

18 Holes

by

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Setting

A golf course.

Time

The present.

Cast

STEVE - A man in his 20s-40s.

JOHN - A man in his 20s-40s.

(STEVE and JOHN approach each other from opposite sides of the stage, each wearing golf attire and carrying golf clubs [or pulling them on carts]. They will play a round of golf, perhaps actually hitting some kind of balls, but perhaps not. The end of each hole can be indicated in any number of ways: movement by the actors, a shift in lighting, or the sound effect of a ball hitting the bottom of a cup.)

STEVE

Hey, how you doing?

JOHN

Just happy to be here. You good to go?

STEVE

Are you kidding me? I've been looking forward to this all week.

JOHN

Then let's do it.

STEVE

All right. Show me how it's done, big man.

FIRST HOLE

JOHN

...so I'm out walking with Alex the other day and he finds this stick and he's just having a ball with it, right? And then pretty soon he's done playing with the stick, so he kisses it, sets it gently on the grass, and says, "Bye stick!" And I'm standing there watching all this and I'm thinking, "Either he's missing something, or I am."

STEVE

It's probably you.

JOHN

Yeah. That's what I'm afraid of. I used to know what he knows, but somewhere along the line, I must have forgot it.

SECOND HOLE

STEVE

...so do you remember that whole thing when Princess Diana died?

JOHN

Sure.

STEVE

Well, I remember watching it on TV and people are just going nuts, you know, weeping and crying and leaving flowers everywhere, and as I'm watching it I realized that I didn't feel a damned thing. You might as well have told me that Yosemite Sam or Daffy Duck died. On the other hand, the whole World Trade Center thing, I'm watching that on TV and I'm crying like a baby. Explain that to me.

JOHN

Well, the World Trade Center, those were real people. Princess Diana, you're right, she was kind of like a cartoon character. She got packaged and marketed just like any other product, just like any other celebrity.

STEVE

Yeah, maybe that's it. Because I remember thinking, I probably won't die when my chauffeur-driven Mercedes slams into a concrete abutment while I'm being chased by paparazzi.

JOHN

Probably not.

STEVE

Hey, is that wind coming more toward us or more from the side?

THIRD HOLE

STEVE

...yeah, Taylor's all worried about me getting old and dying, so I told him I'd have myself cloned.

JOHN

That's not going to do him any good. He's what, eight years old? And if they clone you, you'd be a baby.

STEVE

Well, that's part of this deal we worked out. See, right now, I'm the dad. But I'll get myself cloned in twenty years or so, then he can be my dad. And then we'll just keep going like that. I'll be the dad, then he'll be the dad, and so on. I think it would be a pretty good deal, actually. If you knew that somewhere down the road, your child would become your parent, hey, you're gonna make sure you're a pretty good parent.

FOURTH HOLE

STEVE

...it's Ding Dongs.

JOHN

No, it's King Dons.

STEVE

King Dons? What are you talking about?

JOHN

They're called King Dons. I swear to God. In fact, originally they were called King Dongs, then they changed it.

STEVE

You're making that up.

JOHN

I'm not. I'm telling you, I wish I'd saved a box of King Dongs. You tell people about them today and they look at you like you're nuts.

FIFTH HOLE

JOHN

...if you want to find an attractive woman, or man for that matter, it's really just a question of how much money they come from. Rich people are better looking than poor people because wealthy men marry attractive women and breed with them. It's that simple.

STEVE

Well, I agree with you to a certain extent. You go to the low end kind of shopping malls and you're going to see some pretty scary specimens of humanity. The better class the mall is, the better looking the people get.

JOHN

Right.

STEVE

But only up to a point. When you get to the really high-end malls, that's when it starts getting scary again.

JOHN

You know, you're right. What do you think's going on there?

STEVE

Inbreeding. The very, very wealthy are kind of required to only marry the very, very wealthy. And if you confine yourself to that small a genetic pool, you're just asking for trouble.

JOHN

Yeah, it's tricky. Hey, there's the cart girl. You want a candy bar or something?

STEVE

Yeah, that sounds good.

(JOHN waves his hand in the air.)

SIXTH HOLE

(STEVE and JOHN munch on candy bars.)

STEVE

...so what I usually do is I wait until Julia goes to bed, then slip one in the DVD player.

JOHN

You're kidding.

STEVE

Nope.

JOHN

Does she know you're doing this?

STEVE

Well, I think it's one of those deals where she doesn't really want to know.

JOHN

You have to wait until your wife goes to bed before you can watch Akira Kurosawa films?

STEVE

She doesn't like Japanese movies. It's like this phobia. She knows it's wrong, she knows it's silly, but she just can't help herself. So I sit in the dark with the sound turned down low and watch *Yojimbo* by myself.

SEVENTH HOLE

STEVE

...it won't matter anyway, because in fifty years or so, women will be ruling the world.

JOHN

Oh yeah? Why's that?

STEVE

Virtual reality. Once they perfect those virtual reality machines, it's all over for men running the show. They'll just stay at home, day and night, plugged into their machines, blowing things up and having sex with Marilyn Monroe.

JOHN

You don't think women would be plugged in too, eating virtual fudge and finding the perfect pair of virtual shoes?

STEVE

Nah. Women aren't as fetishistic as men. I think it'll be all for the best, really. I just hope I live long enough to get one of those machines.

EIGHTH HOLE

JOHN

...do you know what kind of women I find really attractive? New moms.

STEVE

How new, exactly?

JOHN

Well, with a six-month old, say. I see them walking around the neighborhood with their strollers and I'm telling you, they are just radiant. They're glowing. The way they walk, they've got their chins up, they're strutting along, and they just seem so damned happy. I find that really attractive.

STEVE

I've always been attracted to pigeon-toed women, myself.

JOHN

Pigeon-toed? Really?

STEVE

Yeah. I'm not sure why. Probably because with their toes pointed in a little, it kind of accentuates their buttocks.

JOHN

Like when women roller-blade.

STEVE

Yeah! I love seeing women on roller-blades, wobbling down the sidewalk.

JOHN

Well, maybe it's that wobbly thing that attracts you. They look like they'd be pretty easy to run down and ravish. It's your primordial instincts kicking in.

STEVE

Could be. You gotta love those primordial instincts.

JOHN

Hey, they're the only reason we're here in the first place.

NINTH HOLE

STEVE

...so for your money, who do you think is the single most imitated or mimicked person in the entire history of humanity?

JOHN

Boy...um...Yoda?

STEVE

I don't think he qualifies as a person.

JOHN

Oh. Who would you say?

STEVE

I'd go with Curly from the Three Stooges...you know, the whole, "Ooh, a wise guy" thing. When you think about it, it's a helluva legacy.

JOHN

Moe, Larry, the cheese!

STEVE

Exactly!

TENTH HOLE

JOHN

...anyway, I finally decided to look it up and it turns out the whole story about Catherine the Great and the horse is just a myth.

STEVE

That's too bad. It really gave her life a punchy ending.

JOHN

Well, I suppose it was a little unbelievable. I guess it's just the kind of thing you want to believe is true.

ELEVENTH HOLE

STEVE

...the best job I ever had? Probably when I was a teenager, picking up trash at the carnival.

JOHN

Come on. Picking up trash was the best job you ever had?

STEVE

I'm dead serious. I'd get there early in the morning and get my sawed-off hockey stick with a nail stuck in the end of it and just go through the whole carnival.

(MORE)

STEVE (cont'd)

After a couple of days, I was so good with that stick that I could nail cigarette butts with just one stab. And the thing is, what's so great about it, is you start picking up the trash and the place looks like a cyclone hit it. But a couple of hours later, you look behind you and there isn't a speck of paper anywhere. You can see the difference you made because it's right in front of your eyes. It was just real satisfying. I haven't had a job since that made me feel that way.

TWELFTH HOLE

JOHN

...anyway, she's looking at the lasagna and saying I burned it and I'm saying it's not burned, it's caramelized. And you know what? She bought it.

STEVE

That Food Network is a godsend.

THIRTEENTH HOLE

JOHN

...well from a historical perspective, the guys you really need to watch out for are the ones with facial hair.

STEVE

Oh yeah?

JOHN

Sure. Prussian generals, Islamic fundamentalists, suburban cops, guys like Hitler, Charles Manson and Geraldo. They've got some issues going on.

STEVE

You think it's a masculinity thing? They need to prove they're men by growing beards and mustaches and making everyone else's lives miserable?

JOHN

Could be. My question is, does being a prick make you want to grow facial hair, or does growing facial hair turn you into a prick?

FOURTEENTH HOLE

(JOHN and STEVE look upward.)

STEVE

What is that?

JOHN

Looks like a turkey vulture.

STEVE

You think?

JOHN

I'm pretty sure.

STEVE

Where was it we saw that tree frog climbing out of the irrigation pipe?

JOHN

Crooked Creek?

STEVE

Yeah. Man, what the hell was he thinking about?

FIFTEENTH HOLE

JOHN

...all I'm saying is that from an experience standpoint, I'd be kind of interested to know what it feels like to perform fellatio.

STEVE

Huh. I don't think I'll be able to help you out there.

JOHN

Well, it's not like I'm going to do it. I'm just talking about the sensation. It would be interesting to see what it's like, that's all.

SIXTEENTH HOLE

STEVE

...you can take it from me, if humanity survives another ten thousand years, you're not going to see any roadkill at all.

JOHN

What are you saying? Cars will be programmed to avoid animals?

STEVE

No, I'm saying that roadkill will be naturally selected against. Those animals that stay away from roads or bright lights are the ones that will breed. Cars and trucks have only been around for a hundred years or so, so the animal population hasn't had time to adjust.

JOHN

So really, this is the Golden Age of Roadkill.

STEVE

You're damned right it is!

SEVENTEENTH HOLE

JOHN

...the thing is, you're not supposed to say it, but slavery actually helped civilization along.

STEVE

In what way?

JOHN

Every way. Before there was slavery, what did you do to people you defeated in battle? You killed them and ate them. But once they made them slaves, and it didn't matter who it was, blacks, whites, Asians, whoever, once they had the slaves doing the grunt work, it left other people more spare time to think about stuff and invent things like zippers and microwave ovens. That's why guys like Aristotle and St. Paul were all for slavery. They could see it really moved things along.

STEVE

You know, you should really hit the talk-show circuit. You'd be the breath of fresh air they need.

EIGHTEENTH HOLE

JOHN

...well, let me think. I'd have to say a novocaine shot up into the roof of my mouth when I was about ten years old. I remember the dentist saying, "This might sting a little." How about you?

STEVE

It was in our basement. I'm maybe twelve or thirteen, the lights are out, and my brother winds up for a slap shot using a glow-in-the-dark Superball. Caught me right in the left testicle.

JOHN

Jesus.

(He putts a long one, and his body English helps guide the ball into the hole.)

Yes! I knew I'd make one today. It just took me eighteen holes to do it.

STEVE

So what did you shoot?

JOHN

Oh, I don't know. Ninety-something, probably.

STEVE

Are we on for next week?

JOHN

Sure. I'll give you a call.

STEVE

All right.

(STEVE embraces JOHN.)

I love you buddy. I don't know what I'd do without you.

JOHN

Yeah, I know.

STEVE

See you next week.

(JOHN and STEVE head off in different directions. STEVE exits as JOHN's cell phone rings. He reaches into his pocket and pulls it out.)

JOHN

Hello?...Oh, hi hon...no, we just finished. I'm walking to the parking lot right now...what did we talk about?

Oh...nothing. See you in a few.

(JOHN puts his phone back in his pocket and exits.)

THE END.