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**I'M STANDING HERE WITH MY THREE WOOD IN HAND.**

Now, goddammit...

The drive I just hit on the par five was a wonderful smash, and it was even straight. I've got just over two twenty to the green. I've got a chance. A chance to reach the green and putt for an eagle!

This is perhaps the most enjoyable moment in golf.

The chance to reach.

The flight of the ball is the whole point. Smack, contact, the ball flies off, it takes 4 or 5 seconds before it lands, and another second or two before it stops. Good or bad, white or black, success or failures, in each second a smile, a nagging worry, a laugh.

This is unique for golf and goes a long way towards explaining why it's so enjoyable. In ice hockey you know if the puck will hit the net in the blink of an eye, in soccer it's three blinks, in tennis it's seven...but in golf there's an eternity to wait for the outcome.

Still, there's so much more to golf; the hot dog after nine holes, or teeing off on the first tee with a whole round, untarnished by double bogeys, ahead of you, or when a skulled chip hits the pin and drops into the hole, or when you find the ball a hair's breadth from being out of bounds, or that well deserved sip of smoky single malt after a birdie.

There are so many pleasures in golf.

Like the time that I almost died. The guy we were playing with nearly whiffed a six iron from the tee, the ball went a foot or two to the side, and bounced into the cuff of his pants. The guy looked around with surprise on his face; "What happened? Where is the ball? Did anyone see?"

Did anyone see!?!

The rest of us were toppled over with laughter, gasping for breath, dangerously close to suffocating, while the guy with the ball in his cuff was desperately trying to find his ball.

There are few other activities where you laugh as much as in golf.

There are few other activities where a fine cigar tastes so well.

There are few other activities where you make so many stupid decisions; "I could make it...sure, I only hit my three iron 210 once before...and the ball wasn't nestled down in a thistle that time...but what the heck, I could make it..."

There are few other activities where aesthetics is such an important factor.

Like me playing with blades. Possibly also an example of another stupid

decision, but not necessarily. I'm sure my swing isn't suited for blades, my knowledge isn't extensive enough, my wrists not equipped with enough feel-and still I choose chromed blades.

Why?

And why do I generally prefer to play with a half set in a worn leather bag on my shoulder?

Aesthetics, that's why. Because the set is beautiful, and because beauty is important on so many levels. Okay, the blades probably cost me a shot or three every round, but I'm smiling while I'm doing it. And if I'm smiling, I'm probably making up a shot or three.

Maybe. Maybe not. It's not very important. The beauty, and the joy that the beauty brings, that is what's important.

That is also the reason for why I like this book in general, and Peter Cordén's photography in particular. Of course, I also like Gene Oberto's text..He's got a poetic pen and the fresh eye of a visitor. Together they offer a trip to some of Sweden's wonderful golf courses. You are reminded of the magnetic water holes at Åtvidaberg, the whisky smelling edges of the bunkers at Grönhögen, the need for binoculars on the greens at Bro Bålsta, the smell of seaweed at Falsterbo, the ricochets from the trees at Halmstad, the club selections that the tour stars made at Barsebäck, the delicious food at Hills, the stupid decisions at Ullna's fourth hole. ... How many fabulous courses there are in our country,? How many exquisite fairways there are to walk up with a cigar in the corner of the mouth and a magnificent view in the corner of the eye.? Most of our courses reflect our nature and the great variety in our nature; they are rarely the anxiously streamlined designs that you so often come across in other places in the world.

This book won't tell you that here is a bunker, here is a flag and here is a white painted clubhouse. Peter Cordén does not give an account with his photography, with his art. He tells stories. Stories about laughter, about three irons from thistles, about hope, and about desire... Peter Cordén uses blades for his photography.

That is what makes this book so enjoyable.

**STEFFO TÖRNQUIST**

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Translation: Michael Broström