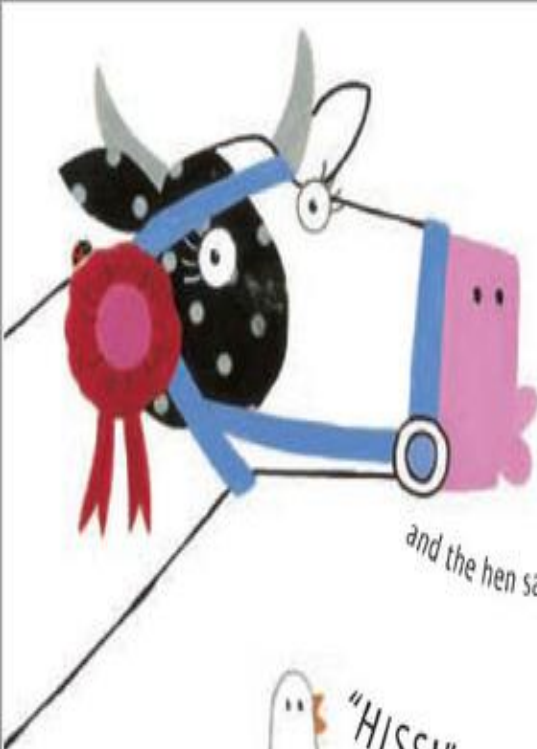
Macmillan Children's Books



Once upon a farm lived a fat red hen,  
A duck in a pond and a goose in a pen,  
A woolly sheep, a hairy hog,  
A handsome horse and a dainty dog,  
A cat that miaowed and a cat that purred,



A fine prize cow . . .  
and a ladybird.



And the cow said, "MOO!"



"NEIGH!" said the horse.



"OINK!" said the hog.

and the hen said, "CLUCK!"



"HISS!" said the goose



"BAA!" said the sheep



and "WOOF!" said the dog



and "QUACK!" said the duck.




One cat miaowed while the other one purred ...





And the ladybird said never a word.



But the ladybird saw,  
And the ladybird heard ...

She saw two men in a big black van,  
With a map and a key and a cunning plan.  
And she heard them whisper, "This is how  
We're going to steal the fine prize cow:



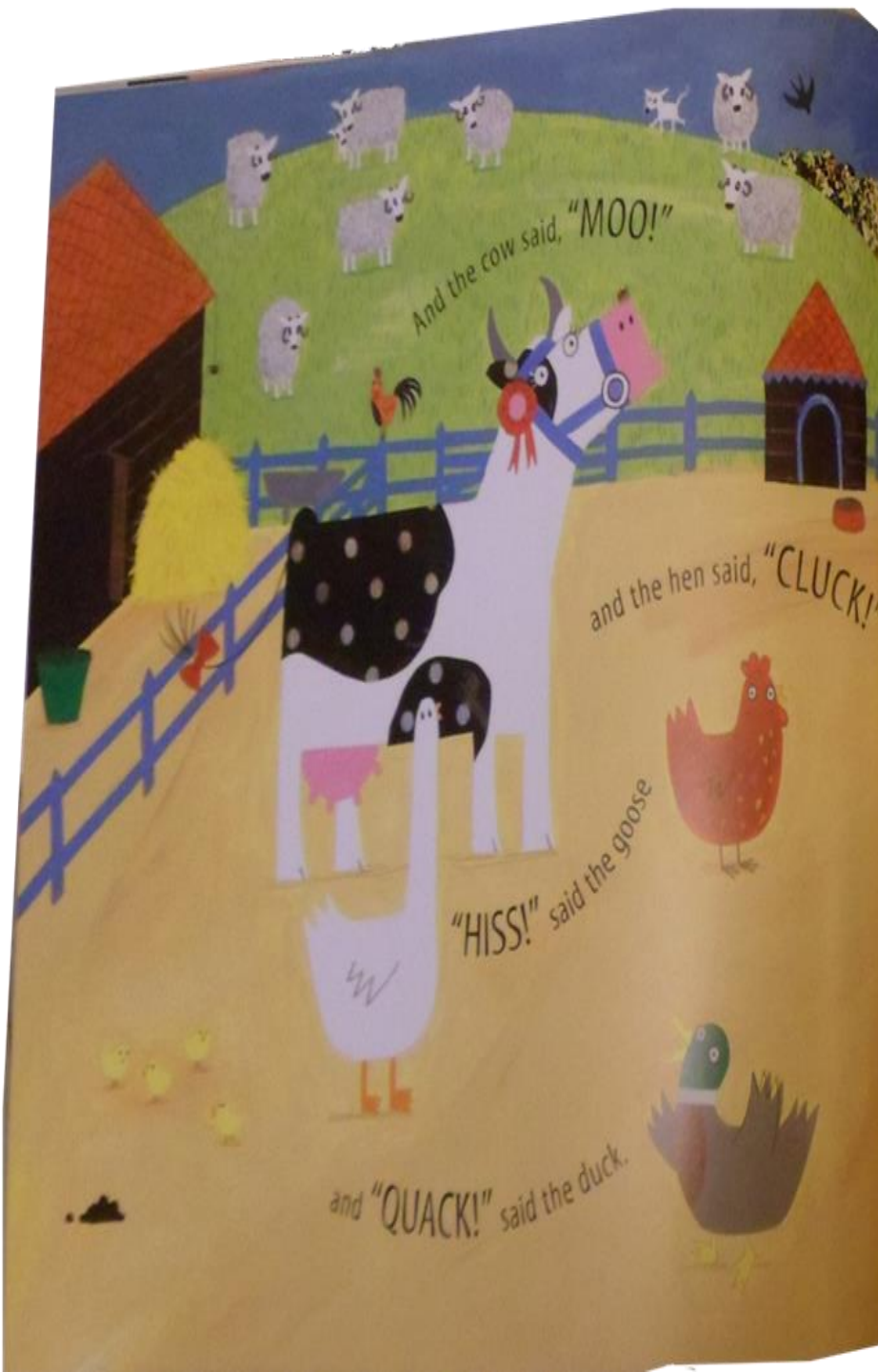
"Open the gate at dead of night.  
Pass the horse and then turn right.  
Round the duck pond, past the hog  
(Be careful not to wake the dog).  
Left past the sheep, then straight ahead  
And in through the door of the prize cow's shed!"



And the little spotty ladybird  
(Who never before had said a word)  
Told the animals, "This is how  
Two thieves are planning to steal the cow:  
They'll open the gate at dead of night.  
Pass the horse and then turn right.

Round the duck pond, past the hog  
(Being careful not to wake the dog).  
Left past the sheep, then straight ahead  
And in through the door of the prize cow's shed!"



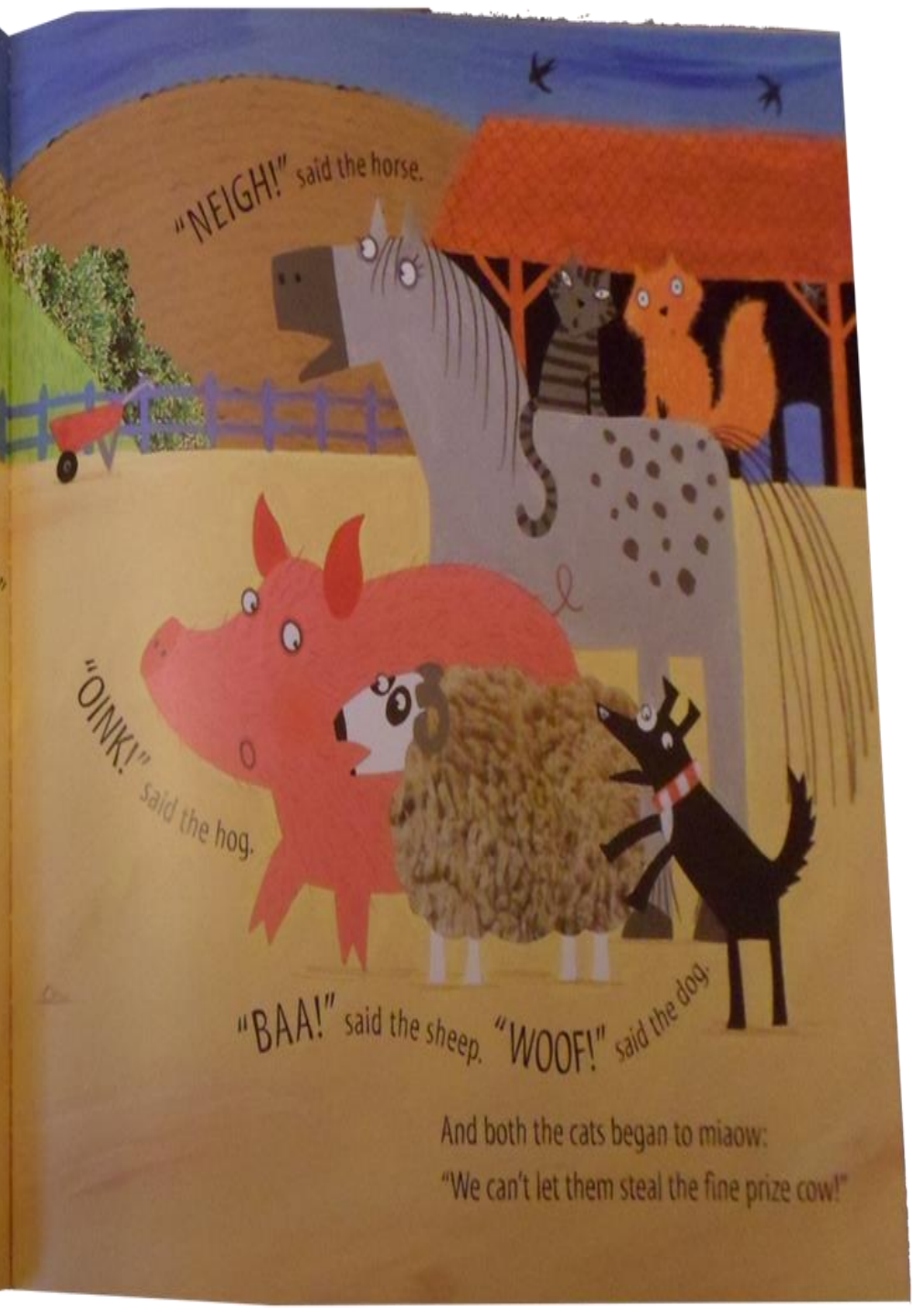


And the cow said, "MOO!"

and the hen said, "CLUCK!"

"HISS!" said the goose

and "QUACK!" said the duck.



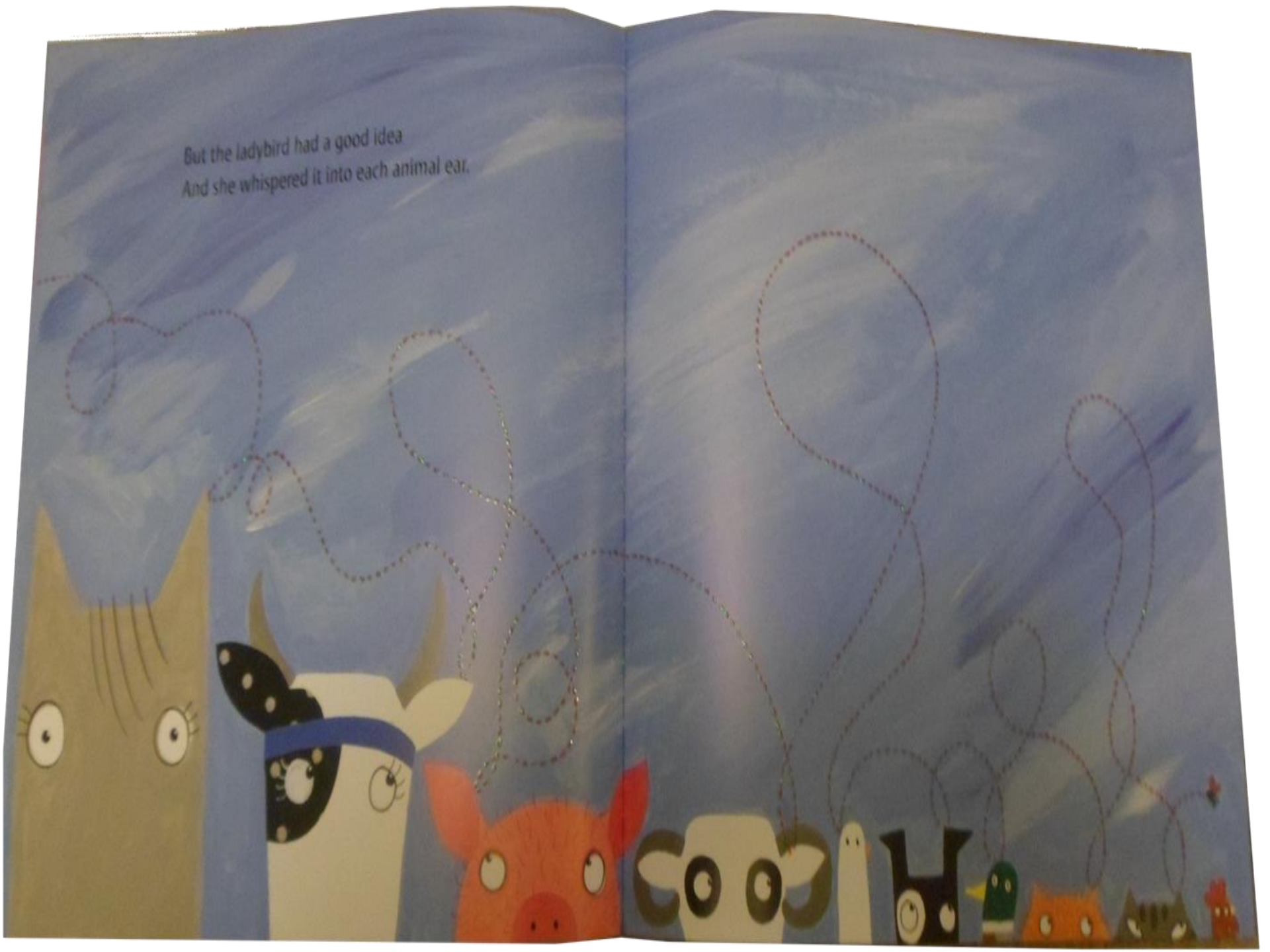
"NEIGH!" said the horse.

"OINK!" said the hog.

"BAA!" said the sheep. "WOOF!" said the dog.

And both the cats began to miaow:  
"We can't let them steal the fine prize cow!"

But the ladybird had a good idea  
And she whispered it into each animal ear.



At dead of night the two bad men  
(Hefty Hugh and Lanky Len)  
Opened the gate while the farmer slept  
And tiptoe into the farm they crept.



Then the goose said, "NEIGH!" with all her might.  
And Len said, "That's the horse – turn right."



NEIGH!



And the dainty dog began to QUACK.  
"The duck!" said Hugh.  
"We're right on track."



"OINK," said the cats.  
"There goes the hog!  
Be careful not to wake the dog."

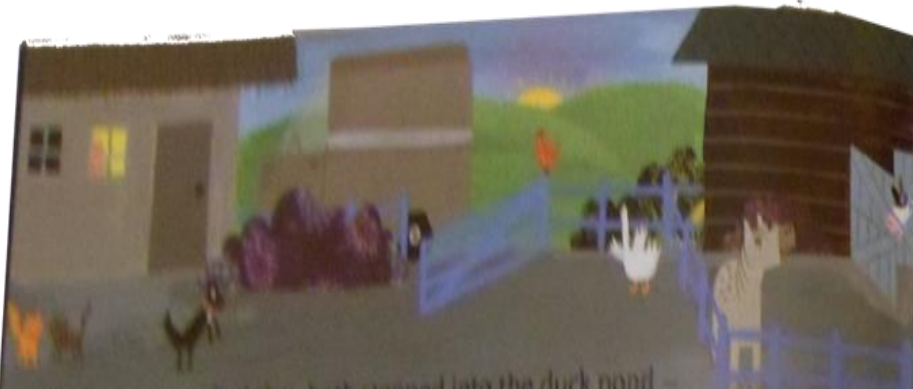


"BAA BAA BAA," said the fat red hen.  
"The sheep! We're nearly there," said Len.



Then the duck on the pond said, "MOO MOO MOO!"  
"Two more steps to go!" said Hugh.



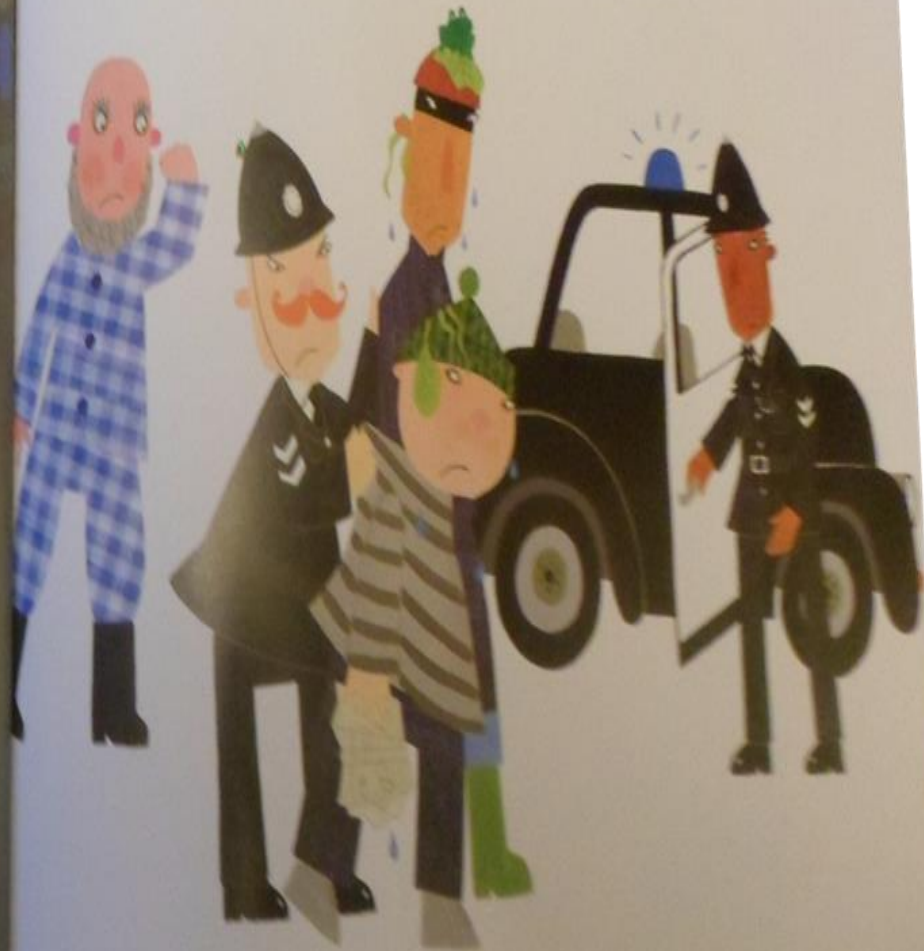


And they both stepped into the duck pond –

**SPLASH!**



And the farmer woke and said, "Golly gosh!"  
And he called the cops, and they came – NEE NAH!  
And they threw the thieves in their panda car.



Then the cow said, "MOO!"



and the hen said, "CLUCK!"



"GEESE!" said the goose



and "QUACK!" said the duck.



"NEIGH!" said the horse.



"OINK!" said the pig.



"BAA!" said the sheep.



"WOOF!" said the dog.



And the farmer cheered, and both cats purred.



But the ladybird  
said never a word.









By the author of *The Gruffalo*  
**Julia Donaldson**

Illustrated by  
**Lydia Monks**

The **W**hat  
the  
**L**adybird  
**H**eard  
**S**ong



[What the Ladybird Heard](#)