

Popcorn Chicks

This is it, hatching day! I was awoken numerous times during the night with the sound of peeping and yet when I went to go look, none had yet hatched. Despite my exhaustion from lack of sleep, my exhilaration of the hatching ruled my mood. This is my first go at hatching quail eggs and I am so excited. I dress, take a peek, nothing yet, and run downstairs to down a quick breakfast. I ran up again and am shocked to find two chicks seemed to have literally popped out of their shells in the short time I was eating.

Unlike chickens where the chick breaks out of one end of the egg, the quail eggs break in half. With my tea mug in one hand, I pull up a chair beside the incubator and sit down for a day's entertainment. There, that one seems to be moving. No it stopped, What about that one? No, just one of the two chicks stumbling around bumping into it. I laugh at their awkwardness but am amazed how something so small can be so perfect. Suddenly, the egg which I saw moving earlier breaks in half and a wet black and cream chick lays there seemingly surprised at the result of its effort. Another movement to the left reveals another chick having escaped its shell. They literally seem to be popping like popcorn. Six hours later, 7 tiny fluff balls are huddled together under the heat lamp.

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