



## The Lie

THE FOURSOME had played this course so many times they knew the best shots by heart, but today it felt a little weird. For one thing, they were only three: the guy in the red shirt, the guy in the Phoenix Open hat, the guy with the white belt.

Golf buddies. They never saw each other outside of golf, only occasionally even stopped for a drink after. Still, six years as a foursome counted for something.

They'd been a random starter assignment that first time but they

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soon realized that they were pretty well matched. Their pace of play was similar, and that was important to each of them, not having somebody lagging behind or rushing ahead. They all preferred to keep conversation minimal; they got enough of that from their wives, especially since retirement. None of them wanted a radio, none brought a cell phone. So after that first eighteen, they agreed to meet the next week.

And so it became part of their schedule, a pleasant few hours away from family and expectations. What the grandkids called 'me time.'

Today they played the first six at their regular pace, but the holes went faster without Charlie. Nobody mentioned him. They stopped making eye contact as the play came near the bend in the park where the golf course hooked around the small lake.

The guy in the red shirt stopped the golf cart under the trees, and as everybody walked up the guy with the white belt reached into his golf bag and pulled out a small white cardboard box. They gathered at the edge of the water.

"Here?" the guy with the white belt asked.

"That's what his wife told me," the guy in the red shirt said.

The guy with the white belt opened the box and scattered the gray sand across the grass. "Should somebody say something."

The guy in the Phoenix Open hat pulled a coin from his pocket

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and put it in the grass.

“Best lie of his life,” the guy with the white belt said.

“Keep it on the fairway,” the guy in the red shirt said.

They all bowed their heads for a moment.

The guy in the red shirt was the first one to look up. He nodded to the guy in the Phoenix Open hat. “You’re away.”