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“Tommy the special golf ball”

By

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The Shelf

Tommy was sitting high up on his shelf, smiling, he just couldn't help himself.

The smile he had on his face was so big he almost rolled over and off of the little black velvet-stand he was sitting so proud on.

The reason Tommy had such a big smile on his face, was that he was thinking of all the excitement from the last four days. He was thinking of how proud the other golf balls would be of him if they just knew what he had done.

Or would they really be proud of him if they knew?

Maybe they already knew what he had done?

He did remember that they usually heard what the other golf balls did, especially when they had been where he had been. At least the few balls that ended up on a shelf like he was on now.

“I am not sure if they really would say anything nice about me, the other balls. They were always so jealous, especially when someone else was as lucky as I am” He thought to himself.

Well, he didn't care what they thought, at least if they were mean thoughts.

He was proud, and he would always be proud, no matter what the other golf balls said.

The Factory

The first thing he could remember was rolling down the belt with all the other gray balls. He could hear them all chattering, curious and wondering where they would be going next. They were all born right after each other; all of them with a gray rubber coating and all of them had the feeling of the harder inside of their gray skin.

There was another belt right down the factory floor, on the other side. The balls there were of a light blue color and were rolling in a different direction.

Tommy was a wee bit scared, but so were the other balls rolling alongside of him. They were all scared, at least the balls on the belt with him. When he looked over at the other belt, he noticed that the balls over there didn't look scared at all.

He could hear them clearly because they were all singing together, loud, all of them rolling one after the other, in a straight line;

“One- Two-Three-Four, off to work we all must go---

One-Two-Three-Four, We're all here to help score low.....

One –Two Three-Four, We're all here to help score low-----

One-Two-Three-four, off to work we all must go”.

“Where are *they* going?” Tommy asked one of the balls right next to him.

“I don't know” answered the other ball-“but they all sound very serious”

“They are rrrrange balls” he heard over from the other side of the floor in a strange odd voice. An old white ball, with a nice logo written on him was hanging in a bracket on the wall with many other balls that was all very different looking.

"They have a long life on the rrrrange ahead of them" said the old strange ball. He seemed to know what he was talking about. "Their only mission in life is to help golfersrr with theirr game, but it's a very harrrd life....and they nevrerr get to play on a real golf course" said the old ball.

"Never?" asked Tommy, a little scared now and hoping he wasn't going to this rrrrange the old ball was talking about.

"Well, every now and then a golfer hits them so bad they end up *outside* the rrrrange and in to a fairway, and some golfer picks them up or hits them by mistake, but most of them will work on the rrrrange all their life and never leave"

The old ball seemed to know the world outside of the factory and Tommy asked him: "I think my name is Tommy", Tommy said "Who are you, and how do you know everything?"

- "I'm Arthur McGee; I am Scottish my lad, frrrrrrom the birthplace of golf. Played for the grrreeatest champion of aaall champions, at the Old Course, St Andrrrews that is."

"You talk funny" said Tommy

"That's the way it goes sirrr, no one can chose where they come from, no choice in the matterrr..."

"Where are we going?" asked Tommy, now all the other balls on the belt with him were listening as well.

You just don't know how lucky you are " said the old McGee "I assurrre you, frrrrom the look of you, you are not going to the range, I am sure of the matter, Just wait until you get your cover, then you will know for sure"

"Thanks" Tommy said, a little quieter now, curious and excited at the same time. He was happy that he wasn't going to that range place at least. He knew that.

The lights in the factory hall were shut off, it was dark and quiet after all the machines was closing for the day, and he whispered to the ball next to him: “Hey my name is Tommy, What is your name?”

“Arnie” he said “I’m Arnie”

“What kind of ball do you think you will be Arnie?”

“I am not sure Tommy, but I think I will be the same kind of ball as you“

“That would be great “said Tommy. “Good Night Arnie”, Tommy whispered now, he was getting sleepy.

“Good night Tommy”, he heard next to him, as he fell asleep.

The Cover

Tommy woke up as the lights were turned on with a sudden bang. He could see lots of machines and the noise was almost painfully loud. There were big scary machines that started to move in all different directions. He looked around for Arnie, but he couldn’t see him. He was in a huge basket full of gray balls just like himself and everyone was chatting, rolling and he could see they all were scared of what would come next.

“Don’t worrrrry lads”, he heard old McGee saying from up on the wall. “You are getting your coverrrs on, and then you’ll get your prrrrints” It will be overrrr in a few minutes and then you’ll see what kind of golf you will be playing. Nothing to worrrrry about”

Tommy was a bit calmer now, as he heard what McGee said. He was for sure old and wise he thought, and he couldn’t wait to get a real cover on.

The basket was moving and he saw that they all were being rolled over to some kind of a belt. On the other side of the floor he could see the range ball basket, and they were already on their way up the belt.

I am happy that I am not going to the range, thought Tommy to himself, watching them counting, singing and marching.

“One- Two-Three-Four, off to work we all must go---

One-Two-Three-Four, We’re all here to help score low.....

One –Two Three-Four, We’re all here to help score low-----

One-Two-Three-four, off to work we all must go”.

They rolled on to the belt, and then suddenly he dropped in to a metal hole. Arnie was right behind him, but he fell in to another hole and Tommy couldn’t see anything now.

There were hundreds of holes and every ball on the belt dropped right in to them.

With Tommy and the other golf balls in them, the metal holes started to swirl around, spinning very fast and then suddenly moved on towards another room.

It was very dark and one after the other dropped in to a black hole. That was all that he could remember, before waking up in a huge basket again, feeling very different.

Tommy looked around, and all he could see was white beautiful golf balls, with dimples all over them, and all the balls looked exactly the same. He felt so good and was so clean and shiny that it almost sparkled from him. He looked up at the wall and saw Old McGee, “Mr. McGee sir, do you know what kind of balls we are sir?”

Old McGee looked down on them and answered him: “You, young man, you and all the otherrrr balls in that basket therre, are the best of all the balls around. You are TRU #1’s my lad, and it

wouldn't surprise me if you were going to play the best golf there is, for the greatest golf champion in the world one day. Just wait until you get your prrrints on and you'll see."

Tommy was very excited and he could sense that all the other balls that were lying next to him with him were all feeling really good about themselves as well.

The Print

The basket suddenly shook and everything was moving around Tommy and the other balls.

Tommy was very excited, because he was going to get his prints and then, well who knew where he would go.

It really didn't matter where he was going, because he knew that all he needed now was a print on him, and then he would be playing golf. Maybe even with a great champion. Old McGee had said so and therefore it must be true.

Tommy was very excited.

All the balls were moving now. They popped in to a cylinder again, but this time it was a much smaller cylinder. They all could feel the metal clamp around them and they could feel the cold metal hold them tight as they moved towards the machine that was going to print them with a logo, print them with the type of ball they were and print them each with their individual number. It was all happening at the same time in one big swoop.

Tommy was moving in to the machine, he closed his eyes and felt very brave. He had heard the sound of the loud printing machine as it printed the other balls, very fast, one at the time. He moved fast in to the darkness and just as he was to get his stamp, suddenly everything was quiet! The light went out, the sound from the machines went quiet, the belt stopped rolling, and all the loud machines and sounds was so quiet you could almost hear a needle drop.

But it was just for a split second, because as sudden as it all had stopped, it all started again all at the same time, the machines, the sounds and the light. Right when it all went quiet he had felt that he had gotten his print both on his front and on his back, and he rolled out of the dark machine.

But something had happened while he was printed. He didn't know what it was, but he knew that something had gone wrong.

He dropped into a basket again, where all the other balls were and he saw that they all had their new prints on them. As he dropped in to the basket, he could see that they all had the same print on them: *Pentrate* with a number 3 number under the word *Pentrate*, both on their front sides and on their backs.

On the opposite sides they all had *TRU #1* with two arrows written in a line on them. Wow, he thought, Old McGee *had* been right; they *were* the TRU #1 balls as he had said.

The golf balls

“Ha ha ha ha”, Tommy heard around him. “Look at that stupid golf ball there” he heard. “Look at that funny looking logo, and he doesn't even have a real number on him” They were all pointing at him, Tommy, and they were all laughing hysterically at him, pointing and moving away from him.

“What kind of a logo is that? It doesn't make any sense”. And what kind of number is that, not a number I have ever heard of”, Tommy heard from over on the other side.

“Don't worry about them” he heard from over on the side. He turned and there was Arnie. “I don't mind how you look like; I know you are just like the rest of us”

“Thanks Arnie” Tommy said, but he was very sad and even a bit scared, because now the other balls even started to push and shove at him.

He heard them tease him all together now:

“Tommy doesn’t have a number, what will he do? Not even a logo and crying, boohooohoooo”

“Tommy without a logo, what will he do? Forget about playing golf-boohooohoooo”

He heard Old McGee from over at wall trying to talk to the mean balls but they just ignored him.

“Come on fellas, be nice, therre is no need for this kind of behavior, calm down boys”

Arnie tried to comfort Tommy, but it was not easy, as Tommy really *was* crying, and this made it even worse.

He wished he wasn’t born at all, and wished he hadn’t listened to Old McGee.

He wished he hadn’t gotten out of the basket, and he wished he hadn’t gotten on the belt.

He wished he hadn’t rolled in to that dumb hole that took him to get the cover.

He wished he hadn’t gotten in that hole because then he wouldn’t have gotten this stupid print on him that didn’t make any sense.

He wished that he had never ever ever been born so that he wouldn’t be here in this horrible place.

But most of all he wished that the other balls would just stop teasing him. Didn’t they see that it was just the print that was different? That he was the same as them?

He heard Arnie try to help and as much as he liked Arnie, and liked that he tried to help, it really didn’t help at all. It didn’t matter, because soon they would all go on to be played with, and he would probably be thrown in a dumpster somewhere. Well he didn’t care if they threw him away, as long as he could get out of here where all these mean golf balls were teasing and acting so mean... All he could hear was them teasing him, pushing him, teasing and laughing at him.

Maybe it was true?

Maybe they would just throw him away?

Who would play with a dumb ball that didn’t have a real logo or a real number after all?

Tommy was a little bit scared, and he was very very sad.

He closed his eyes as hard as he could and wished he had a print like all the other golf balls had.

The Box

A big machine with long automatic arms grabbed the basket they were in, and Tommy, Arnie and all the other balls were suddenly moving with big jerks towards yet another machine. Tommy and Arnie stayed close together, and the arms jolted upwards and emptied the basket in to a duct. They rolled downwards and in to a smaller tube, and now Tommy and Arnie were right behind each other. The noise was almost overbearing, but Tommy was glad that he didn't have to hear the other balls teasing him any longer, so he didn't mind the loud noises at all.

Next to the pipe there was a machine that folded small cardboard boxes. As Tommy rolled in to the tube, he saw an imprint of what the other balls had on them: Pentrate Tru#1 in a nice color, with a picture of how he had looked like before they put the cover and that stupid print on him. As the box was folded, it became a small box, and he realized they were moving towards the box.

The loud noise became even louder, and as he rolled to the end of the tube, Tommy, Arnie and the ball ahead of him all rolled into the box. It folded shut and they were all in the box, shut close, cramped together, all on top of each other with Tommy in the middle. He felt good; at least he could see out of the box, because there was a little window where he was in the box, so he could see out.

The box was moving, and as he was moving away from the wall, he could see Old McGee on the wall. McGee looked straight down at him smiling. He blinked to Tommy, and even if he could not hear him, he thought he could see him saying: "Hi Tommy, don't worry, you will be ok lad, just remember to do your best and you will be ok"

There was no space at all in the sleeve, and Tommy introduced himself to the ball under him.

The ball answered, immediately: “My name is Alek, and I am the greatest golf ball in the world”

Arnie looked down on them from the top, and said: “Well, if you are so great, I guess we all are”

They all three chuckled and were happy that they felt the same. Even though Tommy still was feeling a little sad on the inside.

Especially since he did not know if anyone would ever play with him.

Next the sleeve of the three balls were moved onto yet another belt, got tucked together with three other sleeves full of balls, and popped in to a box. It was a snug fit and a lid slammed on top of them. It was dark, very dark, but they all felt that this was all how it was meant to be. They were on their way to a golf shop, a pro shop or even better, maybe to a tournament somewhere out there in the big world of golf. All the golf balls felt proud, because they knew that this was why they were born; to play golf, and do the best of their ability.

All the balls but Tommy. Tommy was not sure what he could expect. They all had teased him and said that no one ever would play with him. Maybe they were right?

With sadness he relaxed and waited, right there in the middle in the sleeve, with Alek underneath him and Arnie above him.....

The Caddie

The box with the four sleeves of 12 golf balls had been on a long journey now. After leaving the factory, the box was sent to a big warehouse, with thousands of other boxes, all kinds of colored boxes. Boxes with all kind of different logos. Balls for different type of players. High and low swing speeds, hard and soft balls, dual core and low trajectory. Tommy didn't really know what it all meant, but it all sounded very important. There were even thousands of range balls stacked in

huge piles in the corner. Everything just to suit different players. However special attention was paid to the elite of all the balls. The boxes of balls that were stacked up by one of the walls: *The Pentrate TRU#1's*. Tommy and the other balls were right in the middle of this stack and they could feel all the attention from the other stacks of other balls coming down on them. It felt just great. Tommy felt proud.

After being stacked up in different piles, they were moved again, this time over to a shipping area. A warehouse worker packed them in yet another smaller box, and they were on their way again. After a couple of days moving around with traffic, noises and sounds all around them it got quiet again. It was dark, and they lay still for a long time.

“Here they are, a box of brand spanking new Pentrate TRU#1's, exactly like we always order them. Directly from the factory, all number 3's, just like you always want them”

They heard a lower voice from behind him talk back, and the same man that had spoken said in a loud voice: “I'll make sure they are all properly marked with your 3 dots under the Pentrate mark sir. When we play in the morning I will have all the markings done and all the course planned out. We will be prepared to play as soon as you get your sleep, get warmed up in the morning and our Tee Time comes around. It will all be ready for you sir, just like always, just you be sure.”

Tommy and the other balls were very excited and all of them were giggling, as they realized that this was a caddie talking to his player. That would most likely mean that they were at a tournament ready to play in a championship. Probably the next morning already!

A while later the caddie came back and he sat down at a table. He took out 6 boxes, opened each one of them and started pulling out the sleeves with the balls numbered 3 printed on them.

Now Tommy got worried, as both Arnie and Alek had Pentrate TRU#1 and the number 3 print on them. But he did not!

Tommy was thinking hard now: “There was no way that the caddie would use him. Especially not in a championship” thought Tommy to himself. He tried not to look like he cared, but inside he was scared. He did not want to end up in a dumpster, thrown away, like what the mean balls had chanted back in the factory.

The caddie took a sleeve out from one of the other boxes and started marking each ball with three small dots right under the number 3. Then he marked a straight line on each of the sides that had Tru#1 written with the arrows on each side. The lines covered the prints on the side. He was very careful, making them all look exactly the same. After the caddie marked the set of 3 balls, he put them back in the sleeve.

The box with Tommy, Arnie and Alek in it was picked up. Tommy was scared, and he said to the other balls: “Goodbye fellas have a great tournament. I’m sure he’ll throw me away when he sees me”

“Don’t be silly Tommy. I’m sure it will be ok” Arnie said.

Tommy didn’t think Arnie sounded very convincing.

The caddie turned the sleeve upside down and Arnie rolled out. He marked him with the three dots, turned him around and marked the line on each of the other sides. Arnie was quiet as he was put aside. The sleeve turned again and Tommy rolled out scared, but quiet. He felt strange as he was picked up by the caddie’s hand.

“Well what do we have here”? Tommy heard him say.

“Look at this ball, first time I have seen this kind ball, without the proper marking. Something must have gone wrong in the process with this one. Hmmm. (Tommy was terrified now, he held his breath), I think I will put him aside for a special occasion. You never know, sometimes you just need a special ball for a special occasion”

Tommy suddenly smiled excitedly. He had never heard anything that nice being said of him. All of the sudden his confidence was very high again.

He felt the marking of the dots and the line on his side. It tickled a bit and he giggled. The Caddie put him aside, in to the side of what seemed to be a golf bag.

“WOW” Tommy said to himself. “I’m special! Maybe I will be played with anyway....”

The Championships

Tommy was put in a side pocket the night before the tournament began. He felt very comfortable in the huge golf bag that the caddie was carrying for the golfer. He heard lots of people talking with the golfer. Tommy thought that the golfer must be very good, as he heard that everyone around him greeted the player and wished him good luck.

There were a lot of people around, and they went to the range. Tommy knew that it was the range because from the pocket he could hear very familiar sounds.

“One two three four, off to work we all must go” he heard from outside the bag and he knew that this was the range and that the balls being hit were range balls.

“This means we are warming up” Tommy thought and relaxed.

After the warm up he could hear a voice calling out

“From Raleigh North Carolina, playing his 5th Masters tournament.....”

“We are at The Masters!” thought Tommy to himself, “And I think I will play. I just wish that Arnie and Alek were here. I wonder where they are now.”

Tommy heard the caddie and the golfer talking together all day as they were playing. They discussed what to do in a certain situations, what club to hit, the distance to the pin, how the green

was breaking, and what direction the wind was coming from. He heard the crowd cheer, and ooooh's and aaaahs were following them all around. It became a bit boring for Tommy after a while, as he was in the pocket, all alone. He had no one to talk with and he couldn't really make out how things were going. When the golf round ended, he could hear the caddie and the player shake hands and thank the other players and caddies. He heard the caddie talking to himself as he washed the golf clubs. The bag was put aside, and Tommy relaxed as the noise calmed and it became dark. No other golf balls were around him and Tommy fell asleep.

The same things went on the following morning and the day after that as well. Tommy was in the pocket, all by himself, and heard the range balls, the announcer, the spectators and of course the caddie and the player discussing their strategies. Nothing changed, and he didn't know where Arnie and Alek were, as Tommy still was all alone in the pocket.

"I wonder if I get to play the last day-at Augusta" he thought to himself-dreaming."

Alek and Arnie

It was morning and Tommy woke up as the caddie prepared the golf bag for the last day of the tournament. He took out one club after the other, made sure that all the clubs were clean, made sure that all the clubs were actually there, and that they were positioned in order to where he wanted them. He unzipped the pocket, where three days earlier he had put Tommy. He took Tommy out and put him in his left pocket. He then opened another pocket of the bag, took two balls out, looked at them closely, and put the two balls in the pocket with Tommy.

“Alek-Arnie” Tommy said smiling. “How glad I am to see you two guys!”.

“We thought you were gone by now” said Arnie. He and Alek were smiling as well. “I think we are playing today-at the Masters on the final day. How cool is that?”

They heard the player and the Caddie talking as the player was warming up, hitting range balls, one after the other. After the warm up on the range, they walked over to a putting green, and he started to practice his putting. A while later it seemed that they were ready and they walked over to where the other golfers had been starting two at the time all morning.

“From Raleigh, North Carolina, starting last on the final day, tied for the lead...”

They could hear the starter announcing the players and it was time to start the final round. They felt the caddy’s hand in the pocket and he picked out Alek. “Play good Alek, do your best” the Tommy and Arnie said as Alek went out from the pocket.

It was a sunny spring day, and Augusta National golf club showed itself from its best side. The azaleas were beautiful like every year, in full bloom. There were thousands of excited spectators lined up around every hole. The biggest crowd was following the last group where Alek now was playing his best. The two players went back and forth in the lead, but was never more than one stroke apart. None of the other players was threatening them, as the leaders already had a cushion of several strokes from the others.

Alek tried to do what he was supposed to and as soon as the club head hit him, either from a tee, a sand trap, the rough or the fairway he did his best to feel what the player and the club head wanted him to do. Arnie and Tommy could hear the crowd as they cheered on the players. It was always quiet when the player would prepare to hit the ball, but as soon as he hit Alek, the crowd cheered:

“You’re the man!”

“Get in the hole”

There was always some spectator trying to be funny as well, especially right after a good hit.

At the 13th hole, as the two players again were tied for the lead, Tommy heard the Caddie say: “This is where you can get rid of him sir. Hit the driver with a right to left draw, and when you get in a good position, we’ll go for the green and get us a lead”

It sounded to Tommy and Arnie that they would never get a chance, as Alek apparently was playing so good.

The crowd went wild as Alek went off the tee, because the player had done exactly what the caddie had suggested. But right after he had hit Alek, they could hear the crowd go wild again. Apparently the other player had hit a good shot too. A few minutes later they could hear them talk: “OK sir, now just hit that ball with your 8 iron, let it sit up against that wind and you’ll be below the hole for an eagle putt. You can do this“

The crowd went quiet again, and as they heard the clunk of the short iron hit Alek, it was quiet. The crowd cheered, and they heard oooohhh nooo...

A wind gust had suddenly arrived and pushed the ball a little too hard, and Alek came up a little bit short. Alek looked down as he came towards the green; he tried as hard as he could to get all the way, but dropped down and rolled in to the little creek in front of the green

“That wind was a little stronger than we thought sir. You will have to drop” They could hear the caddie say.

The shot had been almost perfect, but there was no way the caddie or the player or even Alek could have anticipated the sudden gust of wind that had appeared from out of nowhere.

The opponent took notice and hit his shot on to the green.

“Come on Arnie, do your best” Tommy shouted to Arnie as he went out of the pocket in between the caddy’s fingers. “Remember the wind”

As Tommy heard them talk, he closed his eyes and imagined how it would be to be Arnie right now. All the golfers, all the excitement and the best golfers playing the best golf course in the best golf tournament in the world!

“If I just could get a chance” he thought to himself. “If I could just get a chance, I would show them.”

Arnie had done it right, and he flew exactly where the player wanted him to go. He went to the green, right below the hole, and he rolled shortly thereafter in for a par.

But the other player had hit his second shot on to green and made his put and got his eagle. Now Arnie and the player were two strokes behind the other player.

And it was only five holes left to play!

The crowd was very loud now and everyone was watching how the player and Arnie tried to come back from the two stroke lead the other player now had. All caused by that gust of wind that had put Alek in the creek.

On the next hole, the player hit a fantastic drive right down the middle of the fairway. The next shot was on to the green. After a long put and a tap in for par Arne felt himself drop down into the hole. But they were still two strokes behind the other player, and they were running out of holes.

The next hole was again a par 5 and Arnie knew that this was important as he heard the caddie talk the same way he had just a couple of holes before “Let’s try again sir, and let’s do it right. Just let it rip and we’ll get him back right here”

Arnie flew as fast as he could off the tee. He flew straight out to the right but felt right away that he was a little bit too far right. Oh No! He tried to turn in toward the fairway, but it was too late.

He felt himself hit the sharp needles of a pine tree. The player had been a little nervous since there

was so much tension in the air, and he had hit Arnie too hard. There was no way Arnie could do anything but lay and wait for the player and the caddie to arrive.

“All you can do now is chip out into the fairway over there sir, and we’ll get on the green in three”

The player chipped Arnie out into the fairway, hit him on to the green and had to putt twice to get him into the hole. At the same time, the other player had also had some trouble and got a par as well, just the same as Arnie had gotten.

Tommy heard the Caddie talk to the player, and as they discussed the next hole, number 16, he could hear the talk about their strategies for trying to get back before it was too late.

“The wind is pushing a little from left to right sir. And as always on the last day at the Masters the pin is located back left on the green. I say hit a 7 iron and put it out right to left, and let it hang a little in to the wind. It’s a chance, but we have to get this one close to get back in the game.”

Tommy felt something and Arnie came in to the pocket again. “Wow” Arnie said “That was so cool” Before he could say anything else, the hand grabbed Tommy and took him out. He was going to play!

“Play your best” he could hear Arnie yell at him as he went out.

Tommy plays Redbud

The caddie said something again: “You will need something special here sir, and do I have something special. When I checked and marked the balls before the tournament on Wednesday night I found this ball with the others. He’s exactly like the other balls on the inside, and has the same exact cover, but he looks a little different. Something must have gone wrong with the print

process of the logo and he looks a little funny. I believe we should use him and see if we can get something special going here”

“Ok, let’s see what he can do for us” Tommy heard the player say.

Tommy was so excited!

The leader hit his ball first and the crowd immediately cheered, because he apparently had hit it close to the hole.

Tommy found himself on the tee for the first time, and he was almost overwhelmed by all the commotion. There were so many people there, but as the player pushed him and the tee down in to the grass he saw the beautiful golf course he had heard so much about.

It went quiet, and the player was concentrating.

He felt the golf club hit him right in the middle. What he didn’t know was that it would spin so much. He spun so fast that he almost couldn’t concentrate. He looked down and he was flying so fast towards the green that very quickly came towards him. He felt the wind now, and looked down. He went past the hole, still spinning and landed around 10 feet beyond the pin and the hole. He remembered what the caddie had said and started spinning again and after a couple of seconds he rolled towards the hole. He could see the other ball that was only about seven feet away from the hole, and he kept pushing. He was slowing down now and stopped right on the edge of the hole. Push-push-push he said to himself, and so, out of nowhere he could feel himself moving. He tipped over and YES, he dropped in to the hole! A hole in one! On his first shot!

The crowd was frantic and everyone was going crazy, screaming and shouting.

He had done exactly what the caddie had said, what the player had wanted and what the golf club almost had told him to do. And he had flown right in to the hole.

After picking him out of the hole and kissing Tommy, the player walked on to the 17th tee. The other player made his putt and they were only one shot behind. But Tommy knew that he could do whatever he wanted now, and he was feeling very good about himself. He had gotten a hole in one. He didn't care anything about what his markings were. Even the caddie has said he was special! He knew that Arnie had heard it and that he was proud of him too. He didn't care what the other balls thought; because he had shown everyone that he could do whatever he wanted. But he said to himself "It's not over yet, and we have more holes to play"

Tommy plays "Nandina"

On the 17th tee, he could almost feel the tension build inside himself.

"Relax Tommy" he was thinking, just fly like the club tells you to.

Tommy flew straight down the middle, just like the player and the driver had wanted him to. Right afterwards, he saw the other ball land right behind him in the fairway. They looked at each other, but neither of them wanted to start talking. It was just too much at stake.

The other ball flew on to the green, and Tommy followed a little later as he had been closer to the green and the other player had his turn first.

He landed right behind the other ball, but a little closer to the hole. As Tommy was cleaned by the caddie and the other player was putting, Tommy noticed that the other ball rolled straight but it moved just a little bit to the left. The other ball hit the edge of the hole, and stopped just next to the hole.

Tommy was laying on the green, and felt very good. He looked around as it was very quiet and the putter came towards him. He started rolling and came closer and closer to the hole. He

remembered how the other ball had rolled a little bit too much to the left and pushed himself to the right. Plunk! He dropped in to the hole. A Birdie!

Now the crowd went even more crazy than before, because this meant that the two players were tied for the lead again. They were going to the 18th hole, the last hole of the tournament!

The caddie and the player were smiling. They knew something special had happened, and they both believed that it was not only the skills of the player.

They had a very special golf ball that had just earned a hole in one and a birdie on the last two holes.

Tommy plays “Holly”

It was hole number 18 and Tommy was sitting on top of the tee. He saw the crowd lined up on both sides of the tee box, in a chute, all looking at the player and at him. The crowd went quiet, he saw the player take his club back slowly and spin around and hit him perfectly in the middle. He spun frantically, but he could see the pine trees on the right, a huge bunker out straight down the fairway, and the green and the club house further out in the horizon.

He rolled safely down in the fairway and Tommy knew that he had done a good job.

The other ball landed a little behind him again, and they again looked at each other. “Good luck”: he said to him. He didn’t think he could hear him because there was so many people there and they were all so loud no one could hear anything.

“Don’t forget to do what feels right” he said to himself. He could remember what old McGee had said that first day at the factory. He wanted them all to see him now, but knew that they at least would hear of what had happened sometime. He knew that Old McGee would talk about it to other new balls whenever he had a chance.

Tommy saw the other ball fly by him, and knew that it was a good shot.

He heard the caddie give instructions, and they both agreed to what club to hit. The player stood over Tommy, concentrated a little and made a smooth swing against Tommy.

Tommy felt great and spun just like before and flew straight over the huge bunker towards the green. He saw the other ball and went by him. But he had so much spin in him that he still he spun back, past the other ball, and landed around 10 feet beyond the cup. He was two feet closer to the hole than the other ball!

The crowd cheered. And the two players and the two caddies came up on to the green.

Both Tommy and the other ball had made deep marks on the green and the caddies repaired the marks.

He felt the player put a coin down, picked him up, gave him to the caddie. The caddie cleaned him with a towel and looked at him. He could feel what he was thinking. One more birdie and you will be a hero forever, you special golf ball you.

The other player lined up his putt. The crowd went quiet and the ball rolled toward the hole. It was quiet as the ball rolled, but it was clear that it was going to end up short of the hole.

The two players looked at each other and they agreed that the first player should putt again before Tommy's player would putt.

He put the ball in and the crowd was chatting very excitingly.

They all knew that with another birdie Tommy's player would win the tournament.

The player put Tommy down on the green and picked up the coin that marked where he had landed.

Tommy could feel everyone looking at him. He heard the caddie and the player discuss the putt, but Tommy knew exactly what to do. He had seen what had happened before when the other ball

had come up short. Tommy just had to roll extra hard and make sure he didn't stop short. Otherwise it was a pretty straight roll.

The putter hit him, and as he rolled towards the hole he knew it was going to be good. He looked up and saw the faces, as in slow motion, cheering, standing, hoping, waiting!

He rolled in a straight line and saw the hole come towards him. Tommy looked up and for a second he felt the world disappear underneath him.

He went in the hole and saw the entire crowd of spectators standing up screaming! He saw the caddie and the player both jump up with their arms up in the air screaming.

He had done it! He had done it!

Tommy had played the last three holes at August National and had one hole-in-one and two birdies!

The next thing that happened went so fast and he couldn't have expected it.

The player picked Tommy up from the hole, kissed him, and threw him in to the crowd.

As in slow motion, Tommy saw the crowd cheer. He saw them look up as he flew straight over the first few people and landed in the hands of a man right there in the middle of the crowd.

Tommy the special golf ball

There was a little boy standing right next to the man that had caught the ball. The man looked down at the boy, handed the ball to him carefully and said in a low voice: "Make sure you hang on to this ball son. That is a very special golf ball."

The boy looked up at his father, looked down at the ball and squeezed it hard.

"Thanks dad, I will put him up on my trophy shelf and keep him forever"

Tommy smiled, he was very happy that he was with the little boy. Tommy felt very special.