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## Are You An Egg; A Carrot; or a Coffee Bean?

*REFLECTIONS* by...

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At one point or another during your life it will seem as if everything is going wrong. No matter what you do, your problems will just appear to get worse and worse. You will get so tired of fighting and struggling you may even think about giving up. When you encounter such a time, try to remember the story I am about to share with you. It is about a father who wanted to help his daughter put things into perspective one day when she complained to him about how difficult her life had become.



The father, who was a chef, took his daughter into the kitchen. He filled three pots with water and placed them each on a stove element. Soon all three pots came to a boil. In one pot he placed carrots. In the other he placed eggs, and in the last pot he placed ground coffee beans. He let them sit and boil without saying a word.

The daughter sat impatiently, wondering what he was trying to do. She had approached him with her problems and all he could do was think about cooking. In a half hour he walked over to the stove and turned off the elements. He pulled the carrots out and placed them in a bowl. He pulled the eggs out and placed them in another bowl. Then he ladled the coffee out and placed the liquid in the third bowl.

He then turned to his daughter and asked, "Darling, what do you see?"

His daughter replied sarcastically, "Carrots, eggs and coffee."

He brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. She did and stated that they were soft. He then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard-boiled egg. Finally, he asked her to sip the coffee. Her face

frowned from the strength of the coffee. When finished, she meekly asked, “Father, what does it mean?”

He explained, “The carrots, the eggs and the coffee all faced the same adversity. They were all placed in boiling water at 100 degrees Celsius. However, each one of them acted differently.”

He continued, “The carrot went in strong, hard and unrelenting. But after going through boiling water, it softened and became weak. The egg was fragile. A thin outer shell protected its liquid centre, but after going through boiling water, its inside became hardened. The coffee beans are unique however. After they were in boiling water, it became stronger and richer.”

“Which are you,” he asked his daughter. “When adversity knocks at your door, how do you respond?”

“Are you a carrot, an egg, or a coffee bean? Are you the carrot that seems hard, but with the smallest amount of pain, adversity, or heat, you wilt and become soft with no strength? Are you the egg, which starts off with a soft heart, a fluid spirit, but after a death, a breakup, a divorce, or a layoff you became hardened and stiff. Your shell looks the same, but you are bitter with a stiff spirit and heart, internally.”

“Or are you like the coffee bean,” he concluded. “The bean does not get its peak flavour and robust aroma until it reaches 100 degrees Celsius. When the water gets the hottest, it just tastes better. When things are at their worst, you get better. When people talk the most, your praises increase. When the hour is darkest and trials are their greatest, your worship elevates to another level.”

The young girl gave her father a hug and a kiss and never again complained about her problems.

Rest assured that life will through you curves from time to time. No one ever gets a free ride in this world. And also be prepared to “hit the wall” several times in your life when it seems as if you will never reach a solution to your problems.

When faced with seemingly insurmountable obstacles, remember three things:

1. God would never give you more adversity than you can handle;
2. Everything will be all right in the end, so if everything is not all right, it's not the end; and
3. Be like a coffee bean - when things are at their worst, you get better.

