

Dragon Eggs

Just what it says on the sticker: one and a half dozen slightly leathery, bronze-tinged eggs, in a standard-looking cardboard container. The carton is about twice as large as normal, however (so are the eggs) and the carton assures you that the eggs do not need refrigeration. And, in point of fact, they apparently do not.

The team that found the Dragon Eggs container naturally brought it in to be analyzed. So far, three eggs have been removed and tested; and the results were enough to make a room full of biologists go out, get drunk, and start a bar brawl. The DNA results are off the **hook**. There are proteins in Dragon Eggs that could advance the state of the art in biotech by entire decades -- if researchers could only get *enough* of them. But they're unfertilized eggs, which means that they're not going to hatch on their own.

Or maybe they can, with the right kind of encouragement. Parthenogenesis has been of interest to the poultry industry for some time, and for obvious reasons; and some avian species can in fact reproduce without a father, under the right circumstances. No serious attempts to commercially exploit the condition have been previously

tried, because nobody's been willing to throw several billion dollars at the problem, just to get factory-cloned roosters; but circumstances have changed, and now a couple of agribusiness research firms are suddenly discovering what it's like to be Lockheed-Martin.

And now one of them needs a Dragon Egg, because they're ready to test their fertilization procedure. So go bring them one. It need hardly be said that this Egg is almost obscenely valuable, yes? It should also need hardly be said, but must be, anyway: *do not eat the Dragon Egg*. Yes, it smells like the single most wonderful thing that you have ever smelled. Yes, there are office legends about how delicious even that one poorly-cooked Dragon Egg tasted. Control yourselves anyway. And control everybody else, too. Try not staying in one place too long and switching cars regularly.

And yes, you have to drive it. Nobody knows if Dragon Eggs travel by air well. And this is no time to find out.

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