

The
Seduction
of Natalie



Francesco Rizzuto

THE SEDUCTION OF NATALIE

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Welcome to Magic Valley



Click on the image to tee-off at the first hole.

Natalie recalled her golf coach's advice about teeing-off.

"Step up to the tee and address the ball."

"Hello, ball," she muttered, *sotto voce*. She shuddered at the thought of sand traps, water hazards, trees and shrubs, and the so-called 'rough' where small, and sometimes not-so-small, boys searched for lost balls to sell back to the golfers.

"Wanna buy it back?" he snarled. She didn't really. But the kid looked so menacing with those close-set, beady eyes and pointy snout like an ugly ferret and the swastika tattoo that decorated the jugular vein in his neck and the fire-red Make-America-Great-Again ball cap with its peak skewed at a dangerous angle and the low slung camo pants that exposed the crack in his buttocks, that she immediately thrust forward a five-dollar bill and grabbed her errant ball from the delinquent's paw before he got any better ideas.

Natalie and her husband Derrick were participating in what Beta Systems Incorporated called 'The Client Cup,' his employer's idea of a golf tournament. The Spring weather was idyllic with a clear blue sky and just the faintest hint of a breeze. Not that their own team had any hope of winning this event, of course. The outcome was rigged.

"It's all about networking," the boss informed his minions, "It's an opportunity for our high-profile clients to showcase their skills – while we ooh and ahhh and praised our betters to high heaven. Then we seal that big sales contract by the eighteenth hole."

It was really about selling sonoidal switches for digital news feeds. That's what Beta Systems does. But that's another story, almost. Most important of all, make sure your team scores high, the boss warned with only the slightest hint of a sneer. The client's team needed to finish with the least number of strokes to win the tournament.

All Natalie could think of were those two piercing eyes and that weasel-like snout peering at her over a proffered golf ball that wasn't worth more than a dollar and fifteen cents or three for two-forty-nine at Walmart.

Derrick, on the other hand, was full of confidence. He hadn't yet mentioned the little 'aid' that he purchased over the internet for a great deal more money, a special programmable GPS-enabled golf ball that soared in whatever direction and for whatever distance he chose. Before approaching the next tee, he only needed to activate the associated app on his

smartphone and key in the name of the golf course and the number of the hole. The app did the rest. His ball never ended up in the rough. Derrick had been practicing for the last two weeks with this new golf ball which, like Fake News, was totally undetectable and worked flawlessly. The fake ball even had SPALDING stamped on its hard cover.

Derrick hated the boss. He wanted to kill him. Back home in the rec-room of the couple's modest duplex, he'd mounted a cork-covered toilet seat on the wall with the boss's smirking photo pasted into the oval opening in the space reserved for one's ass cheeks. Each evening, while nursing the cocktail that Natalie meticulously prepared for him, he tossed darts at the picture. When one of the darts landed in an eye, Derrick threw both his fists in the air and cried: "YES!"

Now, the reader is probably thinking that Derrick planned to murder his boss. He would programme the golf ball to fly straight toward its objective, like a CIA drone targeting a high-profile terrorist target. But Derrick wasn't that smart. He merely wanted to finish with the least number of strokes, win the Cup, and thereby sabotage the tournament. That would be revenge enough. For now.

The Magic Valley Golf Club was the centrepiece of the Magic Valley housing development, a community of up-scale homes that front onto plush, green fairways, affording each of these expensive properties the illusion of having its own endless grassy lawn. Most of the homes featured huge picture windows to take advantage of the magnificent view. The developers had assured buyers that the buildings were set back far enough that stray golf balls would never invade their airspace although the odd one has been known to come screaming in like a heat-seeking missile to bounce off a tile roof or crush somebody's petunias. The community's motto was: "Incoming!" The wealthy pensioners who could afford to live in Magic Valley wore hardhats and even motorcycle helmets while puttering around their flower beds, pulling up weeds or just lazing on a chaise lounge in the sun. Most had falling objects coverage in their homeowner policies.

Natalie took a driver from her golf bag and addressed the ball. She threw her whole torso into the swing as her coach had instructed, then watched as the tiny white sphere sailed straight down the fairway to land only a few meters short of the green, a lucky shot. She used her nine-iron to scoop the ball up onto the carefully manicured surface then grabbed her putter to sink it for a total of three strokes, one stroke under par.

Her husband wasn't so lucky. Something had gone wrong with his high-tech golf ball. Perhaps the GPS lost contact with its satellite. Or maybe another faulty sonoidal switch. Instead of sailing in a shallow arc toward the flag in the middle of the green, the naughty little ball veered abruptly to the right in a severe dog-leg, then flew straight through the picture window of one of those expensive homes. Oh, oh!

"I think we'd better go over and check out the damage," he said to Natalie after she sank her own ball in three. Derrick had next played an ordinary ball and sank it in five, his strategy entering failure mode, and they were only on the first hole with seventeen punishing holes to go. Demoralized, he even forgot to use his laser-assisted putter.

"We'll offer to pay for the window, of course. No other choice, I suppose." He made a mental note to check if the super-golf ball came with any kind of warranty or liability coverage. Maybe he could sue the manufacturer for product malfunction and somehow recoup the cost of the window.

They parked their electric golf cart along the side of the fairway so that other golfers could play through, then hiked over to the house where Derrick's errant ball had punched a clean hole dead-centre in the window pane, the remnants of which resembled a huge spider's web. He sheepishly pressed the front doorbell with the tip of his index finger but after a minute or two there came no answer. He rang again, but still no answer. He banged on the door with his closed fist. Derrick and Natalie looked at each other, then glanced back at the broken glass.

"Well, I guess there's nobody home. We'll have to come back later."

"I'm going to try the door," Natalie said, reaching for the door handle. The lockset clicked, and the door swung open. They tip-toed inside.

"Hello? Anyone here?"

In the centre of a large living room lay Derrick's ball, resting in the middle of a thick Persian carpet. Lying next to the ball were the remnants of a small broken pottery urn decorated with some kind of exotic script, Sanskrit or Cyrillic or Nepalese maybe. But when Derrick reached to retrieve his ball, there came the biggest shock of all. Perched in a lotus position on a low dais along the far wall was a naked man; well, naked except for the crimson coloured turban wrapped around the crown of his head.

"Oh. Excuse me, sir. We just came to retrieve this golf ball. I'm sorry for the broken window and of course we'll cover the damages. Here's my business card."

Derrick reached into this wallet then extended the crisp, white rectangle toward the seated figure, at the same time pretending not to notice the stranger's nakedness.

"Peace."

"Peace to you, sir."

Natalie remained speechless, transfixed by the apparition.

"I am Enrod, the Genie."

"Pleased to meet you, Mister Enrod. My name's Derrick and this is my wife, Natalie. We're here to settle the small matter of your broken picture window. You see, my ball went off course and, well, yeah. It broke your window."

"Window is no problem. You have done Enrod a great favour. Enrod was trapped inside that urn you see lying in ruins before you. When your golf ball came through the window, it shattered the urn and released him. Enrod thanks you."

"We'd still like to pay for the damage, sir. If you'd kindly send a scan of the repair bill to the email address on my card, then I'll gladly cut you a check for the amount. We're very sorry for the inconvenience."

"That is unnecessary. I am a genie. I can fix the damage instantly. Now to celebrate the happy occasion of my liberation and your kindness, I shall grant three wishes, one for each of you and the last wish for myself."

Derrick and Natalie stared at the naked, turbaned man in disbelief. Could it be? Was today their lucky day? Their minds ran through the potentialities like a couple of slot machines on steroids. Enrod the Genie addressed Derrick first.

"Now, what is your wish?"

"Well, I think I'd like to have a hundred million dollars. That way I could quit my job and wouldn't need to murder my boss anymore."

"Granted," the genie declared solemnly in a low, husky voice. "Go to the nearest ATM and check your bank balance. You are now a multi-millionaire."

Derrick clenched both his fists and threw his arms into the air. "YES!" It was better than scoring a double bullseye on the toilet seat.

"Now it is your turn, young woman, to tell Enrod the Genie your wish."

Natalie thought a little longer than Derrick, but not much longer.

"I think I'd like to have a powder blue BMW Nazca M12. It's my dream car."

"Granted," the genie declared, even more solemnly this time. "When you return to your home, a powder blue BMW Nazca M12 will await you in the driveway. Enjoy your new automobile."

Derrick and Natalie grabbed each other's hands, jumping up and down and beaming like a couple of kids on Christmas. This was better than winning the lottery. Oh, thank you, lovely errant golf ball!

"And now," said the genie, "I shall grant the third wish that I have reserved for myself."

Now what could that possibly be, the couple wondered to themselves? After all, a genie could have anything or transform himself into whatever shape he wanted. They'd seen Disney's Aladdin and Prince of Persia and knew that genies were extremely clever beings. What was it that a genie would ever need or wish for?

"You see, because I was trapped inside that urn, I have not been with a woman for over five hundred years." He turned to address Derrick. "Therefore, my wish is to have sex with your wife."

The two golfers stared at each other, at first in utter disbelief.

"Well," Derrick offered, "he *has* made us multi-millionaires, right?"

Natalie was only thinking of the beautiful powder blue BMW Nazca M12 awaiting her in the driveway. She couldn't wait to slide her key into the ignition and rocket off down the highway, showing off the car to her friends.

After an hour, Natalie raised herself up on one elbow from the mattress in the upstairs room where the genie's wish had been fulfilled.

"By the way," he asked, crimson turban still attached to his skull and tilted at a rakish angle. "May I ask how old you are?"

"I'm twenty-six."

"And how old is your husband?"

"He's thirty-two."

"And for how long has he believed in genies?"

Stay tuned for the next chapter of *The Seduction of Natalie* coming each week to this web page.

If you enjoyed this story and can't wait to see what's going to happen next (and who will win the U.S. election in 2020), then why not purchase the entire novella at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07N2WRXN5>