

The Golf Game or 18 Holes in His Mind

Characters

Major James Nesmeth (MJN) –

Narrator --

A few fellow golfers –

Someone to change signs and bring in trees /props

Props

Golf clubs

Large pieces of paper, each one with a different year 1, 2, 3, etc. – 7 written on it.

Golf shirt for MJN

POW shirt for MJN

Fake trees

Rain stick, thunder sounds from the keyboard

Big sign that says 74 as a golf score card

Crate to act as prison cell

Chicken wire to surround the crate to indicate the cell

Scene set up

MAJOR with look of dreaming on his face is leaning on his golf club in the midst of the “golf course.”

Narrator :

Major James Nesmeth had a dream of improving his golf game – and he developed a unique method of achieving his goal.

Action: MAJOR has look on his face of acknowledgement – He looks up

Narrator : **Until he devised this method, he was just your average weekend golfer, shooting in the mid-to-low nineties.**

Action: Major swings his golf club and silently says “Fore!”

Then, for seven years, he completely quit the game. Never touched a club, never set foot on a fairway.

Action: MAJOR walks away and sits down facing away from congregation. Then MAJOR turns around in his seat and sits as if he is meditating, eyes closed.

Narrator : **Ironically, it was during the seven-year break from the game Major came up with his amazingly effective technique for improving his game – a technique we can all learn from. In fact, the first time he set foot on the golf course after his hiatus from the game, he shot an astonishing 74! He had cut 20 strokes off his average without having swung a golf club in seven years! Unbelievable! Not only that, but his physical condition had actually deteriorated during those seven years. What was MJN’s secret? Visualization!**

Long pause

Narrator : **You see, MAJOR had spent those seven years as a prisoner of war in N. Vietnam. During those seven years, he was imprisoned in a cage that was approximately four and 1/2 feet high and five feet long.**

Action: MAJOR slowly takes off his outer shirt and golf cap to reveal a POW T-shirt beneath. He feels around and imaginary cell.

Narrator : **During almost the entire time he was imprisoned, he saw no one, talked to no one and experienced no physical activity. During the 1st few months he did virtually nothing but hope and pray for his release. Then he realized he had to find some way to occupy his mind or he would lose his sanity and probably his life. That's when he learned to visualize. In his mind, he selected his favorite golf course and started playing golf. Every day, he played a full 18 holes at the imaginary country club of his dreams. He experienced everything to the last detail. He smelled the fragrance of the trees and the freshly trimmed grass.**

Action: Fake tree is brought in and set next to MJN. (Golf club is hidden in the tree).

Narrator : **He experienced different weather conditions – wind, rain, summer and fall mornings.**

Action: Rain stick and thunder sounds from the keyboard. Cards that signify the cards he is in prison are slowly added one card at a time.

Narrator : **In his imagination, every detail of the tee, the individual blades of grass, the trees, the singing birds, the scampering squirrels and the lay of the course became totally real.**

Action: MAJOR continues to sit on the “bench” and looks like he is meditating.

Narrator : **He felt the grip of the club in his hands. He instructed himself as he practiced his down-swing and the follow-through. Then he watched the ball arc down the exact center of the fairway, bounce a couple off times and roll to the exact spot he had imagined... All in his mind. In the cage he was in no hurry. He had no place to go. So in his mind he took every step on his way to the ball, just as if he were physically on course. It took him just as long in imaginary time to play 18 holes as it would have taken in reality. Not a detail was omitted. Not once did he ever miss a shot, never a hook or a slice, never missed a putt.**

Action: MAJOR is putting. He smiles. He laughs. He silently says “Yes!”

Narrator : **Seven days a week. Four hours a day. 18 holes. 7 years. 20 strokes off. Shot a 74. ...Then he was freed.**

Action: MAJOR is joined by a few other golfers (Golfers can audibly be heard congratulating MAJOR for his great golf game.

Golfers: **How did you learn to shoot a game like that?**

Major: **Well, you have to think it, feel and imagine it until it is real!**

A large golf card is held up that reads 74. All the golfers walk off the set.

CARE PACKAGES FOR THE WORK PLACE

Characters

Barbara --
Maitre d' --
4 diners--
Waitress --
Chef --
Young bus boy --

Props

Book and dressing table
Hand held Mirror -- June
Sign: Kitchen -- Staff Only (on the chaplain's office door) --
Wallet with pictures
3 tables
Checkered table clothes, salt and pepper shakers, dinner ware
Menus
Flower for Barbara

Opening scene

Barbara is looking at herself in the mirror, straightening her hair, smoothing her clothes as she is getting ready to go out. She is set up on the floor of the sanctuary

Barbara: "Here I am in (town the church is in) for my speaking engagement. I don't know anyone here, but since I wrote a book that my publisher published, that lady has me writing and speaking more than ever."

Barbara picks up her book, looks at it and then puts it on the table top.

Barbara: "One of the things I dislike about this part of my job is eating alone. It always make me feel lonely to see others laughing and talking. Sometimes I have the uncomfortable feeling that I look like I am waiting to be 'picked up' by someone."

Barbara shutters.

Barbara: "I have already ordered room service the past few nights just so I don't have to go out and feel that discomfort of being judged ... whether I really am or not."

Barbara turns and faces the audience as if she is getting ready to go out the door.

Barbara: "So my strategy is, I have to get out of this room. So I am going to the restaurant first before anyone else gets there and leave early, too."

Action: Barbara pretends to close the door to her room, then walks up the stairs where three tables are set up. The podium becomes the Maitre d's station. The Maitre d' is off to the side, sees her coming, and rushes to the station to greet her. He looks at his watch.

Maitre d' : **“Good evening Madame. (Glances again at his watch). It is so nice to see you at this veerry early time. We are open at 6:30, but I am most happy to seat you now anyway.”**

Barbara: **“Thank you so much. I dislike eating alone in restaurants so I come early before there is any kind of a crowd. I guess I am a bit anxious so I am earlier than I thought. I hope you don't mind.”**

Maitre d' : **“Oh, I understand, Madame. Life can be so much more pleasant with someone to share it with, even when there are bad times.... Please follow me.”**

Action: Maitre d' takes Barbara and seats her at the closest table to him. He goes back to his station for a few seconds, looks around, then returns to Barbara's table.

Maitre d' : **“You know, I am all caught up with my work, and people don't usually start coming to the restaurant until after 7:00. You said you didn't like to eat alone, so I wondered if you'd mind if I sat down with you for a while.”**

Barbara: **“I'd be delighted!”**

Action: The Waitress comes out and takes her order from the kitchen.

Maitre d' : **“I have been a Maitre d' for six years now and my dream is to become part owner here. I have some changes I would like to make, including featuring the recipes of the great Chefs (Names of good cooks or chefs in the church). It can be hard to balance my family life with the restaurant because of working on nights and weekends and holidays. But I love my work and my family, so we make do. We love each other very much. See, here are some pictures...”**

Action: Maitre d' takes out his wallet and shows her pictures (his children, wife, dog). There is the illusion that time has passed. Dianna and Sheila wait until the pictures have all been shown. Then they come to the Maitre d' station. Maitre d' sees them, excuses himself and puts his head in the kitchen door then, goes off to tend to them. Maitre d' leads them to a table at the far side of the platform area. As he is leading them to their table, The Diner says,

Diner: **“We are just waiting for our friends.”**

Action: From out of the kitchen comes the waitress/waiter. S/he walks over to her table and begins to talk.

Waitress: **“My station is way in the back tonight, and I'm sure no one will be seated there for a while. I'm not really busy. Do you mind if I sit down with you for a while?”**

Barbara: **“I would be very glad to have your company. Please ... sit!”**

Waitress: **“ Well, I like working here but I am studying to be a music producer for the film industry here in Michigan. I have a boyfriend here...”** The conversation trails off until two more Diners arrive and are seated in her section. She excuses herself and goes off to tend to them.

Action: The busboy sticks his head out of the kitchen and he comes and sits with her.

Busboy: (with a Spanish accent) **“I am sorry I do not speak English very well, but you seemed so welcoming to everyone, and I thought I could speak with you too.”**

Barbara: **“Please sit. I would love to talk with you. I used to teach English as a second language so I am sure we can understand each other.”**

Busboy: **“When I came to the restaurant, I hardly spoke any English at all. That’s when they taught me how to say, Holy smoke, Batman. And they taught me, Lipstick on a pig is still a pig. And read my lips, no new taxes... Oh, I love America!”**

Action: Their conversation turns to Spanish and then trails off into whispers. The Maitre d’, waitress, waiter and people are moving around. It is getting busier and busier. The busboy sees how busy it is and excuses himself and leaves and starts to clear the two tables.

All Diners have set down, eaten and left. Almost all the tables of people have left and Barbara has been there the whole time.

When the restaurant is nearly empty, the Chef, with Chef cap, sticks his/her head out the window. Waitress walks out with Chef. Chef sits down and talks with Barbara for a minute. Waitress walks to the table and begins to clear it with the Busboy. As the Chef gets up to leave ...

Barbara looks at her watch: **“Oh my goodness! The whole evening has gone by! It’s 10:00!!**

Barbara to Waitress: **“May I have my check please?”**

Action: There is an audible silence in the room. All of the characters working in the restaurant come over to her table. They present her with a flower.

Maitre d’ : **“This was one of the nicest nights we’ve every had in the restaurant.”**

Waitress: **“You are such a great listener.”**

Busboy: **“It was so great to have someone understand what I was saying.”**

Chef: **“I think you helped make the food taste better for everyone just because you were so open to us all.”**

Barbara, (wiping tears off her face): **“What began as a lonely night has ended as a beautiful experience.”**

All: **“For all of us.”**

All walk off the stage arm in arm.

The End

GOD CALLING

Week 5, Oct. 26

Characters

Rev. Ken Gaub
Mrs. Barbara Gaub
Narrator
Ken's son and daughter
Waitress
Telephone operator
2 people talking
Ken's daughter in law
God – on the phone
Millie

Props

Phone
Phone booth

Scene set up

Two people, man and a woman, are talking in their yard
They are having an earnest discussion about their neighbor, Rev. Gaub

1st Woman: Yeah, that Rev. Gaub is a really nice man. He says he almost has a compulsion to help people, especially those who are hurting.

1st man: "I heard he said some people just need a little boost, and his helping them makes him feel like he's making a positive difference.

Woman1: That's an understatement. He's like the pied piper for God. He conducts crusades, not as big as Billy Graham, but he is pretty good. He travels all over the United States."

Man1: "He's gone to Africa and South America, too. I've seen the pictures of the people there. They are so beautiful, even though there is so much trouble over there."

Woman1: "I don't know how he had the time for it, but somehow he finds the time – and the strength! He started a magazine, a radio and television ministry and a youth outreach program."

Action: Woman1 puts her hands on her face and shakes her head in amazement.

Action: Man1 & Woman1 walk off the set.

Narrator: But sometimes even preachers get drained and discouraged, and they wonder if they should consider another line of work. That was how Ken felt one day in the '70's when he, his wife, Barbara and their children drove their two ministry buses down I-75 just south of Dayton, Ohio. He wondered to himself, *God, am I doing any good, traveling around like this, telling people about You? Is this what you want me to do?*

At about 5:30 in the early evening, Ken's son, Jacob asked his Dad to pull off at the next exit and get some pizza like the road sign suggested.

Action: Ken Gaub, wife Barbara and a son and daughter walk into a room that looks like a restaurant. A telephone is on the wall like in a telephone booth.

Jacob: "Hey, Dad, thanks for stopping and coming here to let's get some pizza!"

KG: "Sure, son. It's time to stop. I'm hungry too." He mutters to himself, "If only getting a sign from God about what I should do was as easy as reading a road sign. I sure would like a sign God."

Action: Ken stares into space. He stands outside what looks like a restaurant. Jacob kicks stones on the parking lot ground.

KG to Jacob: "Here comes your mom and sister, Ruthie.

Action: Ken looks out into the audience as if seeing his wife driving in. Jacob follows his gaze.

Action: Barbara and Ruth come walking up to her husband and son, and stop near the door.

Action: Ken barely notices the rest of his family arriving and sitting down.

Barbara: "Coming?"

Ken: "I'm not really hungry. I'll stay out here and stretch my legs."

Action: All move inside an imaginary door and go to sit at the table, except for Ken. There is a table with four chairs that they sit at. A waitress comes and brings 4 glass of water and sets them on the table. Just inside the door is a table or stand that has a phone on it.

Ken goes inside and takes a glass of water from the table, then goes back outside.

The family watches Ken come in and go out. They look dismayed, but begin to order food from the waitress. They are smiling and laughing. The waitress writes things down on a small pad of paper.

Ken: God, am I just totally burned out? Is this negative feeling I have going to be with me forever?

Action: A phone on the stand starts to ring. It breaks Ken's prayer and concentration. It rings 6 times.

Ken, out loud to himself: "Why doesn't anyone answer the phone? What if it's an emergency?"

Action: The phone continues to ring 5 more times. Ken looks around the room. No one else seems to hear it. The family keeps talking, and the waitress doesn't look up from taking their order. It keeps ringing. Finally, in exasperation, Ken walks over to the phone to answer it.

Ken: "Hello?"

Telephone operator from the sound room: “Long distance for Ken Gaub.”

Ken, stunned: “You’re crazy!

Action: Ken realizes he’s been rude. He straightens himself up.

Ken trying to explain: “This can’t be! I was just standing outside this restaurant I’ve never been to before, and the phone was ringing...”

Telephone operator: “Is Ken Gaub there?” Pause. “I have a long-distance call for him.”

Ken: “Is this a joke?”

Action: Ken smooths his hair, smiling, as if a Candid Camera crew is coming.

Ken: “Where’s the camera?”

Action: The family has gotten their pizza and have begun to eat, still talking and enjoying each other.

Telephone operator: “I have a long-distance call for Ken Gaub, sir. Is he there or isn’t he?”

Ken, not understanding: “Operator, I’m Ken Gaub.”

Operator: “Are you suuuuurrrre?”

Action: A young woman, Millie, appears on the far left of the stage. She has a phone in her hand. She breaks in.

Millie: “Yes, that’s him, Operator! Mr. Guab, I’m Millie from Harrisburg, PA. You don’t know me, but I’m desperate. Please help me.”

Ken: “What can I do for you?”

Action: Millie begins to weep. Ken waits patiently for her to gain control.

Millie: “I was about to kill myself, and I started to write a suicide note. Then I began to pray and tell God I didn’t want to do this. I remembered seeing you on TV and how kind you were. You seemed so understanding to the people you were talking to on your show. I thought, if only I could talk to Mr. Gaub, I’d be okay.”

Action: Ken mouths – WOW.

Millie, calmer, pauses, takes a deep breath: “I knew it was impossible because I didn’t know how to reach you. So I started to finish the note. And then some numbers came into my mind. I didn’t know what they were, but I wrote them down.”

Ken says softly, covering up the mouth piece: “God, help me know how to help Millie.”

Millie: “I looked at those numbers, and I thought, wouldn’t it be wonderful if I had a miracle from God, and God has given me Ken’s phone number? I can’t believe I am talking to you! Are you in your office in California?”

Ken: “I don’t have an office in California. It’s in Yakima, WA.”

Millie, looking puzzled. Slowly she asks: “Then where are you?”

Ken: “Millie, don’t you know? You made the call.”

Millie: “But I don’t know what area this is.”

Narrator: Millie had dialed the long-distance operator and given the numbers to her, making it a person-to-person call. And somehow she had found Ken in a parking lot in Dayton, OH.

Action: Ken and Millie talk inaudibly on the phones as the narrator continues.

Narrator: Ken counseled Millie.

Action: Millie and Ken hang up the phones. Looking at the phone, Millie puts her hand on her heart, bows her head and says thank you.

Action: Ken looks at his phone, dazed. He looks over at his family. He is standing tall and a look of gratitude comes over his face.

Narrator: Ken had prayed for a sign, and he got it. He received just what he needed. A renewed sense of purpose, a glimpse of the value of his work, an electrifying awareness of God’s concern for It’s creation, all in an encounter that had been arranged by Universal forces.

Action: Ken walks over to the table where his family is eating. He has a big big smile on his face. He is obviously happy.

Ken: “Barb, you won’t believe this! God knows where I am.”

Action: Cast gets up and walks out of the sanctuary.

Skit: Take a Moment to Really See

Characters:

Narrator –
Blind couple –
Baby -- doll
3 or 4 people who pretend to be driving a car –

Props:

Illusion of cars
2 white canes
Large toddler doll
Baby in sling
Crosswalk
Sound track of cars whizzing by
Stoplight hanging from ceiling
White tape on floor to designate lanes

Action: Narrator sets up the scene. She is driving in car.

Narrator: *“I was driving to a business appointment and, as usual, I was planning in my mind what I was going to say. I came to a very busy intersection where the stoplight had just turned red. ‘All right,’ I thought to myself, ‘I can beat the next light if I race ahead of the pack.’”*

Narrator: *“My mind and car were in auto pilot, ready to go when suddenly my trance was broken by an unforgettable sight.”*

White tape on the floor indicates the crosswalk.

Action: Blind couple walks from in back of the church. Canes are stretched out in front. They walk arm in arm. Woman is clutching baby to her chest.

Narrator: *“A young couple, both blind, were walking arm-in-arm across this busy intersection with cars whizzing by in every direction.”*

Action: Someone makes whizzing car sounds – sound track? People pretending to be driving cars are moving around the stage.

Narrator: *“The man was holding the hand of his wife, while the woman was clutching a baby sling to her chest, obviously carrying a child. Each of them had a white cane extended, searching for clues to navigate them across the intersection.”*

Action: Couple slowly comes down aisle.

Narrator: *“Initially I was moved. They were overcoming what I felt was one of the most feared handicaps – blindness. ‘Wouldn’t it be terrible to be blind?’ I thought. My thought was quickly interrupted by horror when I saw that the couple were not walking in the crosswalk, but were instead veering diagonally, directly toward the middle of the intersection.*

Action: Couple starts veering over the white crosswalk marks.

Narrator: *“Without realizing the danger they were in, they were walking right smack into the path of oncoming cars. I was frightened for them because I didn’t know if the other drivers understood what was happening.*

Narrator: *However, I saw a miracle unfold before my eyes.*

Action: People pretending to drive cars stop.

Narrator: *“Every car in every direction came to a simultaneous stop. Everything froze. In that moment, time seemed to stand still for this family.”*

Narrator stops for a long pause.

Narrator: *I noticed everyone’s attention was also fixed on the couple. Suddenly the driver to my right reacted. He started to yell...*

Action: Person driving car to driver’s right – Cranes neck out of window.

Driver: S/He yells **“To your right. To your right!”**

Action: Other people in the cars hear him and join him.

<p><i>All Drivers: All drivers start to shout in unison, “To your right, to your right.”</i></p>

Action: Couple responds. They adjust their course as they follow the coaching. Continue to use canes. They come to the curb. They remain arm-in-arm.

Narrator continues:

Everyone could tell the blind couple had no clue what danger they were in yet you could hear the relief from all the drivers... they were saying...”

Action: People in cars get expressions of relief and say relieving statements.

Narrator: *“I think all of us were deeply moved by what we had just witnessed. Here were human beings stepping outside **themselves for a moment to help this family in need as the light turned green.**”*

Action: The cars all drive off and the couple disappears.