

THE MAGIC OF GOLF AT HOOK'S HIDEAWAY



ERIC'S STORY

ANNE BRAUN

ILLUSTRATED BY SANDY VAZAN

DEDICATION

To my amazing Son, Eric. Your journey on and off the golf course has been inspirational, and I feel blessed to have shared it with you. This one's for you, my baby.

To my husband, proofreader, and fact-checker, whose love of golf inspired another generation.

To my amazing illustrator, Sandy Vazan, whom I am thrilled to have with me again on this new journey.

To my dear cousin Paul Hope, who is golfing with the angels. The story is finally ready to be told, and I'm sending it up to you.

To my beautiful family and friends who have encouraged and supported me on my writing journey, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

And . . .

To kids who struggle with reading. Don't judge a book by its thickness. It may hold the key to a most unexpected adventure. Never give up; your story is out there.



Suite 300 - 990 Fort St
Victoria, BC, V8V 3K2
Canada

www.friesenpress.com

Copyright © 2019 by Anne Braun
First Edition — 2019

Illustrations by Sandy Vazan

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form, or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information browsing, storage, or retrieval system, without permission in writing from FriesenPress.

This book is printed in the Dyslexie font, the typeface for people with dyslexia. Go to www.dyslexiefont.com to find out more about the typeface.



ISBN
978-1-5255-4489-7 (Hardcover)
978-1-5255-4490-3 (Paperback)
978-1-5255-4491-0 (eBook)

1. JUVENILE FICTION, READERS, CHAPTER BOOKS

Distributed to the trade by The Ingram Book Company



“It was an exceptional day when ye walked through the gate, laddie. It has been an honour and a privilege to get to know ye, and I look forward to many more adventures with ye and Daddy.” He paused for a moment, having forgotten to tell us something important. “Ye must look for the signs in the spring,” he said, looking at both of us. “They will let ye know when it is time to visit us again.”

CAPTAIN HOOK



“Change is hard sometimes, bud, and it’s hard to say goodbye. The good news is that it won’t be long before you see them again. Do you remember what the captain said about the five driving ranges? I’m sure Old Tom, Mulligan, and the captain will be there with you on every one. In the meantime, carry them every day in your heart, and they will never leave you.”

DAD

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE:			CHAPTER FOURTEEN:		
A Golf Journey	1		My First Lesson with Dad	43	
CHAPTER TWO:			CHAPTER FIFTEEN:		
A Passion is Born!	7		Looking for the Captain	48	
CHAPTER THREE:			CHAPTER SIXTEEN:		
Range Finder	10		Very Special Keys	51	
CHAPTER FOUR:			CHAPTER SEVENTEEN:		
Finding Hook's Hideaway	12		Accessing the Tunnel Building	54	
CHAPTER FIVE:			CHAPTER EIGHTEEN:		
Hook's Hideaway	15		The Elevator Wall	57	
CHAPTER SIX:			CHAPTER NINETEEN:		
Meeting Captain Hook!	20		The Sign Wall	60	
CHAPTER SEVEN:			CHAPTER TWENTY:		
My First Official Driving Range	24		The Golden Keys	63	
CHAPTER EIGHT:			CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE:		
Distance Marker One	26		The Past, Present, Future Wall	66	
CHAPTER NINE:					
Distance Marker Two	29		END OF BOOK ONE		
CHAPTER TEN:			CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO:		
Distance Marker Three	32		Entering the Tunnels	71	
CHAPTER ELEVEN:			CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE:		
Distance Marker Four	35		Finding the Tunnel Door	74	
CHAPTER TWELVE:			CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR:		
Distance Marker Five	38		Unlocking the Tunnel Door	77	
CHAPTER THIRTEEN:			CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE:		
Distance Marker Six	41		A Successful Practice Run	81	
			CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX:		
			Remembering the Steps	84	

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN:	
The Hall of Heroes Wall	87
CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT:	
Leaving Hook's Hideaway	90
CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE:	
The Ride Home	94
CHAPTER THIRTY:	
Summer Plans	96
CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE:	
Practice Makes Magic!	98
CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO:	
The Guardian	102
CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE:	
Back to the Tunnels	105
CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR:	
Unlocking Tunnel Door One	109
CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE:	
Old Tom by the Sea	111
CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX:	
Unlocking Tunnel Door Two	117
CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN:	
Flying Golf Balls and a Tractor!	125
CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT:	
Unlocking Tunnel Door Three	135
CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE:	
Major Moments	144

END OF BOOK TWO

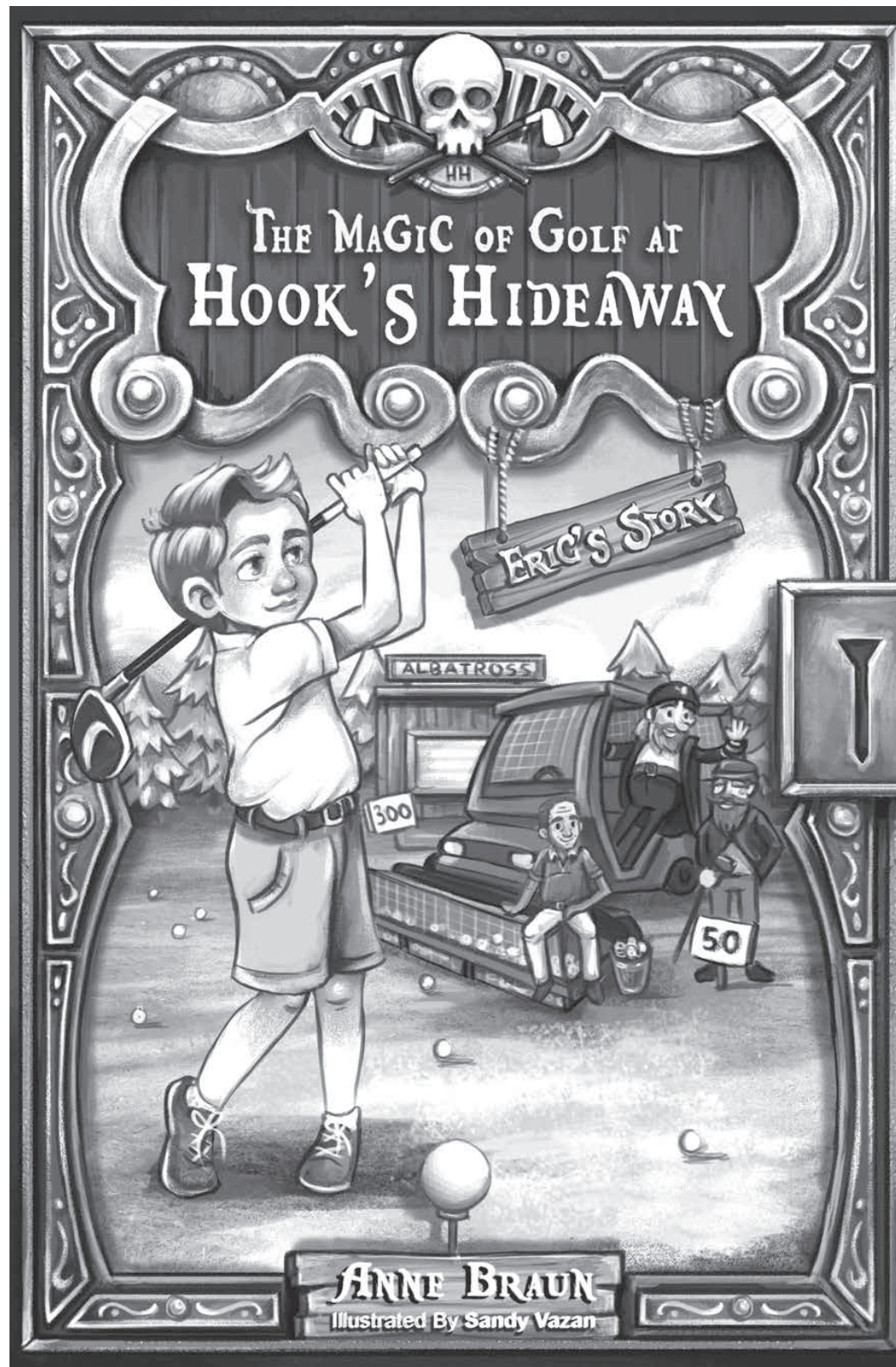
CHAPTER FORTY:	
Unlocking Tunnel Door Four	155
CHAPTER FORTY-ONE:	
Looking Like a Golfer	164
CHAPTER FORTY-TWO:	
Unlocking Tunnel Door Five	177
CHAPTER FORTY-THREE:	
Respecting the Course and Others	184
CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR:	
Unlocking Tunnel Door Six	192
CHAPTER FORTY-FIVE:	
Golf Clubs and Distance Markers	203
CHAPTER FORTY-SIX:	
Unlocking Tunnel Door Seven	214
CHAPTER FORTY-SEVEN:	
A Misguided Golfer	224
CHAPTER FORTY-EIGHT:	
Golf Rules and Scorecards	233
CHAPTER FORTY-NINE:	
Unlocking Tunnel Door Eight	244
CHAPTER FIFTY:	
Hazards Aplenty!	255
CHAPTER FIFTY-ONE:	
Unlocking Tunnel Door Nine	265
CHAPTER FIFTY-TWO:	
Mini-Putt Memories	276
CHAPTER FIFTY-THREE:	
Time to Say Goodbye	288

END OF THE BOOK



“This is not really goodbye, young laddie. It is merely a farewell until your next visit. School is important, and you do love your hockey, so you must finish what you started. There is plenty of time for golf, and I know it will be a part of your life for a long time.”

OLD TOM





CHAPTER ONE:

A Golf Journey



Any chance to get a break from school was a good one. I looked forward to every PD day on the school calendar, and this one in particular. While the teachers were professionally developing, I had something much more exciting planned.

Anyone who knows me is also aware that I have never been a fan of school, apart from recess and gym class. Being stuck inside a classroom, forced to concentrate on schoolwork, was painful and boring! All I could think about while the teacher was talking was how much longer it would be until the lesson was over. My teachers had been kind enough, though, and if I were lucky, I would

get one who understood how boys learned best. If learning wasn't engaging or fun, then what was the point? The same was true for reading.

The only time I had enjoyed reading a book was in grade one. My teacher had been great at finding stories that made sense to me and that I could relate to. The books were not too thick, and the stories were just long enough to keep me interested. Things had started to change in grade two, and they continued to go downhill from there. We started making more frequent trips to the library—the first problem! The books started getting thicker, and they ended up finding a permanent home in my backpack. From that point forward, I read because I had to, not because I wanted to. Reading became as unenjoyable as homework. And don't get me started on homework! I remember my poor mom going through every library and bookstore trying to find something that interested me. She had even considered writing a book for me about something I love. Little did she know, there would be a lot to write about in the coming years. Anyway, let's not ruin a perfectly good day by talking about school.

"Are you ready, my baby?" a voice called from the kitchen. "Dad asked me to get you there early enough to warm up. I don't want you to be late." In case you haven't figured it out, that's my mom. She's one of my biggest fans. "Dad left you a note," she continued. "It says that he will join you right after his meeting and that you shouldn't worry. He'll be there in plenty of time."

"Thanks, Mom," I responded, wondering if she remembered that I was fourteen years old and about to start high school. "I'm going to check my gear, and then I'll meet you at the car."

My golf bag and golf shoes always sat beside Dad's gear in the garage. As I reached over to grab my things, I noticed something carefully tucked away on the other side of Dad's golf bag: my first driver and my first pair of golf shoes! As I looked at them, I realized that they seemed very small now. I was surprised that Dad had kept them after all this time.

"We have to go, Eric," Mom reminded me. Refocusing my attention on the task at hand, I checked every pocket of my golf bag to make sure that nothing was missing. Next, I counted my clubs to make sure that I had what I needed to play. With nothing left to check, I loaded everything into the car, and we headed to the golf course.

I couldn't have asked for a better day for my first round of golf on a full-length course. The Hook's Hideaway Junior Invitational was taking place at a beautiful old golf course near Hook's Hideaway, an extraordinary driving range where my incredible golf journey had begun. I had travelled these roads with Dad many times since. Every summer, a new driving range had revealed itself, teaching me more about the game and myself. They challenged my skills in unique ways, in the most unexpected places. Everything I experienced during that time had prepared me in some way for today.

Mom wasn't as familiar with the drive as I was, so I explained how things would begin to change. When we passed the cows and horses in the farmers' fields, I told her it was a sign that we were getting close to Hook's Hideaway. We headed in the direction of the driving range, keeping an eye out for any tournament signs.

When we finally arrived, the beautiful old golf course was already getting busy. Young golfers, with their bags

over their shoulders, said their goodbyes and went to check in. Mom pulled up to the entrance and got out of the car while I collected my gear. Giving me a kiss when no one was looking, she wished me luck. "You've got this," she said, encouragingly. "You know this course, so don't be nervous. You are an excellent golfer." Mom's words of support were comforting, but no match for the first tee jitters. Mom added that she would not be able to stay, but I knew that (as soon as I was out of sight) she would park the car and watch me play from a distance, silently cheering me on.

I had been here before—not as a golfer, but as a student of golf. I knew my way to the clubhouse and went there to sign in. Standing behind the counter was a dear old friend. The captain came around to greet me with his usual delight. I was no longer the "wee laddie" whom he had met for the first time years ago, and I was a much better golfer now.

"Ye have time before ye tee off, laddie," he said. "Why don't ye warm up?" The captain and Mulligan had always encouraged my dream of becoming a professional golfer and reminded me often how important it was to practice.

"And I'll take your bag," came a familiar voice from behind me. Recognizing the voice, I turned around to see another old friend: Mulligan, the caddie of champions! In addition to being my friends, both he and the captain had become important role models and mentors as I learned about golf and life. Only one person was missing. I wondered if Old Tom would make an appearance. What I had learned over the years was that Hook's Hideaway made anything possible!

Now on the range, I pulled out the clubs I wanted to

practice with, and Mulligan placed a bucket of balls beside me. As I gripped my driver, the sound of a tractor collecting golf balls brought back memories of my first visit to Hook's Hideaway. It was there, on the driving range, that Dad had taught me how to hit my driver, my 7-iron, and my putter. It was also where I developed a love for the game, and the rest, as they say, is history! Thanks to Dad, who loves to recount our adventures over and over again, these special memories will never leave me.

It was getting close to my tee time, and Dad still hadn't arrived. There were three groups ahead of me, and Mulligan, sensing my worry, assured me that there was still time. Dad joined us a few minutes later on the range.

"How are you feeling, bud?" he asked. I told him that I was a little nervous. He reminded me of the time when Mulligan and I had watched three different golfers on the range, that first summer at Hook's Hideaway. I had learned about nerves. "Even professionals get nervous," he'd said. "The key is not to let it overtake you."

"Don't worry about what anyone thinks about how you play. It's you against the course." That was a little of Dad's wisdom. "When your mind gets filled with doubt, look around at this beautiful course and recognize how it makes you feel." The golf course was Dad's happy place. "Remember your passion for the game and the incredible adventures that brought you to this point." Pausing for a moment, he then said, "I think they called your name. It's time to go."

It was a short walk from the range to the first tee. Dad and Mulligan waited with me. "Daddy," Mulligan said, looking at him (he always called my father "Daddy"),

"did they tell you that Eric could have a caddie today?" Dad looked surprised. It was the first time he had heard about the ruling. Smiling at him, Mulligan continued. "Would you like to do the honours then?" There was only one other time that I had seen Dad get that excited. Luckily, he always carried an extra pair of golf shoes in his car and practically ran to get them.

A few minutes later, Dad stood with me as I waited to tee off, giving me a few last-minute pointers. "You know what to do, bud," he said. "Just play your game."

I walked up to the tee box and placed my ball on the tee. A small crowd of spectators had gathered, but strangely, I wasn't nervous. Dad watched with pride as I took a couple of practice swings before addressing the ball.

At that exact moment (my dad told me later), an old memory had come flooding back to him. It was the memory of the day he had surprised me with my first driver and discovered that I wanted to play golf with him. It was also on that day, just after my sixth birthday, that this newfound passion would lead us to a magical place that would teach me about the game in the most fantastical ways. It's a story that's worth retelling, and if you have the time, I would love to share it with you now. But we have to go back to the beginning, back eight years . . . to the day where it all began.