

Rub of the Green

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

The sun crests over the horizon. The course is empty, old, and completely unkempt. There are worse golf courses in the world, but not many.

A NEON-COLORED GOLF BALL bounces into the frame and rolls directly into a rusted pie tin.

Seconds later, GABE (50s) approaches. He sports a magnificent mullet, looking tired and haggard.

Lagging behind him is LEROY (60), a weary caddy lugging a crappy, vintage bag of mismatched golf clubs.

GABE

Ah, a golfer's diet: live on greens as much as possible.

Gabe heads to a nearby oak tree. Crudely carved into the trunk is: *"9th hole, par 5, 477 yards."*

He tees his ball, grabs his driver, and settles in. He assumes a mockingly serious tone, speaking to himself:

GABE

Everyone knew it would come down to this... Gabe Barnes and Tiger Woods. Combatants engaged in a fight against the other's very destiny.

Gabe rears back and takes a massive swing. WHACK.

The ball rockets straight down the fairway, bouncing over the sunburned green. Leroy's jaw drops.

GABE

Whoa. Lookin' good. Tiger's hurting...

The ball suddenly veers, landing deep inside a sand trap on the other side of a bunker.

Gabe hurls his driver into the air in frustration.

GABE

Oh! You think you can do better?

Leroy doesn't answer. Gabe turns around. He is alone.

(CONTINUED)

GABE

I miss you too, good buddy.

A rhythmic, electronic BEEP-BEEP-BEEP begins to echo over the quiet fairway. It grows louder, transitioning into--

INT. E.R. - NIGHT

White ceiling tiles. Harsh fluorescent lights.

A medical team works frantically over GABE'S unconscious body.

NURSE DOREEN (40s), a hardened veteran of the ER, stares at the heart monitor.

NURSE DOREEN

Damn, looks like v-tach!

DR. OLIVIA KOHL (40s) grabs the defibrillator paddles.

DR. KOHL

Defib at 200. Everybody clear!

ZAP. Gabe's body arcs off the gurney. The monitor continues to flatline, emitting a high-pitched whine.

NURSE DOREEN

Still in fib. Three hundred.

DR. KOHL

Three-sixty. Clear.

ZAP. A long, agonizing second of silence.

Then... a reassuring BEEP... BEEP... BEEP. The sinus rhythm returns.

DR. KOHL

He's back. Amiodarone, 250, hang a drip.

The rhythmic beeping softens, fading back into the rustle of wind as we--

CUT TO:

EXT. GOLF COURSE - 3RD HOLE - DAY

A DESERT CHIPMUNK sits calmly on the parched earth, chewing an acorn.

(CONTINUED)

Gabe labors as he walks across the green toward the sand trap. He looks sickly, taking big, wheezing breaths.

He reaches down to retrieve his ball.

FEMALE GOLFER (O.S.)

Play it as it lays!

Gabe spins around.

Standing behind him is a FEMALE GOLFER. She is radiant, with an angelic face and a smile that completely knocks the wind out of him.

She leans casually on her driver.

FEMALE GOLFER

You can't move the ball. Two stroke penalty.

Gabe forces a smile, but looks shaken by her presence.

The Female Golfer sets her tee, steps up, and swings.

WHACK. The ball soars perfectly straight, dropping 210 yards away on the fairway.

GABE

I've never been able to make that shot.

FEMALE GOLFER

I think I'd close my stance a bit, tighten my grip, and lower my right thumb.

Gabe follows her instructions. His knuckles turn white on the grip. He shoots her a cocky wink, lines up, and swings. WHACK.

The ball sails beautiful and straight, landing 200 yards out. Gabe jumps up, ecstatic.

GABE

Isn't that a pretty sight?!

Gabe suddenly stops. He shivers, worse from wear, cold, and frail. A crease of deep worry lines his face.

GABE

Don't know if I'll be able to finish.

(CONTINUED)

FEMALE GOLFER
(smiles sadly)
It's OK. It's been condensed.

Her words hit Gabe hard. He looks around the empty, vast course.

GABE
Will you walk with me?

She gives him a reassuring, gentle nod.

They walk along the sunburned, cactus-lined fairways.

A tinny, blaring rendition of Ben E. King's "*Stand By Me*" suddenly erupts. It's Gabe's CELL PHONE. He pulls it out and answers it.

GABE
Hey, hon.

MARGE (V.O.)
Who's winning?

GABE
It's not about winning, honey.
It's about the love of the game.

Gabe hangs up, looking back at the Female Golfer.

GABE
Marge, my wife... she'd always
say, "*When I die, bury me on the
golf course so my husband will
visit.*"

The Female Golfer walks beside him, warm and empathetic.

GABE
We were both nineteen when we met.
A house party I almost didn't go
to. When she walked in, I just
knew. I called a meeting with my
boys in the bathroom just to call
dibs on her.

Gabe stumbles. She reaches out, steadies him.

GABE
She felt the same way. Fast
forward thirty years, we were
married. I always knew she was the
one.

(CONTINUED)

A single raindrop spatters against Gabe's forehead.

He looks up, feeling the warmth of the sun on his face.
He looks back to his companion. But the Golfer is gone.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - 18TH HOLE - DAY

A gorgeous, golden sunset paints the sky.

Gabe approaches the final green, his eyes watery.
Standing by the pin is a distinguished gentleman in a
pristine white suit.

ARCHANGEL MICHAEL, stone-faced.

GABE

We've met. You came to me six
years ago. Told me it wasn't my
time yet. Michael, is it?

Michael nods slowly.

Gabe looks down at the ball. He lines up for a long,
difficult putt. He steps back to rehearse his swing.

GABE

Twenty-five feet is all that
stands between Gabe Barnes and
golf immortality.

He sets his feet. He grips his putter tightly.

GABE

Yep. Life offers too few second
chances. The Rub of the Green.

Gabe strikes the ball with pure purpose. It rolls across
the green. It's long enough... it's straight enough...

Clink. It drops perfectly into the cup.

Gabe smiles, grabs the ball, and carefully tucks it
inside his fanny pack.

Michael places a comforting hand on Gabe's shoulder and
steps aside.

A blinding, GLORIOUS WHITE LIGHT opens up right in front
of them.

NURSE DOREEN (V.O.)

V-tach again! We're losing him!

(CONTINUED)

DR. KOHL (V.O.)
Charge paddles to 200. Changing to
300...

NURSE DOREEN (V.O.)
BP's dropping, too!

Gabe steps forward into the brilliant light, filled with
a sudden surge of warmth and contentment.

Through the haze, a SILHOUETTED WOMAN appears, extending
her arms wide open toward him.

GABE
Marge?! Marge?!

DR. KOHL (V.O.)
Come on, Gabe... On three...
Clear!

Michael falls into step right behind Gabe as he walks
into the brightness.

INT. E.R. - NIGHT

Gabe's body arcs violently off the gurney under the force
of the paddles.

BEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEP. The monitor flatlines completely.

NURSE DOREEN
Six minutes. Nothing on Doppler.

Doreen thumps his chest hard with the edge of the
paddles, trying to shock the muscle manually. Nothing.
The flatline continues.

Dr. Kohl raises the paddles to zap him one last time, but
she stops short.

She stares down at Gabe's face.

A peaceful smile. A lone tear rolls down his pale cheek.

Dr. Kohl lowers the paddles, letting out a quiet breath.

DR. KOHL
Call it. Time of death: 3:07 am.

FADE OUT.