

## *Charli and the Chicks Great Surprise!*

By Deborah Ziolkoski

Once upon a time, there was a group of little chicks who were very anxious to be born. You see, these chicks were still in their shell, which day by day was getting to be a little tighter feeling, very squishy, hot and uncomfortable.

They were used to hearing the voices of their mama and papa through the thin shells of the eggs. They seemed to be so caring, kind and loving. The chicks all knew that they would be protected and loved the very moment they broke out of their shells.

One day, when it was very hot outside, mother hen decided to leave her nest and take a short walk with the chick's papa to the pond to get a refreshing drink of water. While they were gone, something interesting happened. Charli the chick's egg started to crack. The other chicks could also hear that one of the chicks were breaking free and decided that they too wanted to be freed from their very hot and sweaty home.

The chicks quickly went to work. First, they stomped and kicked, yelling for their mama to get them out of their shells. They soon realized that they were not going to get any help ...so they started to try to scratch their way out. They scratched and they scratched...but still nothing happened.

Soon they tried to peck their shells apart. Their little beaks were very strong! After pecking and pecking, they tried hard to push the top of the eggshell off. That silly shell would not budge!

Not wanting to be quitters, the little chicks all tried again. First, they kicked and stomped, then they scratched and finally they pushed. This time however, they pushed so hard that their shells popped open, and they all hopped out! Yay! Finally, free!

They were so excited to be out in the fresh air that they danced for joy, twirling and flitting about the yard. They soon realized though that their mama and papa weren't around. Knowing that their parents would be disappointed to have missed their arrival, the chicks quickly climbed back into their shells, holding onto the tops to make it appear as if they had never been cracked.

Soon, the proud mama and papa returned to the nest and never suspected anything! The chicks knew that their parents would not want to miss a single step as to how they cracked their shells. Do you remember the pattern they used? (first, they kicked, then scratched, then kicked, scratched, pecked and pushed!) They made sure that their final push was really strong, to show their parents how powerful they were! They smiled up at their mama and papa, who quickly smiled back and gave them lots of hugs and kisses! Ta-daa!

