

The First Egg

by Elizabeth Trach

Last April, Taylor got an unusual package in the mail. The postman carried the box to the door and handed it to Taylor directly. The box was peeping!

"What have you got there?" asked the postman.

"These are my chicks," said Taylor.

The box was full of six small, fluffy chicks. They were each just one day old. When Taylor opened the box, the peeping got louder. Carefully, Taylor held one yellow chick in his hand. The chick was quiet then and closed its eyes to sleep. Taylor placed it gently under the heat lamp so it would stay warm. Taylor did this for each chick, and soon they were all sleeping together in their special box.

Taylor kept the chicks in his bedroom with the heat lamp running all day and all night. He would watch the chicks for hours when his homework was finished. Soon the chicks learned to peck at each other and to jump up and down. They also began to grow feathers, first on their wings and then on their tails. When all of their fluff was gone and their feathers in place, it was time to move the chicks to the hen house outside.

The hen house had three doors. There was a small door at the top of a ramp that was just for the chickens. There was a big door in the back that was for people. Taylor used this door when he cleaned the hen house or filled the chickens' food and water dishes. There was also a small door on the side of the hen house that led to the nesting boxes. These were small boxes that the chickens could sit in to lay their eggs. The special door would make it easy for Taylor to pick up the eggs without disturbing the hens.

Taylor checked the nesting boxes every day. Many times he saw the chickens sitting in the boxes, but there were no eggs. It would be many months before the chickens were old enough to lay eggs. Taylor was getting impatient.

One day when Taylor opened the door to the nesting boxes, he saw one of the hens inside. She squawked and jumped out of the box. She ruffled her feathers and walked across the hen house to drink some water. Taylor was about to close the door when he saw something in the straw. It was a beautiful light green color. Taylor picked it up, wondering how the chicken got a ball to play with.

But this wasn't a ball. It was his first egg! It was still warm because the hen had been sitting on it until Taylor opened the nesting box.

Taylor was surprised that the egg was green instead of brown or white, but he knew that some chickens laid colorful eggs. He felt very lucky to have such useful pets.

