

Digiduck's BIG Decision



Written by **Lindsay Buck**, *Childnet International*
Illustrated by **Ciara Flood**

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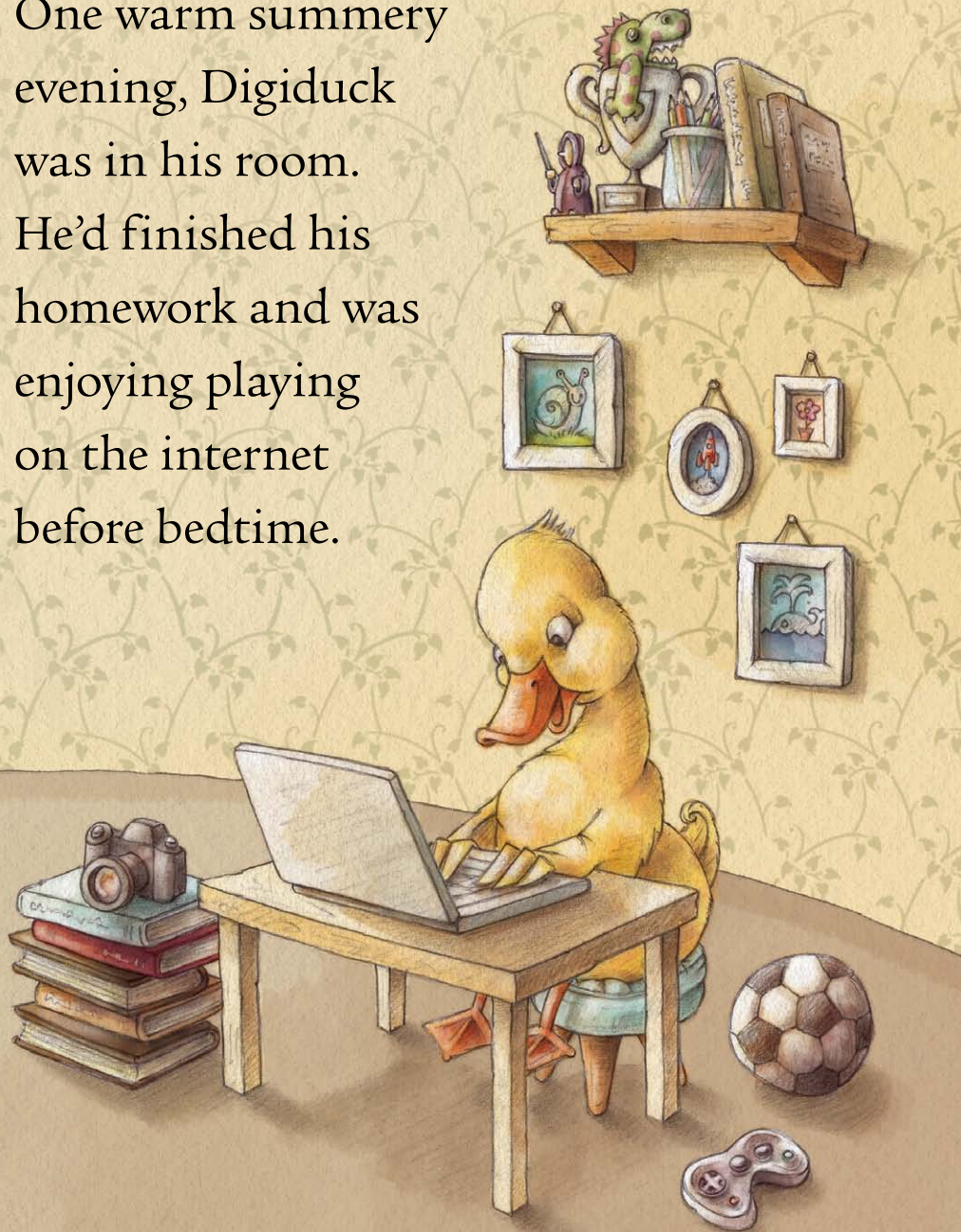
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One warm summery evening, Digiduck was in his room. He'd finished his homework and was enjoying playing on the internet before bedtime.



Family Farmyard was his favourite website. He could play games and chat to his friends. Great fun!



Many animals liked to play at the Farmyard, including Digiduck's best friends from school.

Digiduck's screen went ping and he saw a new message from a friend.

'How exciting!' he thought.

He opened it and giggled.



Someone had made a picture of Proud.pig looking very silly indeed.

'That is so funny!' chuckled Digiduck.

'I must show my friends.'



Before he could send the photo to everyone, Mummy Duck called up the stairs, 'Bedtime darling duck! Wash your feathers, hop into bed and I'll be up as quick as a flap to tuck you in.'

Digiduck felt sleepy so didn't argue,
he didn't want to be tired for
Proud.pig's party tomorrow. 'I'll send
the photo in the morning,' he decided.
Soon enough he was sound asleep.

The sky grew dark and the
stars were shining brightly.
All that could be heard
were the soothing snores
of Mr and Mrs Duck.

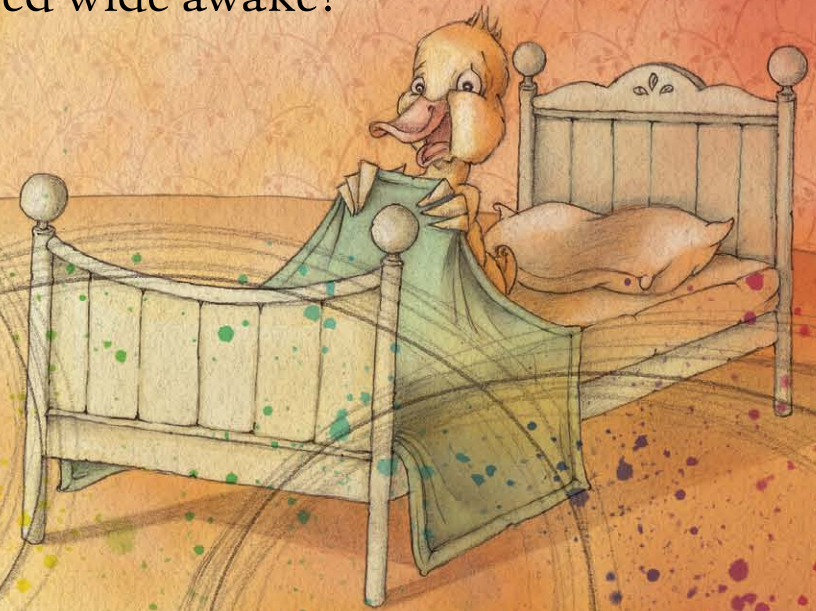


All of a sudden,
a mysterious glow
filled the room...

A dazzling flash
and a loud

wheeee

soon had Digiduck sitting up in
bed wide awake!



He watched in amazement as a large
ball of feathers hurtled out of the
screen and rolled across the floor.

Digiduck was looking at an old owl, grey from tip to tail. 'Wise_Owl,' said the owl, peering over his spectacles and holding out a wing to shake.



'Ooof! I always have trouble with the landing,' muttered the tangle of feathers as it straightened itself up and dusted itself down.



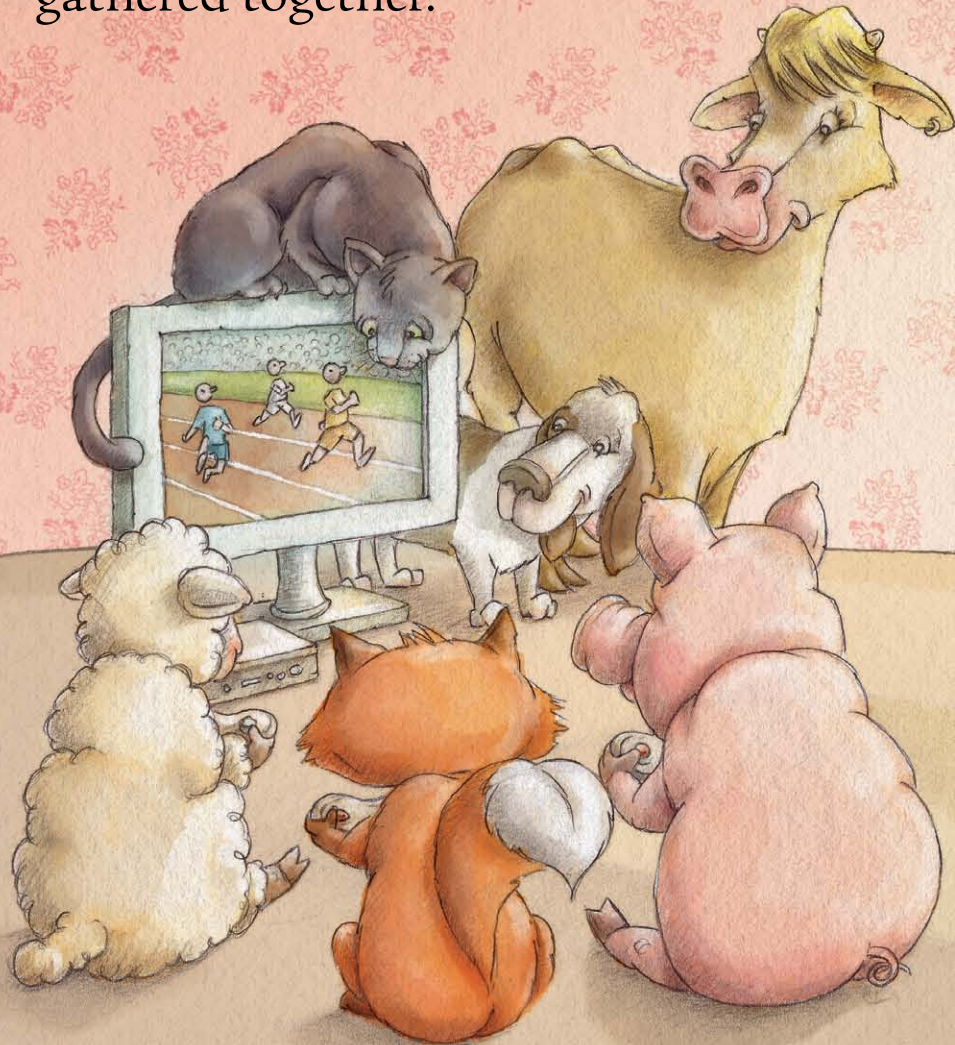
'I know you!' exclaimed Digiduck.
'You're in charge of the Farmyard
website.' Wise_Owl smiled and said,
'I'm here for a very important matter.
You're thinking of sending that photo,
so I'm going to show you what might
happen if you do.'

There was no time to ask what on
earth Wise_Owl was talking about!



He swiftly scooped Digiduck
up and they flew out into the night,
off through time, to the future...

After a bumpy flight they landed outside Shy-Sheep's cottage. Digiduck peered inside and saw his best friends gathered together.



Cool.cow had brought a game that they all wanted to play.

‘Why am I not there?’ asked Digiduck, confused. ‘We always play together.’ ‘Unfortunately you haven’t been invited,’ replied Wise_Owl.

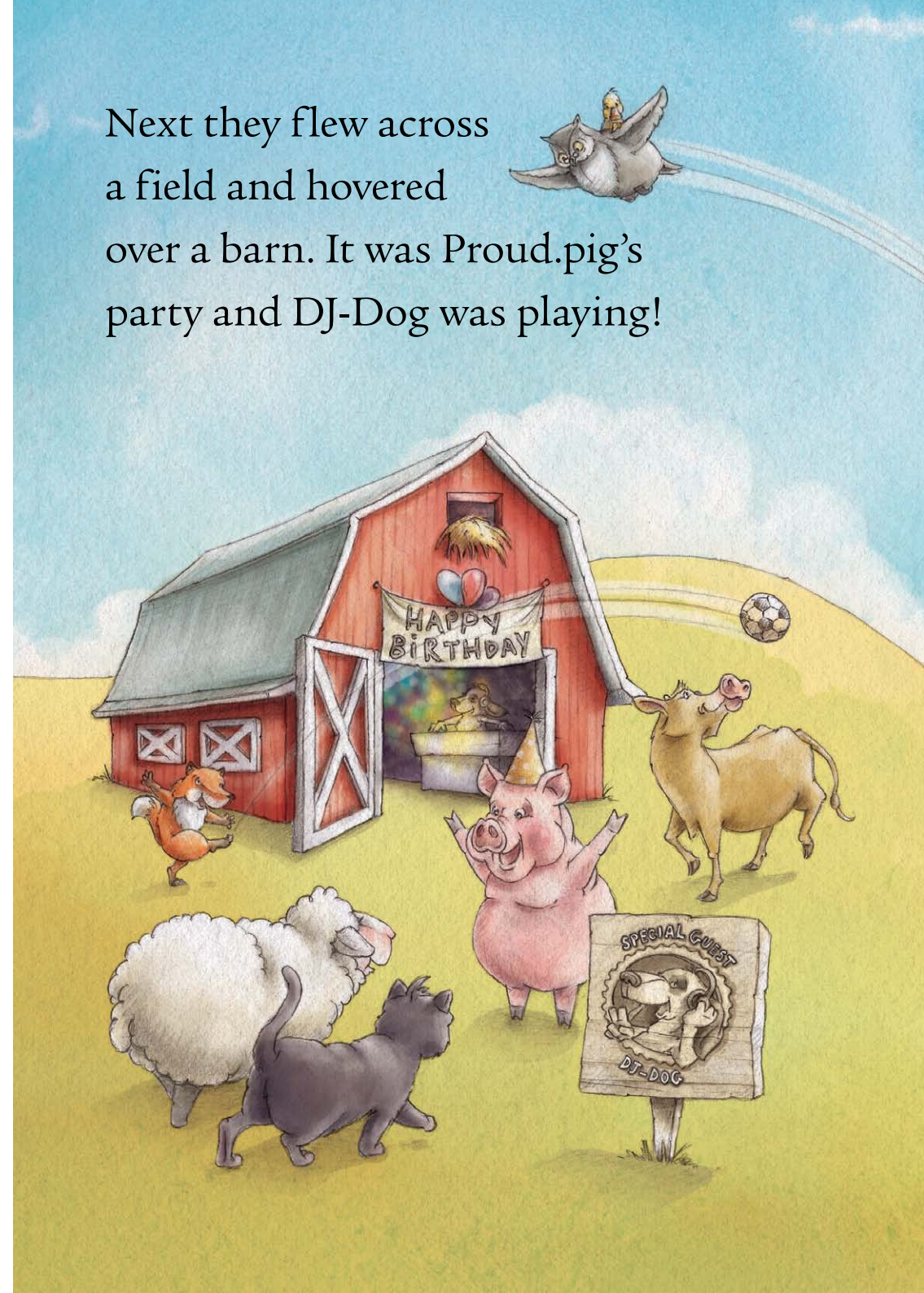


‘After you sent the photo, Shy-Sheep found Proud.pig crying in the playground. She was very sad to see Proud.pig so upset, especially as the picture had come from you Digiduck. You’re supposed to be friends.’

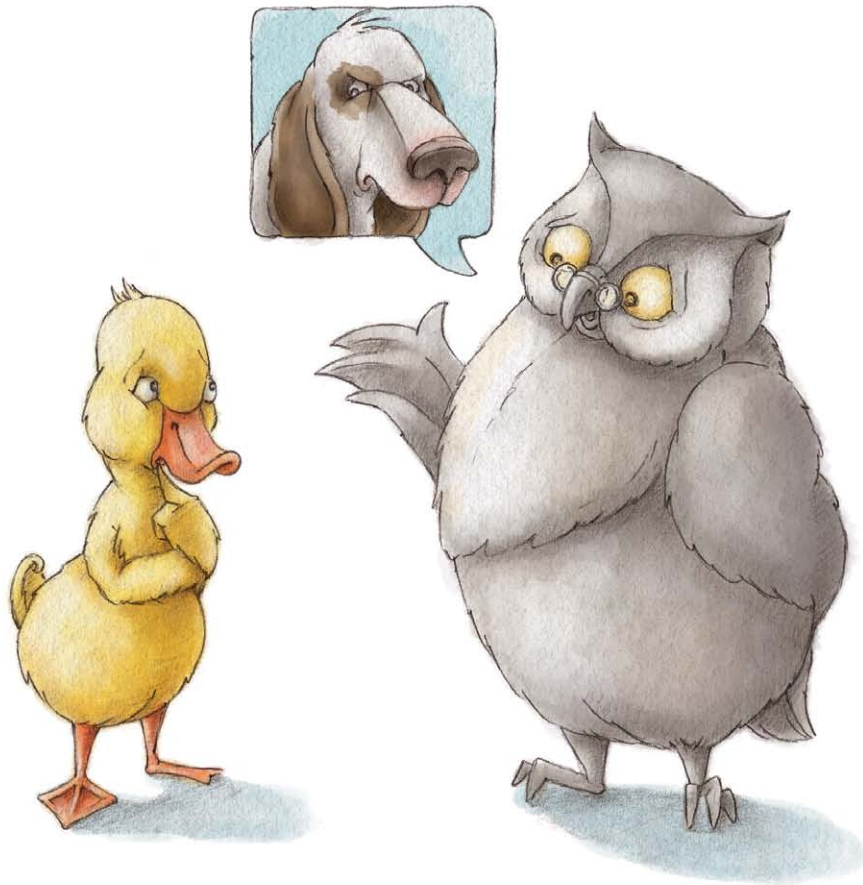


‘It was only a joke!’ said Digiduck in surprise. Wise_Owl picked him up and off they zoomed.

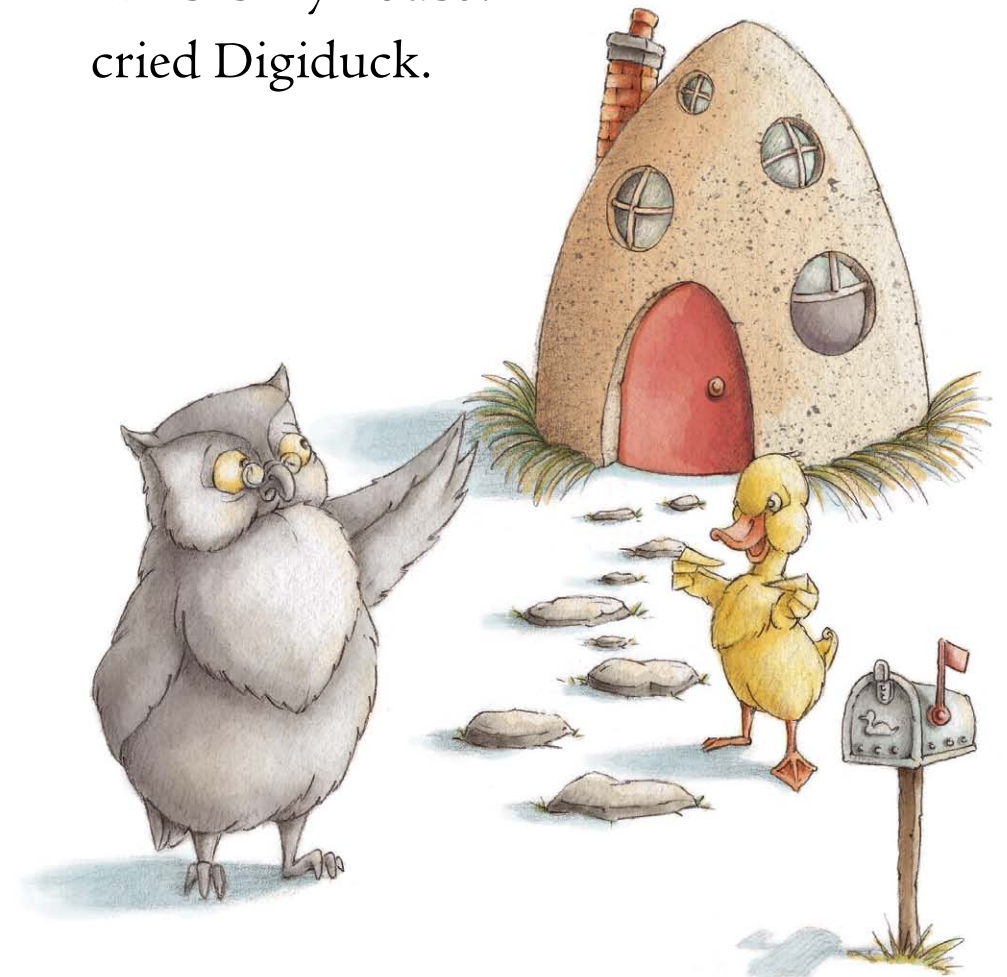
Next they flew across a field and hovered over a barn. It was Proud.pig’s party and DJ-Dog was playing!



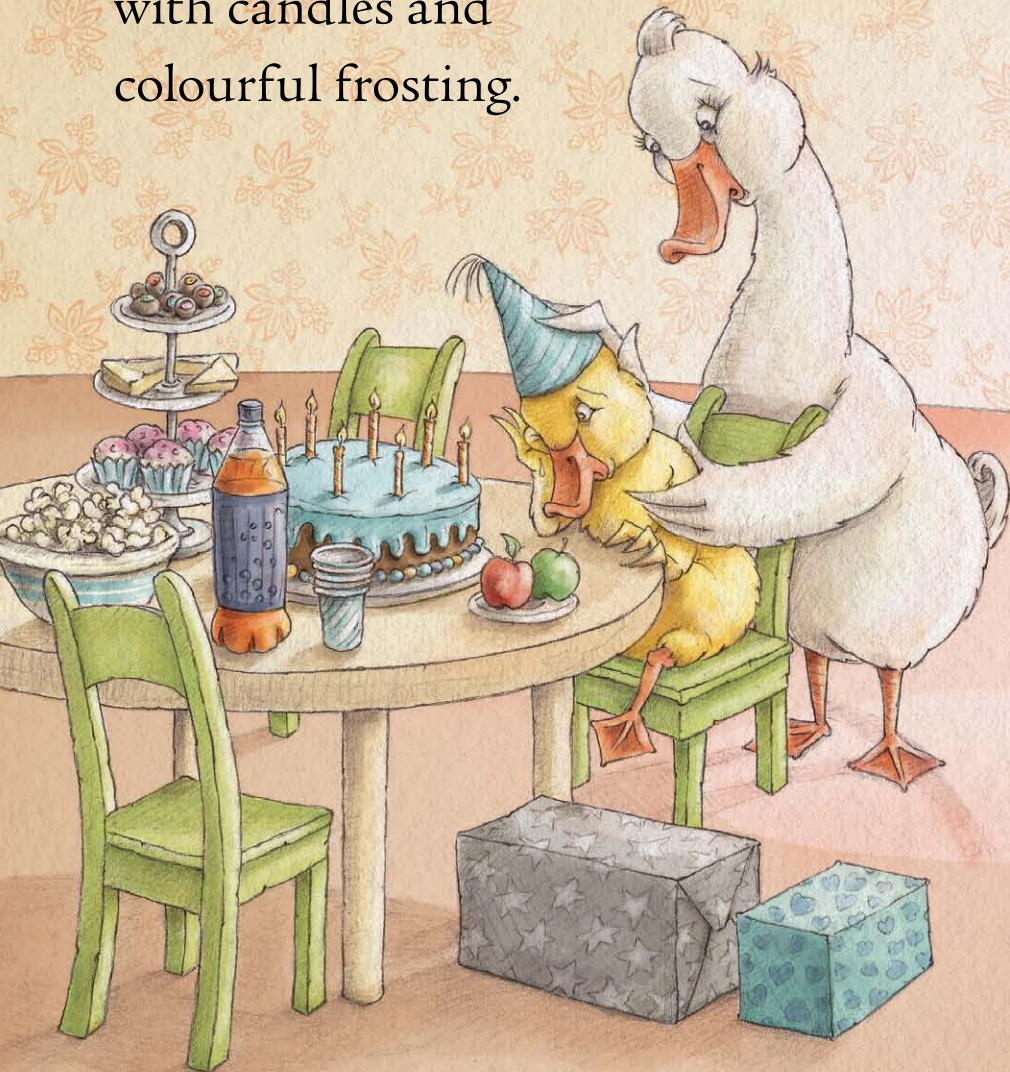
‘I’m not there either,’ noticed Digiduck.
‘I’m afraid Proud.pig changed his mind,’
said Wise_Owl. ‘Everyone at school was
calling him names after they saw his
photo and DJ-Dog was very cross that
you had sent it.’



‘Oh,’ mumbled Digiduck,
‘I was looking forward to that party.’
Wise_Owl nodded and off they sped.
The last stop looked very familiar.
‘This is my house!’
cried Digiduck.



Through the window, Digiduck saw himself sitting at the table. In front of him was a delicious cake with candles and colourful frosting.



However, all the other chairs were empty. 'It's my birthday, where are all my friends?' wept Digiduck, as tears rolled down his cheek.



Wise_Owl knew that Digiduck had seen enough. He wrapped his wings around him and off they whizzed.

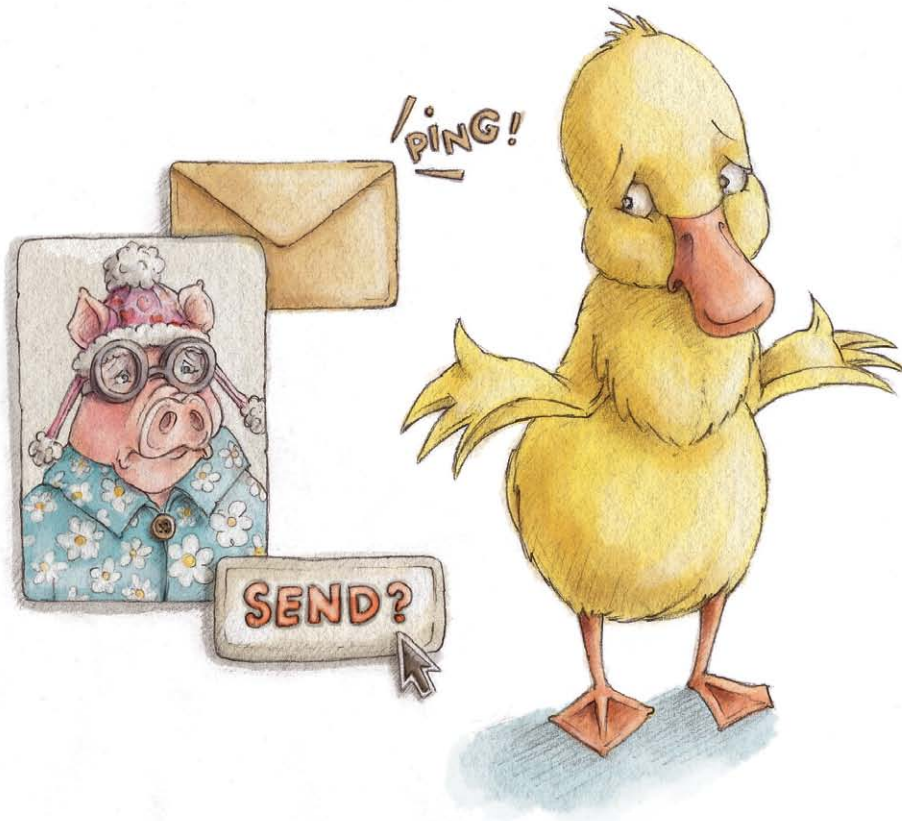


On the journey back through time, poor Digiduck was feeling sad and puzzled. He really needed some help, so Wise_Owl explained everything. 'It all started when you sent that photo to your friends. Everyone in school had seen it by lunchtime. Proud.pig was extremely upset.'

'And it didn't stop there,' continued Wise_Owl. 'People laughed at Proud.pig for a long time because his picture was on the internet. Your friends were very worried that you might make fun of them too.'



Digiduck suddenly understood that if he sent the photo, it could cause a terrible muddle. 'I didn't think anyone would mind, I just wanted to make my friends laugh. Sometimes we say and do silly things... but I never mean to be unkind,' he whispered.



Back in Digiduck's room, Wise_Owl drew the covers and comforted him softly, 'I know that, but sadly your friends didn't.'



‘Digiduck,’ he said gently, ‘you are a lovely duck and a great friend. The internet is a wonderful place to have fun, but you need to behave as you do in the real world. Say kind things to your friends and make sensible choices.’

And with that, Wise_Owl vanished. The sun rose in the sky and Digiduck woke up. ‘The photo!’ he remembered.



He rushed across the room and the message was still there, just as it was last night. Digiduck was over the moon! He skipped and sang, 'I can do the right thing!'



'But what should we do? Who should we tell?' asked Mummy Duck. 'We must tell the Family Farmyard website!' replied Digiduck happily.

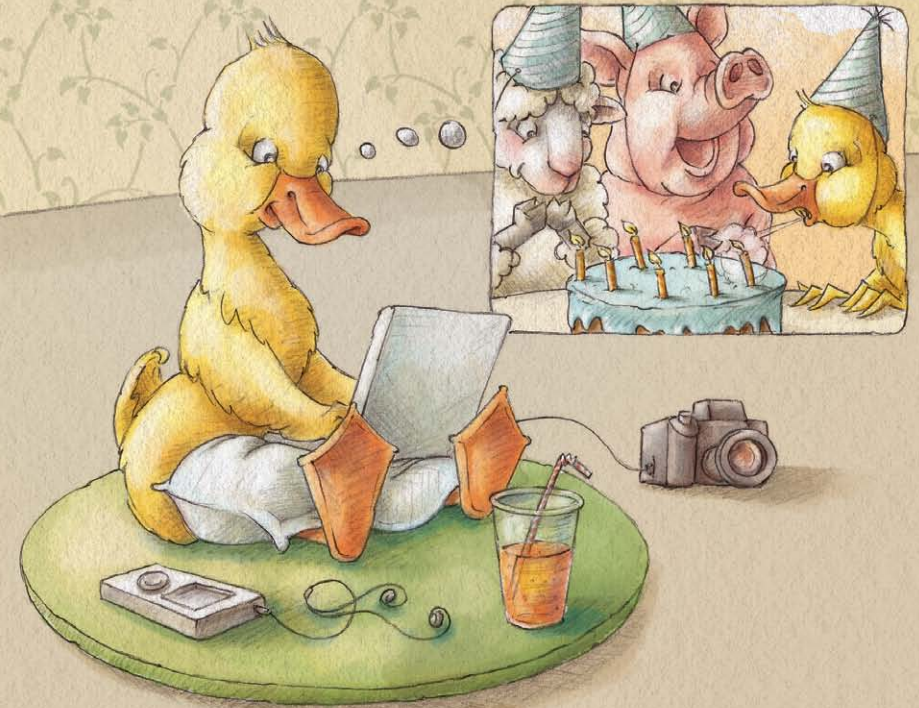


Mummy Duck removed the picture and they sent it back to Wise_Owl. Digiduck smiled, Wise_Owl would be so pleased with him.

Proud.pig's party after school was terrific and Digiduck enjoyed it more than anybody knew. He brought his camera and took photos that he and his friends all agreed were magnificent.



Digiduck knew he had been given a second chance and promised to do his best to look after others on the internet.



As he shared his photos with his friends, he cheerfully looked forward to everything that they would enjoy together in the future.



Childnet

Childnet International is a UK based charity working in partnership with others around the world to help make the internet a great and safe place for children and young people. Since January 2011 Childnet has formed part of the UK's Safer Internet Centre, and was an original member of the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS).

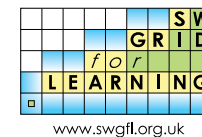
Childnet focuses on education, awareness, and policy, for a range of audiences – children and young people, parents and carers, those working with children, and those providing the internet services that they use. Our education work in schools aims to enable children of all ages to use interactive technologies safely and responsibly.

For more information and advice, please visit www.childnet.com

UK Safer Internet Centre

Childnet International are partners in the UK Safer Internet Centre with the South West Grid for Learning and the Internet Watch Foundation. This project is co-funded by the European Union through the Safer Internet plus programme.

For more information visit www.saferinternet.org.uk





Digiduck's screen went ping and he saw a new message from a friend. 'How exciting!' he thought. He opened it and giggled.

Help arrives just in time for Digiduck, when faced with a difficult decision! Follow Digiduck and his pals in this story of friendship and responsibility online.

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