

*The Embedded Lie is a compelling, emotional, irreverent mystery. Eight central characters feature within an Australian seaside setting. The basis of their connection revolves around a simple game of golf. Same day, same time, each year.*

## **The Embedded Lie**

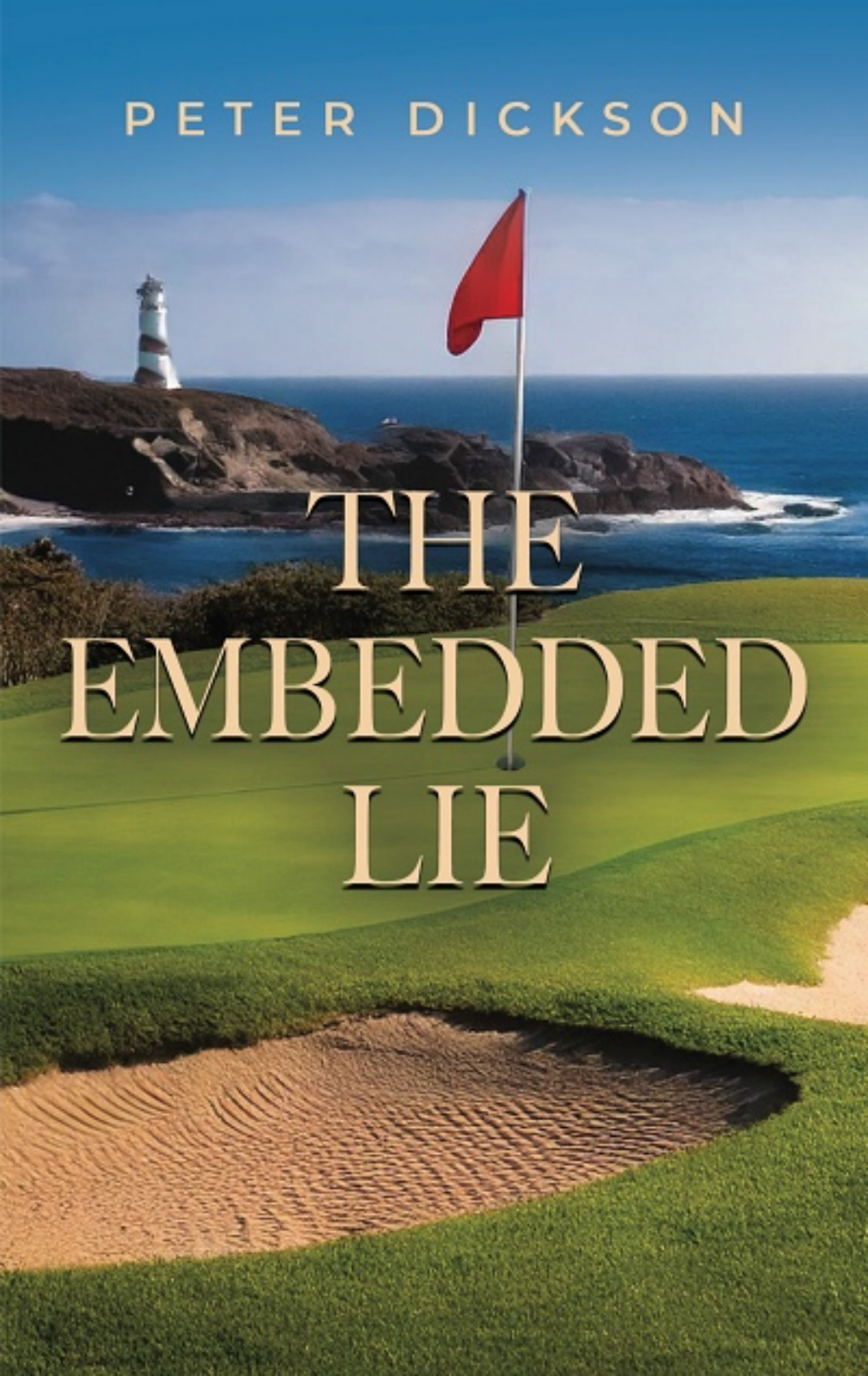
By Peter Dickson

**Order the book from the publisher [Booklocker.com](https://www.booklocker.com)**

**<https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/13672.html?s=pdf>**

**or from your favorite neighborhood  
or online bookstore.**

PETER DICKSON



THE  
EMBEDDED  
LIE

Copyright © 2024 Peter Dickson

Print ISBN: 978-1-959621-44-7

Ebook ISBN: 979-8-88531-865-5

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.

Published by Abuzz Press, Inc., Trenton, Georgia.

The characters and events in this book are fictitious. Any similarity to real persons, living or dead, is coincidental and not intended by the author.

Abuzz Press, Inc.  
2024

First Edition

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data  
Dickson, Peter  
THE EMBEDDED LIE by Peter Dickson  
Library of Congress Control Number: 2024924582

# CONTENTS

PROLOGUE.....	7
CHAPTER 1: TEE OFF - 2023 .....	11
CHAPTER 2: HOLDEN SCRAMBLE - 1977.....	28
CHAPTER 3: ETIQUETTE - 1993.....	32
CHAPTER 4: FIRST CUT - 1994.....	44
CHAPTER 5: THE LONG SHAFT - 1997 .....	54
CHAPTER 6: UNPLAYABLE LIE - 1999 .....	69
CHAPTER 7: COUNT BACK - 1977.....	83
CHAPTER 8: PICK UP - 2002 .....	86
CHAPTER 9: FLUSHED IT - 2005.....	105
CHAPTER 10: CHOKE - 2008.....	121
CHAPTER 11: HAZARD - 2010.....	144
CHAPTER 12: RECOVERY - 2011 .....	159
CHAPTER 13: BANDIT - 2014 .....	176
CHAPTER 14: KNOCK-DOWN - 2015.....	191
CHAPTER 15: GROUND UNDER REPAIR - 2019.....	204
CHAPTER 16: BARE LIE - 2022.....	222
CHAPTER 17: RUB OF THE GREEN - 2023 .....	235
CHAPTER 18: THE LONG GAME - 2024.....	251
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	269

## PROLOGUE

- To you, your father should be as a God. – William Shakespeare.

*My father...a God?* Questioned the voice inside his head. *Shakespeare was clearly not of sound mind when he inked this line. If my father is a God...humanity is doomed...for he is nothing but a monumental buffoon.*

The voice outside his head was becoming unbearable.

“To be brutally honest son, I’m not the least bit surprised. It’s just another example of how you’re not the smartest tool in the shed. Now... far be it for me to offer any golfing advice but even blind Freddy could see what you’re attempting has disaster written all over it.” Mentally at his wits end after a sustained barrage of ridicule spewing from the lips of his old man, he ceased winding up the Hills Hoist clothesline and broke his silence. “I’ve just about had enough of you. Seriously...you are driving me insane with your cynical dribble. Either shut it...or piss off. And for your information...its sharpest tool in the shed...not smartest tool...you insufferable tool.” Choking on a mouthful of whisky his father was mightily impressed with the comeback spluttering... “Touché!”

Returning his attention to the Hills Hoist, he pondered what heinous atrocities he committed in a past life to be lumbered with such a father this time around. *How many other 67-year-olds in the world were half a bottle deep at 12 noon? I’m tipping not many.* Once upon a time it was amusing and kind of badass but

not anymore. Now it was just embarrassing but this raging alcoholic was family, and he was stuck with him. Stuck like starving leeches on an open wound.

After stumbling across some long-forgotten fish netting stored behind his home gym, he convinced himself it would be ideal as a makeshift golf practice net. His father was observing him peg the frayed material to the clothesline with a glass of whisky nestled in hand, and scepticism nestled in head. With a famed local reputation as being the worst golfer to have ever drawn breath, this was risky to say the least. Sporting prowess had never been his strong suit but something about golf had always tickled his fancy. Sifting through his bag to find some balls to use he was annoyed to find just one. Losing ten of them yesterday at the brutally tight Bay Heads course hadn't helped his supply. Dropping his only ball onto lawn in desperate need of mowing, he gripped his driver and took a couple of air swings. Staring with intent at the shoddy apparatus now swaying in the wind he took his stance. It briefly crossed his mind this might be a tad ambitious, especially attempting such a shot straight off the deck with a driver. The blustery offshore breeze wasn't helping matters either. For his ball to land safely in the netting it would require pinpoint accuracy and skill, neither of which he possessed. Missing would see his ball either soar into the sand dunes hugging the back fence, or pummel into said fence, ricocheting into the side of the house causing untold damage. Determined to back himself and ignore his old man's pleas to reconsider, he let rip. For a split second he thought he felt a muscle tear in his massive chest, but gamely pushed through with his stroke. Looking up in eager anticipation he watched it

sail at least 15 feet left of the intended target, its trajectory barely clearing the fence and taking chaotic flight into the yonder.

*Bugger. That's the only pill I have*, he lamented. Tossing the club away in disgust and swearing at himself for such a disgraceful shot he glared at his dad who was shaking his head in a smug, 'I told you so' manner. "Don't say a word you old muppet. Not one word," he threatened. Figuring he had a half-decent line on where his ball might be hiding in the dunes, he decided it was well worth a search. It would also put some welcome distance between him and his maniac of a father. Awkwardly clambering over the rickety back fence, he began following an abandoned walking track hidden within the dense coastal scrub. As he ambled in pursuit, he couldn't stop glancing at the definition of his tanned biceps rippling out from a new powerlifting singlet. *How well am I going? Seriously...what a specimen I've become.* It was only the unexpected sound of nearby voices that jolted him out of his self-admiration.

This was a route rarely taken by the regular army of beach dog walkers, so he was genuinely surprised to hear anyone in the vicinity. *Shit... I hope my ball didn't hit anyone.* With each footstep the voices became louder and more familiar. Slowing his stride to a standstill behind a fallen Moonah tree, he was now close enough to eavesdrop without being noticed. Lowering into a crouched position he managed to find a line of sight through the thick vegetation, revealing the identity of the couple and their Labrador Retriever. "It's done, he's dead," the male voice declared. The woman slowly fell to her knees placing both hands on her head uttering... "Oh my god...oh my god, what do we do

now?” Without hesitation the man responded... “It’s now the old lady’s turn.”

*Holy shit! My ball did hit someone! Hang on a second...he said it’s now the old lady’s turn...doesn’t make sense.* His heart started thumping against his ribs. Unsure whether it was due to the new batch of steroids jabbed into his glute an hour earlier, or hearing such words flow from a person he knew well, it took all his concentration to remain deadly still and undetected. For the next few minutes, he listened in utter disbelief to the grizzly details of a dark secret involving people he’d known his entire life. His ageing leg muscles were violently screaming from an earlier squat session, requiring him to urgently shift position. Unfortunately, this triggered some dead wood to snap loudly as his chunky right thigh made contact. The Labrador heard it first and launched into a barking frenzy. Worried he was about to be exposed he anxiously peered through the treeline to see the couple swiftly walking away in the opposite direction, yanking their highly aggravated dog by a choker chain leash. Relief swept over him as he rose to his feet before the dreaded leg cramps set in. His mind began racing. *What do I do with this information? It’s astonishing. Do I tell anyone? Who would even believe me? I need more proof. Think it through. Good plan. Now...where the hell is my ball?*



## CHAPTER 1: TEE OFF - 2023

Ten o'clock in the morning and I'm already sweating like a speechwriter at a Trump press conference. I heard this line from my good friend Billy a few weeks ago and laughed out loud. I wasn't laughing now though as my sweat glands fired on all cylinders. Loading the car for a game of golf should never be this difficult. With the temperature nudging 30 degrees, I'm chasing a dozen stray balls across the carport which burst free from an open zip as I flung my bag into the boot. Once I'd rounded up the escapees it was time to squeeze the buggy into the limited area left available. In attempting to create some space that wasn't there, my finger jammed into the rim of the buggy. I launched into an expletive tirade as I ripped my throbbing digit from the frame. It's not something I'm proud of but swearing is my go-to crutch when in pain. I once read somewhere how cursing can reduce the perception of pain by as much as 33%. I like to think I was adhering to scientific fact, rather than simply having a potty mouth.

This golf buggy has caused me nothing but grief. When I first laid eyes on the blue-rimmed fold-down at my local golf store I fell in love immediately. I was enamoured by its sleek appearance and visualised how professional I would look striding the fairways with it rolling by my side. One of the staff members noticed me pause at the buggy section and was hovering in my personal space before I could blink. "This is a

work of art for the price,” he said in a tone that sounded very much like Darryl Kerrigan from the Australian film - *The Castle*. I’ve always been a little nervous around golf shop employees. They intimidate me and I don’t know why. It might be due to the fact they always look resplendent wearing immaculate golf attire. I also assume they play off a handicap of two or below, which makes me feel completely inferior. This guy wasn’t helping my preconceived notions. He was a poster boy for golf. Tall, tanned, and wearing an extremely tight polo which only helped magnify his triathlete-shaped rig. “Looks good,” I responded acting like I knew my buggies. I had resorted to projecting the ‘been around golf all my life’ vibe. He implored me to try the seat. “It’s like a sofa in your living room,” he beamed. “It has space inside for your balls, tees, wallet, and car keys including a spring action base which adds another dimension of comfort. It’s got absolutely everything.” I was captivated but portrayed an energy suggesting I wasn’t an easy sales target. *Should I take a seat while he is here? Should I wave him off to let me browse in peace?* I took a seat. “Wow! You’re not wrong!” I blurted. His eyes lit up. “See I told you. Worth the price alone just for the seat!” I had fallen for his buggy-selling charms. Within minutes he was scanning my credit card. *Is he smirking? I’m certain I glimpsed a smirk as he handed me the receipt. Is there something I missed?* With the benefit of hindsight I have come to realise it was at this exact moment he knew, that I knew, nothing about serious golf. What I know now, which I didn’t know then, was purchasing a golf buggy with a seat is akin to scoring an own goal. It opened the sledging floodgates from my golf cronies. “Who on earth needs to take a

seat during golf?” “You’ve got to be kidding – how old are you 85?” “Are you a bit weary today snookums?” The ridicule has been relentless and is showing no signs of abating.

All this finger-jamming had temporarily distracted me from the film camera crew occupying our front yard and nature strip. It was beginning to look like a movie set out there. The reason they were here was to complete a documentary my sister had dedicated many years of her life directing. My eleven-year-old son Dylan was already in the passenger seat beyond excited to be surrounded by cameras. Normally a golf course is the last place he would want to be but today was different. Today was going to be epic in his opinion. Still reeling in pain as I tossed my golf shoes into the back seat, I noticed my mobile phone vibrating inside my shorts pocket. It was a number I didn’t recognise. Usually, I can’t press cancel quickly enough when a rogue number appears but needed a distraction from my aching fingers. I answered and put it on speaker. “Hello, is this umm...Steven?” an elderly voice asked. *Bloody old-sounding telemarketer this one.* “Yes it is. Who is speaking?” “It’s Leanne Anderson,” she responded. “Hello Mrs. Anderson, how are you?” This was an unexpected phone call from my buddy Stilt’s mum. Although I was in my mid-forties, I still felt compelled to call her Mrs. Anderson. “Well, umm...I’m a bit confused... sorry but I’ve forgotten why I’m calling,” her voice resonating with embarrassment. “What’s wrong, are you OK?” I asked concerned. “Yes, I think so...umm actually no not really. There is something I need to tell you, but I can’t remember what.” This was a tricky situation. Mrs. Anderson had been battling with her health over the last few years and resided in the Bay Heads Aged

Care facility. Feeling the need to help her along I thought mentioning our golf day might trigger her memory. “Did you know today is the Masters golf event Mrs. Anderson? I’m just on my way to the club now with my son Dylan.” There was an eerily long silence before she replied. “Is Joe playing? I haven’t seen him. I tried calling but he didn’t answer.” “Yes Joe’s playing. I believe he’s still on his way from Melbourne. He’s running a little late.” There was further silence before she spoke again. “Umm oh that’s right...he is asking me for money.” “Who is asking for money Mrs. Anderson?” “I don’t have enough to give him. I need to tell you about your brother,” the phone went dead before she said another word. *Did she just hang up or drop the phone? How weird.* “What’s going on Dad?” Dylan asked as I stared at my iPhone confused. *My Brother? What does she need to tell me about John? What has he done now?* I tried calling the number back three times, but it kept going through to the Aged Care answering machine. We were running late for golf so had to get moving. “Not sure Dylan, I will chase it up with Stilts at the club. I might try ringing your Uncle John to see if he knows what she’s on about.” After two failed attempts at calling John who never answered his phone at the best of times, I decided to leave it until later. “All a bit strange...money? She is going a bit loopy so it might be nothing. Would make me angry if your Uncle is somehow involved, I thought he was keeping out of trouble.” Dylan wasn’t paying any attention to what I was saying. He was too busy giving the GoPro camera attached to my dashboard the two thumbs up.

One hour later we were all gathered on the 1st tee. Tears of joy sprinkled with sadness were valiantly trying to penetrate the

SPF50+ sunscreen lathered onto my face. The anticipation for this long-awaited day was exhilarating but I couldn't shake the sombre feeling within. I detested how easily I became emotional. It's the way I've always been. My nervous system was wired differently than most. I lived life tenuously balancing on an emotional highwire. Fall to the left and fret awaits. Fall to the right and uneasy peace captures me. Unfortunately, my balance has tipped me left significantly more than right.

Hearing the buzz of camera drone propellers hovering overhead with film crews perched alongside the 1st hole was like reliving a dream. A very old dream. The sense of *deja vu* was overwhelming. Campbell 'Two Soups' Hinds booming voice rocked me back to the present. No one on earth epitomised the term 'all the gear...no idea' more than Two Soups. He was dressed as if currently playing on the PGA tour and sponsored by a major golf brand, which he most certainly was not. The pink polo hugging his torso appeared to be at least three sizes too small. His sizeable man boobs looked odds on to explode through the recycled polyester and elastane fabric any second. He glanced over at the Director and asked... "Good to go nackers?" "Yes, thank you Campbell we are rolling," came the amused reply.

Two Soups then unleashed. "Silence you blokes! Pay attention to your president!" aiming his venom towards Billy who was already talking the ears off everyone. Two Soups was using his new driver as a microphone and switched tone to one of rampant excitement. "Welcome one and all to this year's prestigious Masters event! As per tradition, there is only one rule for the

day. No fucking cheating!” This was rich coming from the mouth of Two Soups. The only known golfing cheat in this lineup was his good self. He then continued in mock sports commentator mode. “Will you all please welcome to the 1st tee...Mick the Snout Bardsley!” Raucous applause erupted. Snout bent down shaking his head in horrified embarrassment as he planted a tee into the turf. I was so focused on what lay ahead I decided to temporarily ignore the strange phone call received from Mrs. Anderson. The only concern occupying my mind was something else entirely. *I hope no one dies this afternoon. Surely lightning won't strike twice.*

Here we were once again. December 29 in a blistering hot Australian Summer enjoying very familiar surroundings at the Bay Heads Golf Club. Or as we like to call it... ‘Royal’ Bay Heads. Each year on or around this date, eight lifelong friends congregate to play 18 holes of golf. The sole aim to win the coveted Master’s Green Jacket. Poor old Snout had the dubious honour of being first off. President Two Soups makes the call each year on who he thinks should be first away. For reasons only known to himself he chose the Snout today. Mick detests being referred to as Snout. These days the only time he hears the nickname is at this very event. He is fully aware he has an enormous nose without it being publicly announced. It didn’t help matters when he took his stance in front of the chuckling gallery, that the silhouette of his shadow from the blazing sun on the freshly trimmed grass was there for all to see. His nose profile alone appeared to be at least a foot long.

There is no pressure in life quite like being the first to tee off at the Masters. All eyes including a camera lens are upon you. Everyone hoping like hell you either have an air swing or snap hook it directly into the clubhouse, perilously positioned only 50 metres left of the 1st tee. Snout was looking in unbelievable shape for a chain vaping, beer-drinking, pizza-devouring forty-five-year-old. Having spent time behind bars he'd become addicted to lifting weights due to it being the main recreational activity available. We also suspect he's giving the 'roids' a solid hammering thanks to his dodgy neighbour Wesley Simpson, who is well known for sourcing illegal pharmaceuticals and using steroids himself. With each passing year Snout was losing a few more feathers up top with his 'Fabio' styled blonde hair, but otherwise, he was presenting in abnormally good nick. The flies were already convening in record numbers on his back. His body odour was something to behold. We welcomed his recent switch from cigarettes to vapes. His preferred choice of strawberry vapour fought bravely to offset his natural smell, but it was a battle even propylene glycol and other chemicals could never win. Unfortunately for those around him, deodorant was a product Snout refused to have a healthy relationship with. He genuinely considered himself odourless, believing his natural scent didn't require any boosting. With a nose that big, it's beyond comprehension it doesn't take a whiff of the body it's attached to and register alarm bells in the brain.

Snout's golf swing was typically atrocious. His fluorescent pink ball flew off the club face cannoning into the sandbox located 5 feet right of the tee. It thundered into the steel frame with such force it rebounded back like a tracer bullet into his left knee

causing him to tumble over in excruciating pain. There was pandemonium amongst the gallery and film crew. I was belly laughing so hard I couldn't breathe. Instantly I was aware of how happy I felt. I hadn't laughed this hard for the longest time. Although feeling immense pressure to win, a round of golf with this lot was just what I needed. Roaming the fairways with such an odd mix of complex humans often felt like some bizarre type of therapy. The type that unlatched an emotional valve within. Freeing you to talk immense amounts of bullshit, reminisce, listen intensely, suffer crippling embarrassment, laugh hysterically, vent with passion, drink to excess and ultimately, succeed or fail in one day. We were all getting older but on this one day of the year we felt like carefree teenagers again. Friends and acquaintances from all walks of life have come and gone but this group was a constant. Our annual ritual provided an unbreakable connection. It had so much of our lives embedded within.

“For fuck’s sake Snout you’re embarrassing us in front of the cameras,” barked Two Soups. “Move aside and sort yourself out. Play your second after the rest of the group tee off you dead set plonker.” Two Soups tried without success to calm the rest of us before his next introduction. “Please welcome our reigning Master’s champion, Kobe Sanders!” Kobe was our resident good-looking rooster. Standing roughly 6-foot-5 inches with a strong tradesman build his appearance was striking. As he made his way to tee off, he checked on Snout’s condition. The rest of us were still laughing at what had just taken place but Kobe was focused on Snout and if he was OK. “Yeah, I should be fine



thanks mate. For crying out loud. What are the chances?" grimaced Snout as he inspected the self-inflicted wound.

As per tradition, Kobe was wearing the green jacket in honour of his victory the year before. He was going through some difficult times lately with a very sick son but still made the effort to be here. There was no fanfare about Kobe, he always appeared relaxed and upbeat no matter what he was going through. He was also an annoyingly good golfer for someone who hardly played. His swing was solid and there's no doubt if he played regularly, he would be a low handicapper. The Master's committee which essentially comprised one person...Two Soups... handicapped Kobe hard today because he was the reigning champion. Playing off a 16-handicap last year he destroyed the field with 41 Stableford points. This year his handicap is 13. The 'committee' never likes to see back-to-back Master's champions. Kobe monstered his drive a long way up the middle of the fairway as per usual. "Shot Kobe. 13 might not be bloody low enough," hissed the president. "Let's now welcome to the 1st tee Stevie Hayes!" *My turn, please, please, please, hit it straight.*

Anxiety and I regularly jostled but at this moment we were engaged in a full-on brawl. Approaching the tee box Kobe gave me a wink as we crossed paths. The sight of the green jacket he was wearing made me think of dad. He passed away three weeks ago after a short battle with pancreatic cancer. On his deathbed, I'd finally come clean about the whereabouts of his old Australian Basketball Blazer which mysteriously went missing in 1994. I had planned to tell him the truth for many years but

kept putting it off. On reflection, it was madness to try and wash away my guilt by fessing up while he was scarcely hanging onto his last breath. But there I was, explaining how it was me who stole his prized possession back in 1994 for use at our annual golf tournament. Dad had searched tirelessly to find this garment for three decades. He always blamed mum, convinced she was responsible. Something she always vehemently denied. With his belief that mum was the guilty party it kept all the pressure on her. I was never considered a suspect. The only other people who knew where it originated from were my wife, brother and sister, and fellow Master's alumni. It was a secret we managed to keep from dad and anyone who asked about its origins for all these years.

I was hoping he would react by expressing something along the lines of... "It's alright son no harm done," or "I always knew it was you, no drama Stevie," but it wasn't to be. Instead, he glared at me with a rage in his eyes that bore right through me. He started gasping for air as he gripped my shirt collar and pulled me close. With haunting purpose, he spat out... "Burn it, burn it!" Then he was gone. Those were his last words on earth. *Burn it! What the hell? How could some stupid old basketball jacket mean so much to someone?*

I focussed on a lone tear sliding down his left cheek. It was the second occasion I'd been in such proximity to a dead body. This time was not nearly as traumatising as the first. *Was it my fault? Did I push him over the edge?* We had never been close as father and son. Throughout my life I often wondered if he even liked me so relief was my only real emotion. I began wondering why

I wasn't upset in the slightest. I knew it was coming but my father had just passed away before my eyes and yet it may as well have been a stranger. The urge to say or even think something fitting for the situation was immense but I had nothing. If his ghost was hovering over the dead body waiting for me to say something poignant before heading to the bright light, then it would have been gravely disappointed. Claspng his hand the best I could do was vow to win his green jacket back, returning it to its rightful owners. The only problem was that I'd never won the Masters. Finishing third several times was the closest I'd ever managed in thirty years.

As I swung my driver through the ball all I could hear were the words *burn it* echoing in my head. I had to finally win this bloody thing. It was bigger than just a round of golf now. Thankfully, I was off to a good start with a freakish drive that outdid Kobe by about 20 yards. *Today is my day. I'm doing this for my family. It's meant to be.* "Good shot Stevie! You pulled that one out of your arse," commented Two Soups in amazement. "My day mate. My day," I responded. "Now would you all please welcome our final member of the first group Paul Jones!" Two Soups gave the 'Paul Jones' particularly loud emphasis hoping anyone listening around the clubhouse would hear it. We giggled like schoolchildren. This so-called Paul Jones was in fact Nicholas 'Nicko' Ramsey-Evans in disguise. He was wearing a ridiculously large bucket hat which didn't fit his head combined with mirrored sunglasses and a fake moustache. I hadn't seen a fake moustache since 1985 when I found one in a Royal Melbourne Show bag. If you were within 10 feet of him and glanced at his face and didn't realise it was

fake, you needed glasses. He looked like a petrified Mario Brother. The reason for his pathetic and childish attempt at disguising himself was because he was currently serving a twelve-month suspension handed down by the Bay Head's Golf Club Committee. He was the only player amongst us who was an actual member of the club. Recently divorced from a second marriage and bitterly estranged from his children, he now spent most weekends alone at his holiday house. With nothing else to do he decided to become a member and play as often as he could. His crime was he'd sent an abusive text message to one of his many golfing chat groups after one of those weekend rounds. The message accused another player, who happened to be a committee member of the club, of being quote 'a fucking low life scum sucking fat cheating bastard.' Regrettably for Nicko, the second bottle of red he consumed post-round tipped him over the edge and headfirst into tapping on his phone. Once he'd pressed send, he realised it was sent to the wrong group but couldn't care less. Not being one to ever be overly concerned about consequences or what people thought of him he fell into a contented, vented, deep sleep. The following morning, he woke from his slumber with a pounding headache and checked his phone. It had thirty-two messages waiting to be read. His abusive tirade had rapidly made its way around the Bay Heads golfing community. It also ended up in the hands of Club Captain Kenny Stapleton or as we referred to him, Judge Smails. The Judge took great pleasure in ordering Nicko to front the club committee and explain himself. Kenny had disliked Nicko and the rest of us for many a year so was frothing at the bit to hand down a hefty punishment. After Nicko vigorously tried

defending himself without any justification, the committee took six seconds to hand down their verdict. Twelve-month suspension from playing the course and being anywhere near the clubhouse. There was little chance Nicko was going to miss Masters Day, so he decided it was well worth risking an extended ban by playing in disguise. He looked absurd but it appeared to be working as he hadn't been spotted. There was so much attention focused on the camera crews it enabled him to fly under the radar. He urgently teed off and set a cracking pace up the fairway to move out of sight from the clubhouse and local members. His fake moustache was already half dislodged so we took bets on how many holes it would take before he lost it in the rough somewhere. It was now time for Snout to play his second shot. Already limping badly he managed to at least hit this one forward, barely missing Nicko's bucket hat by a whisker as he stormed up the 1st hole.

Once we played our second, third, and for some fourth shots, we paused before putting to watch how the group behind fared with their opening gambits. Hitting first was the other big unit in our lineup, Stilts. At 6-foot-6 with skinny legs suggesting he'd missed leg day for at least thirty-five years, he was a peculiar sight standing over a golf ball to say the least. Joe 'Stilts' Anderson was a Detective in the Victorian Police Force. There were two reasons he wanted to become a copper. The first was to follow in his old man's footsteps. The second reason was he'd always wanted the power to arrest people for actions he considered out of order. Everything annoyed Stilts. He was always on the lookout for trouble. Only twenty minutes ago he was complaining about taking a pee at the clubhouse urinal.

Another bloke wandered in and stood right next to him. “Who does this when there are at least ten free troughs waiting to be used? Why stand right next to me?” he whined. This was the kind of stuff that always got under his skin. If he could get away with arresting people for crimes such as not picking up their dog’s poop, sneaking up outside lanes in heavy traffic to push in front of those waiting in line, or simply eating too loud, then he would have thousands of arrests under his belt. We’ve known each other for as long as I can remember, and it’s always been a love-hate relationship. We’ve had some drama playing together in the past which neither of us are proud of. He’s always had the ability to rattle my cage more than anyone else I know. There’s no doubt over the last decade we’ve become closer than ever before, but I’m still happy to give him a wide berth today. He turns into a different animal on the golf course. Far too serious and devoid of humour for my liking. I had mentioned to him before the round about the strange call I received from his mum, and he was visibly shocked. He’d arrived straight from Melbourne without visiting so had no idea what she was on about. He immediately tried to call her a few times before we teed off but with no luck. “She’s been struggling a bit with dementia over the last few years Stevie, I will see her tonight and make sure everything’s OK. She’s made several strange calls to me recently which make no sense so don’t let it worry you.” He proceeded to smoke his drive a long way with his customary draw finishing centre of the fairway. We clapped loudly from a distance. He pumped his fist. Next off was Brett ‘Masta’ Bates. He added a bit of sporting credibility to the group. He was the only one of us to have played professional

sport in his younger days. His claim to fame was he played AFL football. Now managing his own fitness centre franchise in Mildura, the little man has also been going through a rough patch. His wife left him suddenly for another woman without warning. Another woman she met at his fitness centre during a Pilates class. He was blindsided with no idea she was even attracted to women. They now share custody of his three kids, but he desperately misses seeing them every day. He keeps a lot of what's going on in his life to himself. Some time ago at the 19th hole after plenty of silly sauce, Snout couldn't help himself and had a dig at Masta about how bad he must be 'in the sack' to turn his wife into a lesbian. Masta stuck his fist through Snout's nose, which to be fair wasn't that difficult. You could take a swing from 4 feet away and still make solid contact with that monstrosity. We all jumped in to calm them down and not long after they were hugging it out. But from that moment on Masta made it very clear to all, especially Snout, to mind our own business.

Following Masta's tee shot it was time for the great Billy Lewis. Billy was the most optimistic guy I'd ever met. I admired the way he attacked life. He looks strong and fit today which is brilliant to see after the health issues he's endured. Now working for an Advanced Hair Company in Melbourne it also looks like he might have had some recent work thickening up his rug. We all know he wears a wig. Staggeringly, it's not too bad and very hard to spot for even the most avid hair hat detector. We don't ridicule him about it anymore, behind his back sure, but never to his face. His swing was characteristically without power but at

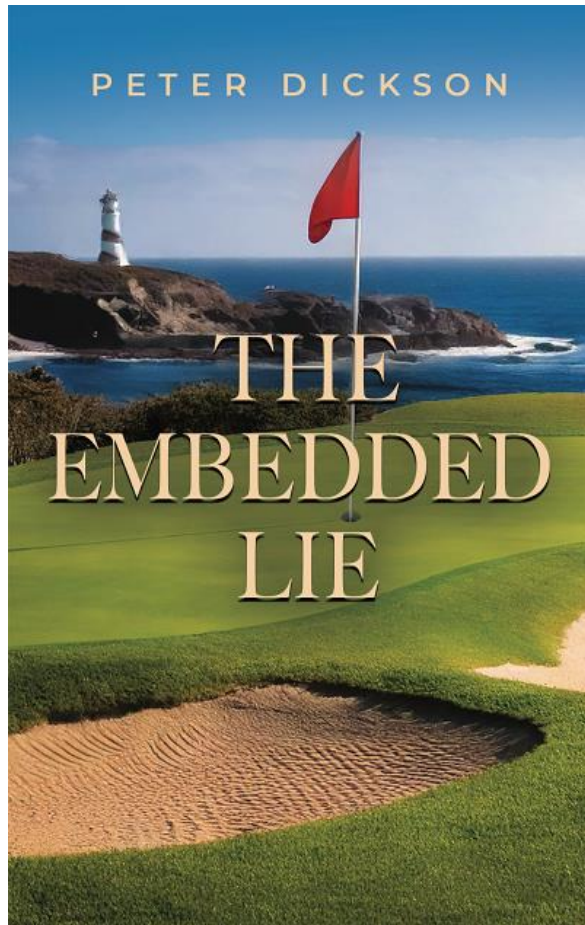
least his ball reached the fairway. Since his teens he's always swung it like an eighty-year-old.

Finally, it was time for the president. If anyone was the alpha male of the group, it was Two Soups. He was without question the greatest cheater I had ever seen on a golf course. Claiming five strokes on a hole when he had seven was standard behaviour. Subtly kicking his ball into a better lie was also one of his great skills. We had all witnessed it with our own eyes, but he refused to admit any of it. His customary response to our accusations was how we were full of shit and acutely jealous of his talents. I cannot recall him admitting guilt for anything. He works as a Financial Advisor in Melbourne these days and is potentially facing serious criminal charges. He has been accused of offering misleading investment advice for a company he has a small ownership stake in. He claims it's all a beat-up and nothing but a witch hunt. To say he was circumspect in business dealings would be an understatement. I've always given him the benefit of the doubt but deep down you just never know the secrets hidden within Two Soups, especially when I know he's been carrying significant debt for several years. Even from our distant vantage point on the 1st green we could see him point his driver towards us with intent. He was posing like the legendary baseball player Babe Ruth, who famously pointed to the stands alerting the pitcher as to where he was about to hit a home run. We chuckled and watched as he proceeded to snap-hook his drive directly at the clubhouse. It skimmed the rooftop and ended up somewhere on the 18th hole. Babe Ruth he ain't. He then violently threw his new driver 20 metres down the fairway. The camera crews were bent over laughing. The 2023 Bay



*The Embedded Lie*

Heads Master's golf tournament was officially underway. Little did we know before the sun set over the Heads tonight our lives would irrevocably change forever.



*The Embedded Lie is a compelling, emotional, irreverent mystery. Eight central characters feature within an Australian seaside setting. The basis of their connection revolves around a simple game of golf. Same day, same time, each year.*

## **The Embedded Lie**

By Peter Dickson

**Order the book from the publisher [Booklocker.com](https://www.booklocker.com)**

**<https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/13672.html?s=pdf>**

**or from your favorite neighborhood  
or online bookstore.**