

**THE
HARD-BOILED
EGG**

by

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John had been looking forward to the meeting for months, and at last the day had arrived. It promised to be a once in a lifetime experience - the Master himself was coming to give illumination. John was too excited to eat any breakfast, so he slipped a hard-boiled egg in to his pocket.

"I'll eat that later," he thought, as he left for the auditorium...

A hush fell over the assembly as the Master entered the room, and all rose in unison as he stepped up to the lectern.

In his agitation to rise, John bumped the hard-boiled egg in his pocket, and it made a bid for freedom. The egg leapt from its nest, and landed softly on the plush carpet by John's left foot. As he was standing shoulder to shoulder in the throng, John was unable to bend down and retrieve the escapee. Nevertheless, he kept a wary eye on the egg, so that the moment he sat down he could grab it.

There was a rustle of activity around John, and everyone was sitting down again. John quickly slipped into his seat, and reached down for the egg. As his fingertips contacted the hard shell, John's neighbour accidentally bumped the egg with his foot and sent it scuttling away. It came to rest under the chair in front of John.

With his eyes riveted on the egg, John casually stretched forward his foot in an attempt to retrieve the sphere. Just as his foot shadowed the egg, the person in front of John shifted position, and the egg ricocheted one chair to the right. John maintained a watch on the egg, and died a thousand times...

Later, with pounding heart, John watched his egg skid three chairs to the left when everyone rose to greet one of the locals, whom the Master had invited on to the stage...

It was a nightmare, the egg seemed to have a will of its own, and was slowly making its way across the auditorium. At one point, John was having difficulty tracking it in the dim light. Then, someone must have given the egg a solid tap, because John saw it spinning back towards him. The egg came to a tantalising halt only two chairs away...

Suddenly there was a rustle, and everyone in the auditorium was standing. John rose and looked around. He could see faces glowing with transportation, eyes were tear filled, cheeks were flushed, and there was an electric energy everywhere. All eyes were lovingly focused on the Master as he smiled on the assemblage.

The Master raised his right hand, turned and left the room - the meeting was over...

As John looked at the retreating Master, he had an overwhelming feeling that he had missed something very special.

As he made for the door, John looked back, and glimpsed for a moment between the shuffling feet a shattered and crushed hard-boiled egg.

End

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