

JUSTIN. So what happens next? We just start the tournament?

BINGHAM. Not quite. In about five minutes we have the "Signing Ceremony." The Director of Crouching Squirrel, my counterpart, a man named Richard Bell, who, I might add is the lowest chiseling son of a bitch who ever walked the earth, and I say that with all due respect, arrives in one of his ugly sweaters and we sign the Tournament Book, thereby confirming the names of the players. Then he and I shake hands, I excuse myself, I wash my hand and we're off and running.

*(He glances out the window.)*

Ah, here he comes now. You can always tell it's him from the heavy shoes he wears. They're meant to hide the cloven hooves inside the *Dickie Bell*, how are you *Dickie Bell*.

*(DICKIE BELL enters. He's an unpleasant man full of bonhomie. He's wearing the ugliest bright yellow sweater in existence.)*

DICKIE. Hello Henry, just look at you, don't you look marvelous! A little tired, though, eh? Around the eyes? You've got to stop working so hard, old boy. It's just too late. Life has passed you by, eh? Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!

BINGHAM. Nice sweater, Dickie. Very understated.

DICKIE. Do you like it? It's called Postiano yellow, I believe.

BINGHAM. Ah yes. Italian word for vomit, I think.

JUSTIN. Hel-hello.

BINGHAM. So sorry. Dickie Bell, Justin Hicks.

DICKIE. Capital. Just capital to meet you.

BINGHAM. "Capital?" Are you English today?

JUSTIN. Would you like a drink? I-I can -

DICKIE. Don't mind if I do. So what if it's early. So's the worm. Otherwise he wouldn't catch anything.

BINGHAM. You mean the bird.

DICKIE. Sorry?

BINGHAM. You said the worm.

DICKIE. I meant the worm.

BINGHAM. No you meant the bird.

DICKIE. Didn't mean the bird.

BINGHAM. Of course you did. The early *bird* catches the *worm*.

DICKIE. Yes, but if the worm wasn't up even earlier, the bird couldn't catch him. So the worm's the early one. Right, eh? Ha ha ha ha ha ha!

BINGHAM. Oh that's excellent, Dickie. You could go on stage with that one.

JUSTIN. Maybe I should, uh -

BINGHAM. Yes, of course, I'll see you later.

*(JUSTIN exits.)*

So, Dickie, how's it going?

DICKIE. Oh I can't complain and who'd listen anyway, eh? Ha? Big day of golf ahead. Mm? Love golf.

*(He looks out the 4th wall toward the golf course.)*

And how's the wife? God, I love Muriel, she's such a strong woman. Like a Sherman Tank. No feet, she has treads on the bottom, churning forward over the landscape.

*(He makes a tank-going-over-terrain noise.)*

Keeps you in line, eh? Ha ha! Love that.

BINGHAM. I'm sure you do.

DICKIE. Now, now, it's just a joke, we can all take a joke from time to time, eh? And speaking of jokes, how's your team this year?

BINGHAM. ...I beg your pardon?

DICKIE. I said how's your golf team. Speaking of jokes.

BINGHAM. Are you honestly standing here in *my* tap room, drinking *my* liquor and insulting *my* club?!!

DICKIE. Now, now I didn't say you don't have a chance. It's golf, eh? Drives, chips, putts, who knows what could happen.

BINGHAM. (*bravely*) Yes, of course, you're right. In fact, just to show you I'm not a sore loser, I suppose I should put a little money on it, shouldn't I.

DICKIE. Now there I agree with you. A bit of jousting I call it. A clash of arms. So what do you say? How much?

BINGHAM. Oh I don't know. You do have the better players of course.

DICKIE. Not necessarily! Where's your spirit? Let's hear it for Quail Valley, Chukka chukka chukka!

BINGHAM. Chukka chukka chukka!

DICKIE. So what do you say, shall we call it ten?

BINGHAM. Well -

DICKIE. Ten thousand dollars, straight up, no odds.

BINGHAM. Ten thousand dollars! Oh, I couldn't.

DICKIE. Well, if it's too much money -

BINGHAM. Let's make it twenty. I mean why not. What's a little wager between friends, hm?

DICKIE. Well now, if you're talking twenty, I suppose we should say thirty.

BINGHAM. Forty.

DICKIE. Fifty.

BINGHAM. A hundred.

DICKIE. A hundred thousand?

BINGHAM. What's the matter? Afraid, are we? Not man enough? Oh, Dickie, you disappoint me.

DICKIE. I'll tell you what. I'll go for a hundred thousand dollars on one condition. That if I lose, I'll pay you *two* hundred thousand dollars, but if you lose you pay me a hundred thousand and throw in your wife's antique shop.

BINGHAM. ...Muriel's shop?

DICKIE. Muriel. Your wife. Big woman. Wears camouflage.

BINGHAM. Her antique shop?

DICKIE. Ye Olde Crock. Now I know it's not worth a hundred thousand, but I've always had a fondness for it. I like all that wood, the old tables, mirrors.

BINGHAM. But she loves that shop. She lives for it. If anything happened to it, she'd kill me. She'd murder me. I'd be a dead golfer.

DICKIE. Oh all right, I understand. Get on her bad side and she might shoot you with those swivel guns near the hatch. "A-a-a-a-a-a!" So let's just call it off, no bets, just golf.

BINGHAM. We can still bet the cash, of course.

DICKIE. Nah. Why bother. You know me, I don't like to go halves.

BINGHAM. Oh come on. Make it interesting. A hundred each way. Or seventy-five. Or fifty.

DICKIE. Nah. Not worth it. Cheers. I'll come back later and sign the book.

(*He heads for the door and walks out.*)

BINGHAM. ...All right.

DICKIE. (*returning*) What's that?

BINGHAM. I'll do it. One hundred against two hundred.

DICKIE. And you throw in The Olde Crock?

BINGHAM. My wife?

DICKIE. The shop.

BINGHAM. Oh. Yes.

DICKIE. Done! Let's shake on it. Ha ha! What a man. Congratulations. You got me again, you devil. Shall we sign the bookage? Give it the old Johnny Hancock's?

BINGHAM. Oh let's. Why not. Then we'll have the whole day ahead of us just for golf.

(*DICKIE signs the book.*)

DICKIE. Ah, I see you have Tramplemain down here.

BINGHAM. Oh, you've heard of him, have you?

DICKIE. I've seen him play. Good man. Good short game.