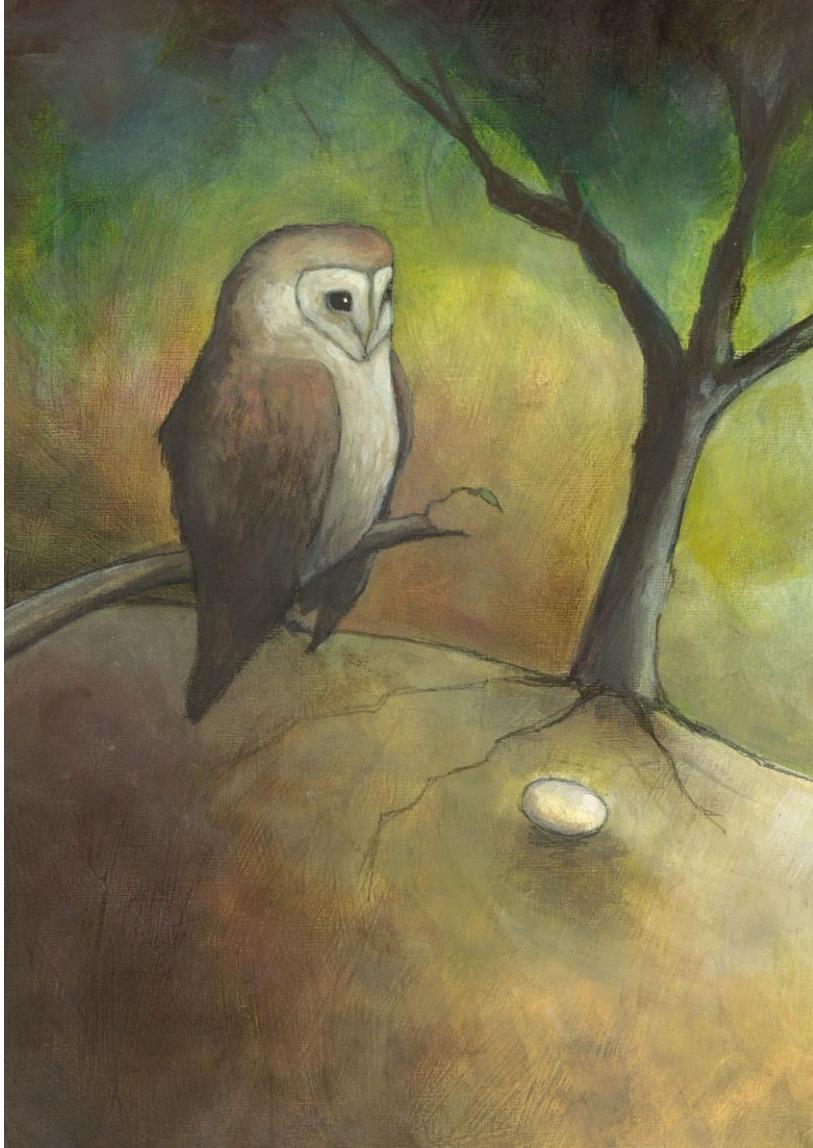
The background is a textured, painterly illustration. It features two dark, slender trees with thin trunks and sparse foliage, set against a backdrop of green and brownish-green hues. The ground is a mix of yellow, orange, and brown tones, with a small, white, oval-shaped egg resting on it in the lower right quadrant. The overall style is reminiscent of a watercolor or pastel painting.

The Lost Egg

Judie McEwen - Dick Rink



Owl had just awakened from his noon day nap, when he heard a strange sound. It was a THUMP!

“Whooooo was that?” he wondered. He looked around from his perch in the trees. No one was in sight! “Whooooo,” he asked.

And then he looked with his sharp owl eyes and saw on the floor of his forest a large white egg! “Whoooo,” he asked again, but no one answered, so Owl flew down to take a closer look.

It was indeed an egg, but where had it come from?



As Owl was studying the big beautiful egg, Mole popped up from beneath the earth.

“Whose egg is this?” asked Owl.

Mole squinted his little eyes, and peered at the egg. “Maybe it is my egg!” he said.

“Silly Mole!” said Owl. “Moles don’t lay eggs!”

“Oh,” said Mole. “You are right, Owl. So I suppose it cannot be my egg.”

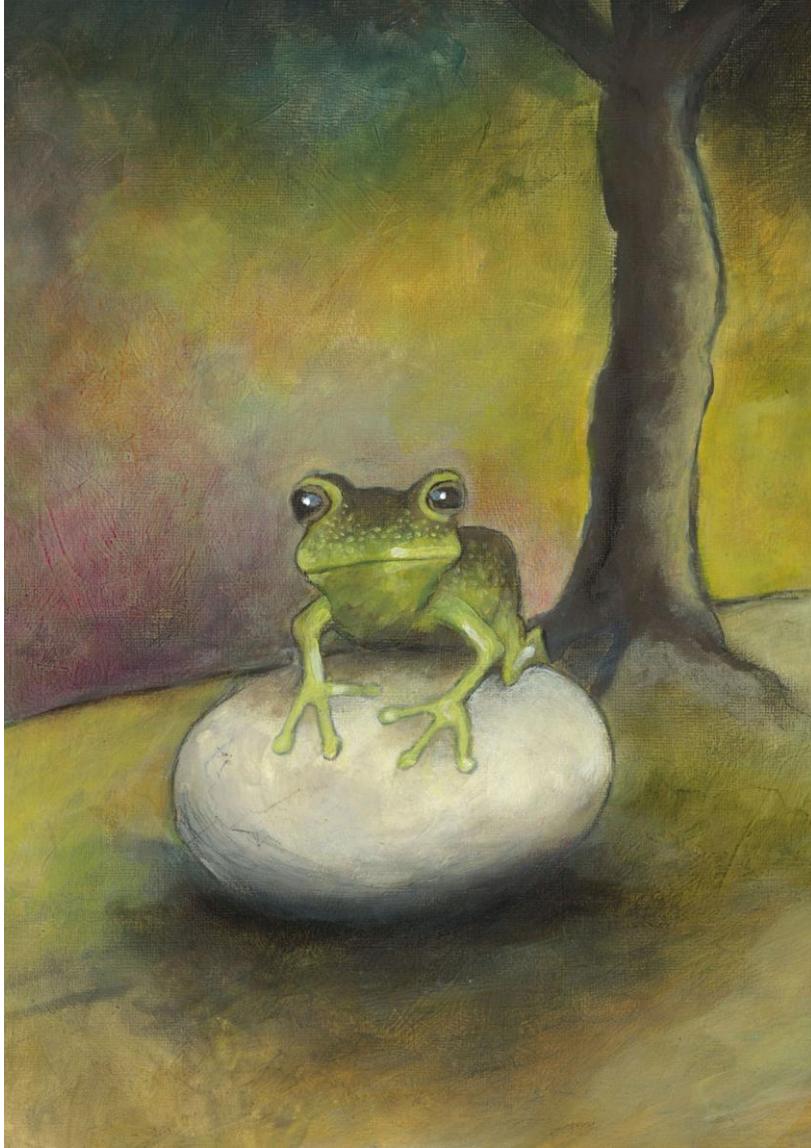
“Whose egg is this!” Owl called again. “Whooooo!”



Rabbit heard Owl's call, so he stopped nibbling on the little green leaves, and hop, hop, hopped up to the egg. He wiggled his nose and gave the egg a sniff.

"This egg might belong to me," he said, after one more sniff. "You know I bring pretty eggs like this one to children in the spring, and it could be mine!"

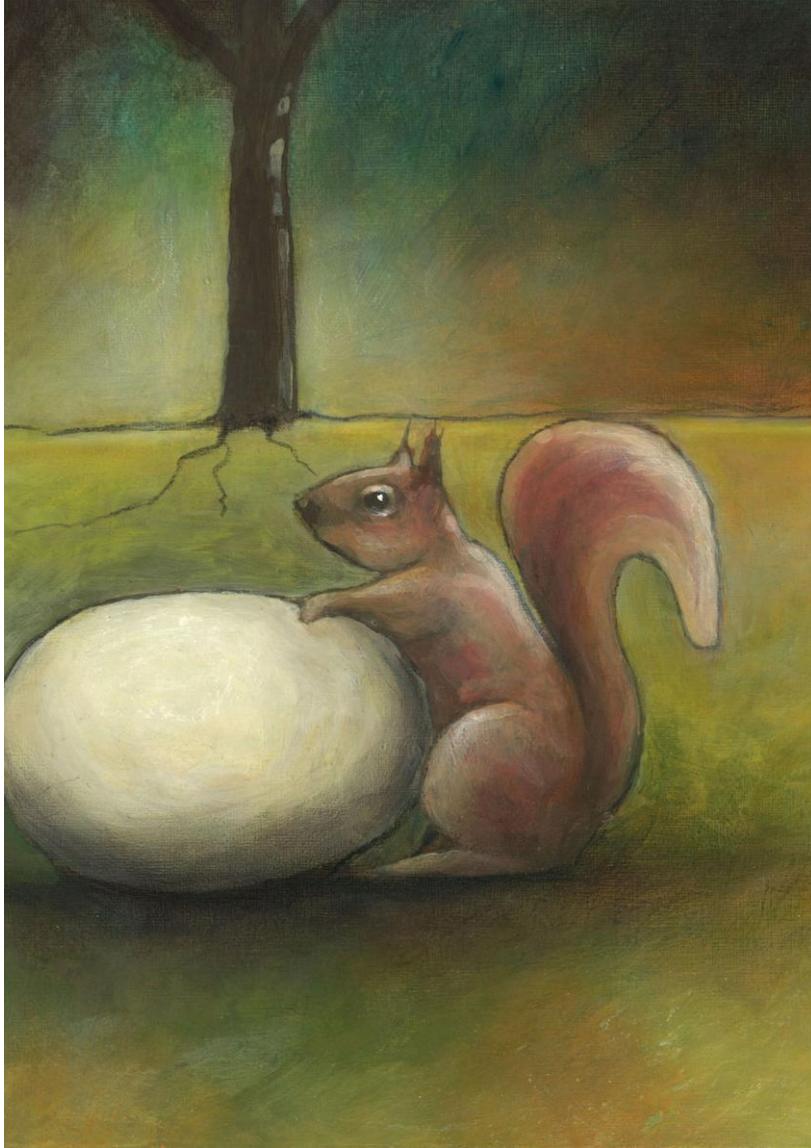
"Rabbit," said Owl, "This egg is not yours. Spring is over, now, and it is summer in the forest. This egg belongs to someone else! Whoooooo?"



Toad heard Owl's question from his rock in the pond, and hopped over to investigate. He blinked his large toad eyes, and gazed at the egg. "Toads lay eggs!" he announced. "Toads lay eggs in the pond! This egg could belong to me!"

Owl looked down at Toad with his wise owl eyes. "Toad," he said, "it is true that toads lay eggs in the pond, but this is not your egg! Toad eggs are very tiny. This egg is very large. It is NOT your egg."

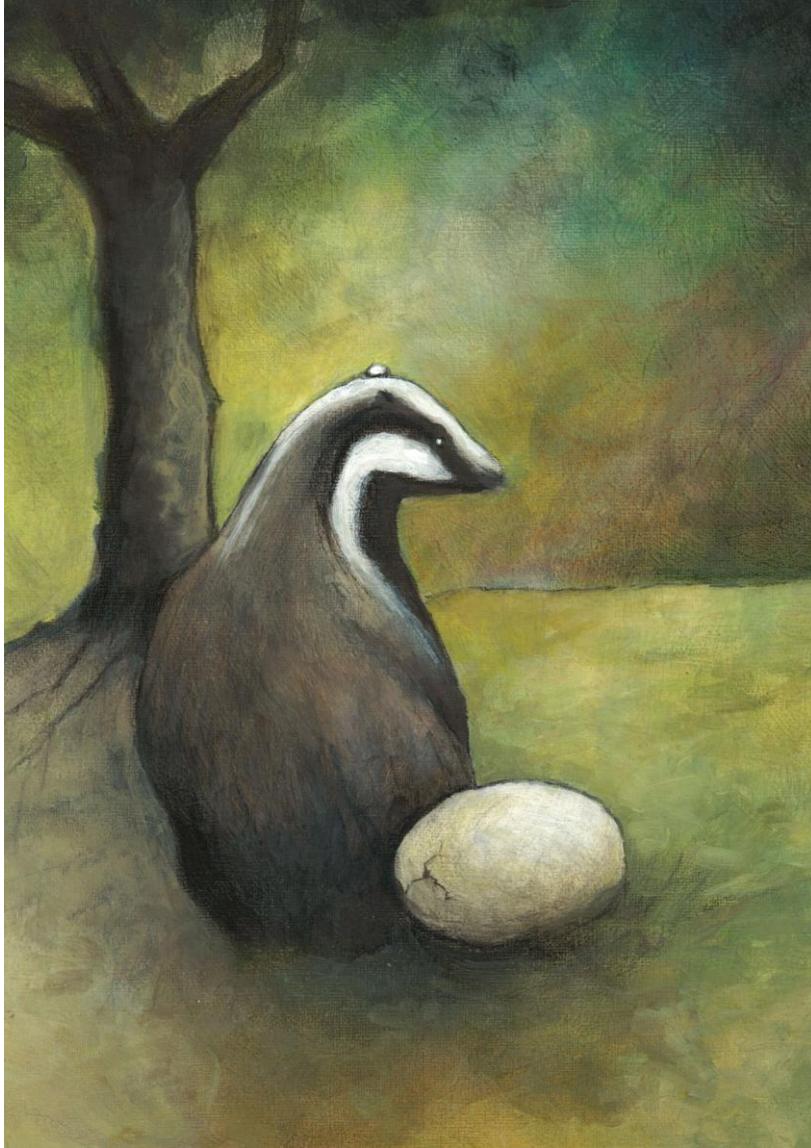
After further examination of the big, beautiful egg, Toad announced. "You are right as usual, Owl. This is not my egg."



Squirrel, who had heard the commotion from his favorite tree limb, scampered down and began to jump to and fro around the egg. "It's mine, mine, mine!" He chattered loudly.

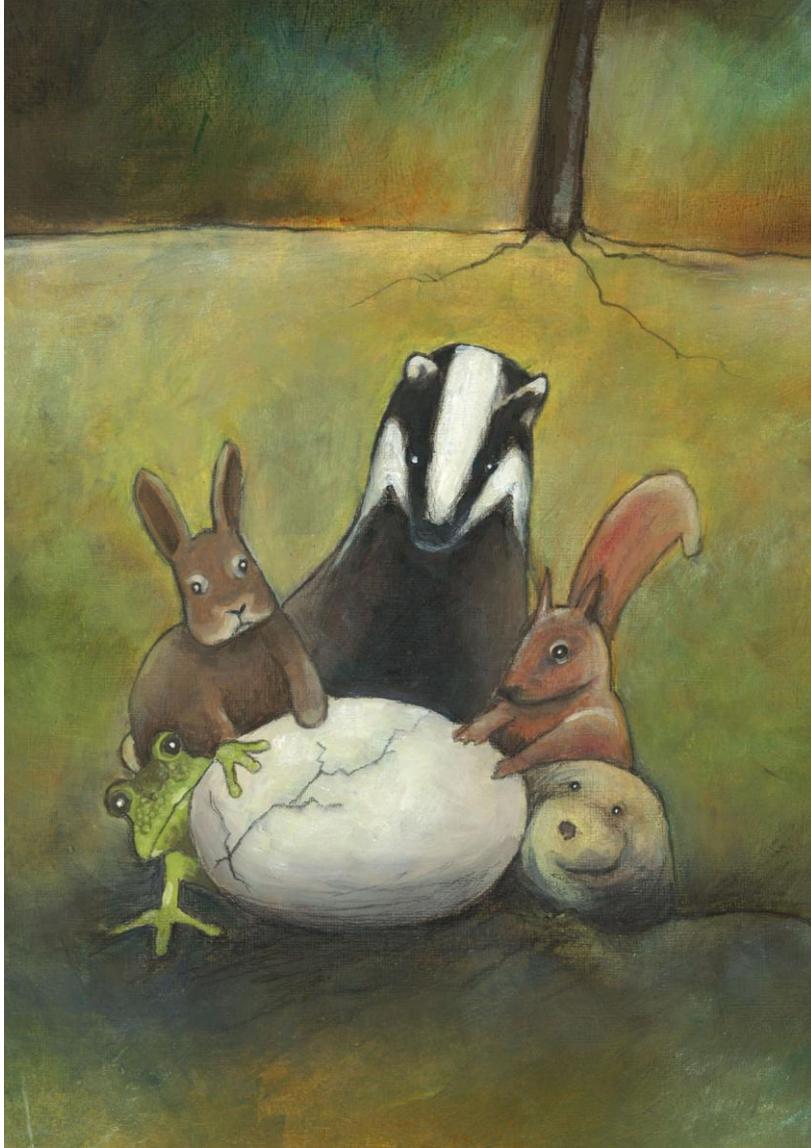
"Squirrel," said Owl in his wisest tone, "This egg is as big as you are! It simply cannot be your egg."

"Right, right, right you are again, Owl! It is not my egg!" he chattered, and he quickly scampered back up to his favorite tree limb to see just who else would come along to claim the egg.



Badger was wandering through the forest, looking for his favorite dinner of eggs, when he heard Owl calling, so he crept over to investigate. “Hmmm,” he said. “I love eggs! I was just looking for an egg for my dinner when I heard your question, Owl. This is MY egg, and I am going to eat it right now.

“NOOOOO!” cried all the animals. “This is NOT your egg!”



Suddenly there came from the egg, a tapping sound, and a tiny crack appeared. The animals were frightened and slowly backed away. Even Badger was a little afraid of the strange sound.

“I guess you are right, Owl.” said Badger. “The eggs I like do not make any sound at all!”

The tapping continued and the cracks began to get bigger and bigger. All at once the animals heard a loud swishing sound from the forest canopy. They looked up in time to see a large eagle flying down out of the trees. She landed right by the egg, and her eagle eyes were sharp and bright.



“Don’t touch that egg!” she cried in a shrill, sharp voice.”
This is MY egg! I was searching high above the forest when
I heard Owl’s call. A big wind came along and blew my egg
right out of my nest! “

The mother Eagle gently placed her great wings around the
egg, and the tapping became louder and louder. All at
once, the egg popped open, and a baby eagle rolled out.
He looked up at his mother and cried, “Mama!”

“My baby!” said the Eagle, and the baby and his mama
kissed each other with their beaks.

All of the animals were happy that the mother Eagle had
found her baby, and that the baby Eagle had found his
mother.

“I must get my baby back to my nest,” said Eagle, “but I
don’t know how I can fly and carry my baby at the same
time!”



Then the wise old Owl spoke up. "I have an idea!" he said. "I can wrap the baby up in my wings and climb on your back. Then you can fly the two of us up to your nest!"

"Excellent idea, Owl!" said the mother Eagle. "But you must promise not to hurt my baby on the way!"

"I promise!" said Owl, and he wrapped the baby Eagle in his wings and hopped on the back of the mother Eagle.

"Here we go!" said the mother Eagle, and she flapped her large, strong wings and soared high up into the trees of the forest.

"Good bye, baby Eagle!" cried all the forest animals. "We are glad your mother found you!"

All the animals were happy, except for the Badger. "Humph!" he cried. "I almost had the most delicious dinner!" Then he ran off into the forest, looking for something else to eat.

The Lost Egg

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