



**Sample Pages from
One Hundred Lies**

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ONE HUNDRED LIES

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT BY
Alan Haehnel



One Hundred Lies

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Characters

5 Males, 10 Females

Liz	Gary	Colin
Bill	Mary	Mindy
Stacey	Kate	Ann
Samantha	Sue	Peter
Donna	Hannah	Josh

The above 15 Actors play themselves as well as the following (doubling possible):

Mom	Robin	Teacher
Dad	Dale	Marge
Uncle Stew	Grandfather	Coach
Aunt	Jeremy	Mrs. Blodgett
Grandmother	Friend	Preacher

Production Note

Time is clearly a significant element of the play, but 30 minutes is not sacred. That is, one cast may need to set the opening clock at 35 minutes, another at 25. As long as all of the lies are told just before the final buzzer sounds, the effect will be maintained.

In the darkness, we see a scoreboard light up. The time is set for 30 minutes. LIZ walks out onto the set, an abstract composition of platforms.

LIZ: Go. (*On the scoreboard, the time starts to run backwards, as it will throughout the play. A light comes up on LIZ.*) Okay, rules of the game are pretty simple. We have 30 minutes to come up with 100 lies significant to the life of Elizabeth Marie Nostrand, commonly known as Liz, commonly known as me.

We hear a ding! and a point goes up on the scoreboard under "Guest." Each time the score changes, we hear the sound effect.

Oh-ho, interesting. You see, when I tell a lie, that's one for the visiting team — the Guests. When a lie is told to me, that's one for the home team. So, what did I... ? Oh, yes. I said, "Commonly know as me," just to be clever, and I suppose that I am not commonly known as me except to myself. (*turning to the scoreboard*) Right? (*after a pause, back to the audience*) The silent type. Anyway, back to the rules: Lies by me — points against me; lies to me — points for me. Interesting twist, though: In order to fulfill the promise of the title of our play — One Hundred Lies — the two scores on the board must equal 100 points. My personal goal, however, given my mildly competitive nature... (*Ding! 2 points for Guest.*) Given my somewhat competitive nature...

Ding! Another point for Guest. LIZ scowls at the scoreboard.

Fine. Given my highly competitive nature, my goal is to be certain that the final score, while totalling 100, is lopsided in my favour — the home team. And speaking of the home team, just so you don't think I'll be working alone, let me introduce to you my amigos for this gig. (*Ding! Point for Guest. LIZ narrows her eyes at the scoreboard for a moment.*) Come on out, team! (*15 ACTORS emerge from behind the platforms and from the wings. The lights come up full.*) Let's have a hand for the home team, huh? All right! Yeah! (*The ACTORS acknowledge the audience's applause and then begin to disperse.*) Hang on a second. Just a little second, gang. Uh, I got a point against me a second ago when I introduced you guys as my amigos. That's Spanish for "friends," if I'm not mistaken. (*She checks the board.*) I guess I'm not mistaken. I rarely am. (*Ding! 2 points for Guest.*) Oookay, cute. (*back to the ACTORS*) You guys are all my friends, right?

ACTORS: (*ad libs*) Oh, yeah. Sure, we are, Liz. Absolutely. Uh-huh.

The scoreboard dings. 5 points go up for the home team.

LIZ: (regarding the board) Interesting. According to the scoreboard, five of you just lied to me. (focusing on BILL, one of the ACTORS) That's pretty odd, isn't it?

BILL: What are you looking at me for, Liz?

LIZ: No reason, Bill. (Point for Guest.) Well, anyway, no matter. (Ding! Point for Guest.) Anyway, not an issue we have time to deal with at the moment. (to the other ACTORS) Thanks, guys. You can... go get ready to do your thing. (The ACTORS go back to where they were before they were introduced.) So. (regarding the scoreboard) I'm behind. 9-5. Maybe, at this point, you're thinking, "She's going to lose." Maybe you're thinking, "There's no way they can get 100 points — 100 lies — up there at this rate." Well, rest easy. We'll get cooking here just as soon as I finish with the introductions. We'll get to a hundred. And as far as me losing... I don't.

LIZ looks at the scoreboard. Nothing registers. She smiles. As soon as she opens her mouth to speak again, though, the scoreboard dings — 3 points for Guest. LIZ glares at the scoreboard for a long moment, then shrugs.

12-5. I like a challenge. Bring it on. (to the audience) One last thing, though it's probably obvious by now — not all lies have equal point value. They range from 1 to 3. A one-point lie is minor, a two-point a bit more hefty, and a three-point is a whopper. Apparently, whoever is making the scoring determinations thought my claim that I don't lose was, in fact, a whopper. Fine. (Ding! Point for Guest.) Not fine, then — I disagree with that tally. But I will accept that judgment, because I know that during the course of this play, I will definitely be scoring a three-pointer or two in my favour. Ladies and gentleman, I, Elizabeth Marie Nostrand, I have been lied to in big ways in my life, believe me. In ways that I never dreamt I... But let's not start there. Let's start small; let's start innocuous. Let's go with a few white lies I've been told. Here's where you get to see how my amig... fellow cast members function. Here comes Mom with a bundled little me.

As the ACTORS come out, they are costumed with accessories that indicate the type of character they are playing — no attempt is made to make them look realistically like a given character, nor is any attempt made to mask the fact that one ACTOR is playing a

variety of roles. An ACTOR playing LIZ's MOM enters with a bundle in her arms — LIZ as a baby.

MOM: Oh, look at you, Elizabeth. You are so beautiful. Gordon, Gordon, look!

DAD: (*entering*) What's the matter? Did she stop breathing?

MOM: No, no, no... look at her. Isn't she the most beautiful baby in the world?

Ding! Point for Home.

DAD: She is. She's perfect.

Point for Home. MOM and DAD exit.

LIZ : Now, granted, I was too young to know I was being lied to, but hey, a prevarication is a prevarication, is it not? (*Checking the scoreboard*) 13-7. I'll be ahead shortly. Count on it. Uncle Stew.

UNCLE enters.

UNCLE: Have you been a good girl, Lizzie? Santa Claus won't be here with his reindeer if you haven't!

Point for Home. UNCLE exits; AUNT enters.

LIZ: And now Aunt Tilly.

AUNT: The Great Pumpkin will rise up out of the pumpkin patch!

Point for Home. AUNT exits; GRANDMOTHER enters.

LIZ: Meet my grandmother.

GRANDMOTHER: We'll leave this carrot out so the Easter Bunny can have a snack, Elizabeth.

Point for Home. GRANDMOTHER off; ROBIN on.

LIZ: Not that lying of this sort was limited to relatives only. I had a clever babysitter named Robin.

ROBIN: I heard the Tooth Fairy just isn't keeping up with inflation these days.

Point for Home. ROBIN off; DALE on.

LIZ: And good old cousin Dale; I could always count on him to mislead me.

DALE: Know what, 'Lizabeth? The Bogey Man is going to jump out of the bushes and drag you to a cave and cut your leg off!

Point for Home. DALE off; GRANDFATHER on.

LIZ: Even one of my favourite people in the whole entire world — Grampy Nostrand. We'd sit for hours and look out at the winter landscape and he would tell me any number of complete fabrications.

GRANDFATHER: Old Jack Frost comes and he paints all those pretty designs on the window.

Point for Home. GRANDFATHER exits.

LIZ: Well, look at that, will you? Tied it up in no time flat. (*Ding! Point for Guest. LIZ laughs and speaks to the scoreboard.*) Oh, now you're getting desperate. Tie score in very little time, how about that? (*to audience*) You want me to really take the lead? You want to see how easy it would be? Take any one of the aforementioned myth-based fabrications and just look at the whole string of lies that prop it up. Let's bring my gram back out.

GRANDMOTHER comes back out. During this conversation, LIZ continues to look out at us as she answers GRANDMOTHER. She makes no attempt to sound like the little girl she was when the conversation took place. GRANDMOTHER focuses on an empty space in front of her, as if talking to LIZ as a young child.

GRANDMOTHER: Oh, yes, I'm sure the Easter Bunny will come this year.

Point for Home.

LIZ: But Grandma, how does the Easter Bunny know where we live?

GRANDMOTHER: Oh, the Easter Bunny has a special Easter egg. The crystal egg.

Point for Home.

LIZ: Like a crystal ball?

GRANDMOTHER: Exactly! Just like a crystal ball.

Point for Home.

LIZ: Does he take it with him on Easter Eve?

GRANDMOTHER: Well, yes, he does, Honey. (*Point for Home.*) And the crystal egg shows him where all the little children live.

Point for Home.

LIZ: (*as GRANDMOTHER exits*) Ah, childhood: When the lies were lovely and went down as soft and sweet as a marshmallow chick. Then one day you wake up and the whole world has changed. The whole world. (*regarding the scoreboard*) You see? 18-14, home team has a substantial lead. Too easy. Frankly, I could continue in this vein and have 100 points on the old board before you could say Jack Robinson... (*Point for Guest. LIZ turns to the scoreboard.*) Ever heard of figurative language? Hm? (*back to audience*) Apparently not a poet. As I was saying, I could get this whole gig over with very quickly if I kept on with the childhood mythological theme, but that wouldn't be much of a challenge. Plus, if you remember way back to my opening comments, I said these would be lies significant to the life of Elizabeth Marie etc., etc. and, while lies about Kris Kringle and the existence of unicorns had some bearing on my development, they wouldn't warrant a whole (*checking the time*) 22 minutes and 43, 42, 41 more seconds (*or whatever is on the scoreboard*). No! On to bigger lies!

MOM and DAD come out.

MOM: Liz, Jeremy, come here, please.

JEREMY, LIZ's brother, calls from the wings.

JEREMY: (*off*) Just a second!

DAD: Kids, your mother and I need you in here right now.

JEREMY: (*off*) Hang on; I just have to finish this.

DAD: No, not just a second! Now!

During this exchange, LIZ has been watching but not participating in the scene. She speaks to the ACTORS as actors (PETER and STACEY) not as MOM and DAD.

LIZ: Uh, hey, guys... not yet. Not this part.

JEREMY: (*entering*) What's the deal? I thought we were going to do this.

LIZ: Yeah, right, but... later.

STACEY: Well, Liz, you said we were moving on to bigger lies.

LIZ: I did, yes. But... (referring to the audience) I don't think they're quite ready for this. (Point for Guest. LIZ gives the scoreboard a quick, annoyed look.) I just... there's such a thing as build, you know? You want to build to these things. (Point for Guest.) Look, later, okay? Okay? It'll happen. Just later. (Point for Guest. LIZ turns to the scoreboard.) What? What was that for? I just said later, and it's going to come later. There is no lie there.

PETER: Well, technically...

LIZ: What do you mean, technically?

PETER: You lied with your silence. You lied by not saying anything.

LIZ: You can't lie by not saying anything. (Point for Guest.) What, are you and the scoreboard, like, buddies or something? You're one of the ones who lied about being my friend, aren't you?

PETER: No.

Point for Home.

LIZ: Well, thanks — you helped me helped me tie it up, at least.

JEREMY: Liz, what he's saying is, everybody could tell you were avoiding the real reason about why you didn't want to do this scene now. And when you conspicuously don't say the truth... it's a lie.

LIZ: You guys don't know what you're talking about. (Point for Guest. LIZ turns on the scoreboard.) Stay out of this! (to STACEY) Stacey, a little help here?

STACEY: I...

LIZ: Don't tell me you were in on the amigo thing, too.

STACEY: No, Liz! Of course we're friends.

*All ACTORS look to the scoreboard. It doesn't move.
They go back to looking at one another.*

LIZ: Thanks.

STACEY: But... I hate to say it, but I agree with these guys. I mean, why don't you want to run this scene yet?

LIZ: Because I'm not ready, okay? I am not ready. I need to build to it. It's just... not... an easy thing (to the scoreboard), and so help me God, if you even dare to... (The scoreboard is passive. LIZ turns back to the other ACTORS.) So.

STACEY: So we'll hit this a little later.

PETER: When you're ready. We've got some time. That is, if you really want to do it at...

LIZ: Of course I want to! It's big! It's big. It needs to be said, or done. Just...

JEREMY: Later. That's fine. No problem.

The ACTORS exit. LIZ watches PETER as he goes out. He catches her look and comes back to her.

PETER: Liz, look.

LIZ: Don't worry about it.

PETER: I did consider you a friend. It's just that, lately, you've been so... angry. I can't...

LIZ: You know what? Don't sweat it. It doesn't even matter. *(Point for Guest.)* We've got to keep moving; that's the thing right now.

PETER: Okay, you're right. I, um... okay.

He exits.

LIZ: *(to herself)* Geez, feels like therapy. We all know what fun that is. *(She realizes her mistake and speaks as the scoreboard registers another point for Guest.)* Okay, yeah, ding me for that. *(to audience)* Okay — three points behind. Let's get the home team back out front here, shall we? Here we go... now, again, I'm not going to claim these next lies are deeply important, but they do matter. And they are a different category of subterfuge than the fairy tales we looked at earlier.

ACTORS come out in quick succession. Again, LIZ keeps looking out at the audience as she answers.

FRIEND: Hey, Liz.

LIZ: Hey, how's it going?

FRIEND: It's going great. *(Point for Home.)* Good to see you.

Point for Home.

LIZ: You, too.

Point for Guest as FRIEND exits.

FRIEND: Well, got to run. *(Point for Home.)* See you!

LIZ: 'Bye.

TEACHER enters.

TEACHER: Good morning, Elizabeth. (*Point for Home.*) How are you this morning?

LIZ: Not too bad, I guess.

TEACHER: That's wonderful. (*Point for Home.*) See you in class.

LIZ: I'll be there.

TEACHER exits.

LIZ: (*to audience*) You know what I'm talking about, right? The little lies we tell just to... be polite. To make a quick little connection so people don't think we're stuck up. Somebody asks you, "How are you?" and even if your cat just died and you just noticed a brain tumour sprouting out of the back of your head, you say, "Fine." I mean, they're lies, but they're just... Well, Mrs. Farnsworth, last year in speech class, she called them "social lubrication," which I thought sounded pretty nasty, but you know what I mean. And as you can see, those types of lies are hard to avoid. I mean, somebody tosses you one, you pretty much toss one back automatically. It's life. Now, another species of lie that is pretty closely related to the sort of politeness category is the, for lack of a better name, smart lie.

MARGE enters.

MARGE: Liz, I just bought these shoes. What do you think of them?

LIZ: (*to audience while MARGE is contemplating her shoes*) Now, here, I have to tell a smart lie. The truth is, I think the shoes make her feet look like twin submarines. (*Point for Guest. LIZ speaks to the scoreboard.*) What did I say about poetry, huh? (*back to audience*) The truth is, I think the shoes do not complement her outfit and are quite unattractive. But, I also happen to know that I can't say that to Marge or she'll probably jump off a... (*catching herself*) be quite disappointed. So, instead, I say, "Wow, Marge, those are amazing shoes!"

Point for Guest.

MARGE: You don't think they make my feet look like twin submarines or something?

LIZ: Oh, no — not at all; I want a pair!

Point for Guest.

MARGE: Thanks, Liz. You're the best.

Point for Home as MARGE exits.

LIZ: (to scoreboard) You know, I could be the best. (She turns away from the scoreboard; it registers a point for Guest as soon as she does. LIZ narrows her eyes but restrains herself.) Not to say that I am the only one who tells the smart lie. I have had plenty of them told to me, as well.

COACH enters.

COACH: Liz, you did a great job out there. (*Point for Home.*) I think you're definitely getting to be a better soccer player.

Point for Home.

LIZ: I missed the ball every time.

COACH: But you're learning how to position yourself better. (*Point for Home.*) And some of those kicks you took just barely missed.

Point for Home. COACH exits.

LIZ: That was my junior league soccer coach, and that was a series of smart lies he was telling me. I mean, what else could he do? With all the parents standing there waiting for him to compliment their kids, with me only five years old, what was he going to do? Tell the truth? "Gee, Liz, you really stunk out there. You seem to have no skills whatsoever and furthermore, I doubt you're ever going to master this game." That might have been the truth, but it would have been the dumb truth. By the way, I did eventually master the game. (*Ding for Guest.*) Okay, so maybe I'm not the top pick to play in the World Cup, but I was MVP and captain last year. See, I think one thing I have been aware of at even a young age was when I was being lied to. (*Point for Guest.*) Most of the time. (*Point for Guest.*) A lot of the time. (*Point for Guest.*) At that particular point, I knew the coach was lying to me. I knew I wasn't a good soccer player. But that's always just made me work harder, see? That's how my competitive nature has served me. My theory, you see, about competitive people is that they know themselves. Other people believe it when they're being buttered up, or even when they're buttering themselves up. But competitors, they work to get better because they know the truth about themselves. I think that's my greatest strength. I may tell a lie now and then — as we've seen — but I'm honest with myself. (*Three points for Guest. LIZ turns on the scoreboard.*)

Three...? Who in the hell are you? That's what I want to know. Who is behind this thing? Huh? Who gives this contraption the authority to make judgments about me? Everybody! Everybody get out here!

The ACTORS enter.

SAMANTHA: What's the matter, Liz?

LIZ: Before we go any further with this gig, this show, this game, whatever it is, I think we need to establish who is behind the scoreboard.

DONNA: Behind it?

LIZ: Yeah. Who's deciding on the points? Who's calling things lies?

DONNA: I don't know.

LIZ: Well, who does?

GARY: Liz, none of us know.

MARY: I guess I figured you did. This is your thing.

LIZ: My "thing"?

MARY: Well, it's about you.

LIZ: Yeah, but I am certainly not controlling that thing.

BILL: None of us is, either, Liz.

KATE: I guess that's part of the game.

LIZ: Well, I think that stinks.

SUE: Uh, Liz?

LIZ: What?

SUE: The time's still running and we only have a combined score of 63 so far. If we don't keep moving...

LIZ: Okay, okay. I get your point. I just wish... I do know myself, better than the average person, I think.

Point for Guest. LIZ turns to look at the scoreboard for a long moment.

HANNAH: Liz, like Sue said, we should probably...

LIZ: What do you think?

HANNAH: About what?

LIZ: Do you think I'm fooling myself?

HANNAH: I... don't really know. I mean, how can I answer that?

LIZ: Truthfully. The scoreboard up there claimed it was a three-pointer against me when I said that I am honest with myself. Do you agree or disagree?

HANNAH: I don't want to answer.

LIZ: Why not?

HANNAH: Because you've been pretty touchy lately.

LIZ: Touchy?

COLIN: Yeah, touchy.

LIZ: What is that supposed to mean?

COLIN: It means exactly that — touchy, sensitive, and I think you're demonstrating it right now.

STACEY: Liz, are you sure we have time for this?

LIZ: Do you agree with them?

STACEY: Sort of. (*Point for Home.*) Okay, yes. I agree with her.

LIZ: I've been touchy.

STACEY: Yes.

LIZ: I can't believe this.

MINDY: Liz, yes, you have been pretty sensitive lately, but you know what? Nobody's blaming you. It's justified. (*indicating the audience*) Why don't you show them why?

LIZ: Oh. Um... not yet.

MINDY: You sure?

LIZ: Yeah. We'll get there, but just not right now. I'm good. Let's keep moving. (*The ACTORS exit.*) So. Um... smart lies. That's what we were talking about. Lies that you have to tell or other people tell to you because it would just be too harsh to tell the truth, right? Let's look at a couple more examples of that. I mean, just like the Santa Claus thing, this category could get us to a hundred in nothing flat. (*Point for Guest. LIZ laughs a tight little laugh.*) We don't

know who's behind it, but we do know he's a literalist. Anyway. When I was seven, I wrote this outrageously bad poem, and I read it to my teacher, Mrs. Blodgett. (*MRS. BLODGETT enters.*) It ended like this: "And when the winter sky is cold, we have to dress warm and do what we're told."

MRS. BLODGETT: Well, Liz, that was wonderful.

LIZ and MRS. BLODGETT look to the scoreboard. It doesn't change.

LIZ: What's the deal? That was a lie. You can't tell me that wasn't. (*turning to MRS. BLODGETT*) Wasn't it?

MRS. BLODGETT: Oh, yes. The poem was horrendous.

LIZ: (*to the scoreboard*) So what's the matter with you? Hey! (*to the teacher*) Hit me with another one.

MRS. BLODGETT: Your rhyming was very unique, I thought.

They both turn to the scoreboard again. Nothing.

LIZ: The rhyming stunk! It was predictable and boring!

MRS. BLODGETT: Some of the worst I've ever heard. I thought Liz might be mildly disabled, actually. I really did. I mean, the poem was stupid, even for a first-grader.

LIZ: Okay, you've made your point. (*to the scoreboard*) What is up with you now? (*pause*) My toes are gangrenous and about to fall off.

MRS. BLODGETT: They are?

LIZ: No. I'm testing the system here.

MRS. BLODGETT: Oh, good idea. I'll help. (*to LIZ*) I like your hair.

LIZ: That was a lie?

MRS. BLODGETT: Yes. Sorry.

LIZ: What's the matter with my hair?

MRS. BLODGETT: Nothing. Oops. (*She looks at the scoreboard.*) See, that was a lie, too, and it didn't register. I think it's broken. The time is still going, though.

LIZ: At some future point I'm going to want to talk to you about this hair thing.

MRS. BLODGETT: I have some ideas for improvement.

LIZ: Whatever. (*to audience*) Folks, apparently we're not going to be able to finish our presentation here because whoever is running the scoreboard has fallen asleep or gone home or something.

One point for Guest.

MRS. BLODGETT: It's back!

LIZ: Oh, somebody woke up. (*One point for Guest.*) All right. You weren't asleep, but you weren't registering lies, were you? Let's see if you're back on the job: My father's name is Xavier.

The scoreboard doesn't change.

MRS. BLODGETT: Is that a family name?

LIZ: His name is not Xavier! That's the point!

MRS. BLODGETT: Oh, you were still testing. I wonder why it didn't put anything up there.

LIZ: (*to the scoreboard*) My cat is actually a werewolf! The world is flat! My math teacher makes a mean linguine! I dated Orlando Bloom! (*No changes on the board.*) What is the deal? You want me to lose, is that it? You've frozen the score so I can't possibly win and we can't possibly finish? (*Point for Guest.*) Then what?

ANN: Uh, Liz...

LIZ: What?

ANN: A few of us have been talking backstage, and we think we may have figured out a pattern.

LIZ: What pattern?

ANN: Well, I mean, we trust your judgment and everything... (*Point for Home*) Sorry.

LIZ: No, no, keep lying to me. Tell me you think I'm doing great out here. Tell me you have high hopes for my future. Hell, tell me you think I'm easy to get along with and you'd love nothing better than to hang out with me every waking second. It's racking up the points; it doesn't matter to me. (*One point for Guest. LIZ yells at the scoreboard.*) Shut up!

PETER: Liz, here's what we figured: In the beginning of all this, in your introduction, you said we were going to reveal one hundred lies significant to Elizabeth Marie Nostrand.

LIZ: Yeah, so?

PETER: Well, so far, most of them haven't been all that significant to your life, have they? I mean, really — the tooth fairy? The “Hi, how are you?” bits? Do those really matter?

LIZ: They matter. (*Point for Guest.*) Okay, so, no — not that much. But The Great God Scoreboard was recording them up until now.

ANN: Well, yeah, that was fine for getting into the topic and showing how our lives are generally full of little fibs and things, but now... maybe it needs you to stop with the petty stuff.

LIZ turns to regard the scoreboard, considering what the others have said.

LIZ: No, that's not it. (*Point for Guest.*) All right, great. We need to get significant. (*to the ACTORS*) Great. Good call. I think we'll get back on track, now. You can go back offstage. (*grabbing JOSH*) Except you, Josh. I want you to do the preacher thing.

JOSH: Oh! Oh, yeah. Let me just grab my costume piece and my Bible. Be right back.

LIZ: I am behind, ladies and gents, due, in part, to an unannounced change in the rules, mid-game. So be it. I am about to catch up very quickly. Josh will be appearing in a moment spouting a few lies that I think will be right up there in the 3-point category, don't you worry. This I probably should have presented back in the myth section, right around the Great Pumpkin part. (*JOSH enters as THE PREACHER.*) Go for it, Preacher-man.

PREACHER: These are days of doubt and questioning. These are days when our confidence in the things of the world can overcome our confidence in the things of the heavens. But I am here to tell you; I am here to testify to you: God is real!

LIZ: There you go — right there! Three points for the Home Team. (*Nothing goes up on the scoreboard.*) Hey!

PREACHER: God is real and He knows each one of us individually.

LIZ: Three more! Three more should be up there for that whopper! What is the matter with you?

PREACHER: Stray as we might from the path of righteousness, worship as we might the idols of money and prestige and power, trust as we might in the arm of man, God will never desert us!

LIZ: I want some points on the board! Those lies were told to me week after week when I sat in church. I was lied to! God is not real!

He has never been there for me! I should have at least nine more points on that scoreboard! I demand them!

PREACHER: Whenever you may feel that...

LIZ: Oh, can it.

PREACHER: What?

LIZ: Forget it, I said. We've obviously got some kind of born-again religious freak running the board who can't face the truth.

PREACHER: (*exiting*) Sorry.

LIZ: Don't worry about it. It's not your fault. (*to scoreboard*) You didn't want lies unless they were significant, right? Okay, I went along with it. But if you can't face up to the truly important lies I've been told, the ones that have really made a difference...

SAMANTHA: Uh, Liz?

LIZ: I know time is running out; I know we have 25 more points still to go. But I'm losing, damn it, and this scoreboard isn't playing fair!

MARY: It's not that. We just... we had an observation.

LIZ: What now?

MARY: The board isn't pro God.

LIZ: Oh, really?

GARY: No. Because when you said, "God is not real. He has never been there for me," it didn't register points for the opposing team. It didn't say you were lying.

LIZ: Well, I... I guess it didn't, did it? So what are we supposed to make of that?

GARY: I'm guessing that a lie has got to have proof one way or another, and when it comes to God — well, that's sort of beyond the realm of proof.

LIZ: Beyond the realm, huh? No proof? I'll give you proof. My life is proof that God doesn't watch over us. (*2 points for Guest.*) What? How is that a lie? I know that there is no loving God up there watching over me and my family, I'll tell you that for damned sure! (*3 points for Guest.*) What is that? What is that? Are still claiming this guy isn't pro God? You saw that!

COLIN: Technically, the points for the lies came after your claims about yourself, Liz.

LIZ: What are you talking about?

COLIN: The scoreboard is saying that your pronouncement — that you know God doesn't exist — is a lie. A big one.

LIZ: Pro-God! That's what I said!

KATE: No. It's saying you don't know what you claim to know. It's not saying God exists or doesn't exist. It's saying you believe in God.

LIZ stands, furious and dumbfounded.

ANN: You know, it's not necessarily easy to know our own minds. About things. I mean, I wonder if we all have a hope that...

LIZ: Let's do it.

ANN: What?

LIZ: I'm ready now. Bring out my mother and father. Have Jeremy ready. Let's run the scene.

MINDY: Are... are you sure you want to do it now? You seem a little...

LIZ: No, no, no. Now is the time; now is just the time. I'm sure. *(to audience, darkly)* Time for my comeback.

MOM and DAD come out.

MOM: Liz, Jeremy, come here, please.

JEREMY calls from the wings.

JEREMY: *(off)* Just a second!

LIZ: Hang on. Stop.

PETER: Liz, look at the time!

LIZ: Yeah, but I want to set this up just a little better. We need them to see just a couple preliminary lies before we unveil The Big Ones. How about this, how about this? Let's do the wedding scene. Mom and Dad get married.

The PREACHER comes out. MOM and DAD take places, as if they are being married.

PREACHER: Do you take each other in sickness and in health, for richer or for poorer, for better or worse, till death do you part?

MOM AND DAD: We do.

They kiss.

LIZ: Put three points up there. Come on. That was a vow they took. A vow before the state of New Hampshire and — guess who? — before God. That's big, Mr. Scoreboard, big!

SUE: But Liz, it wasn't a lie to you.

LIZ: Oh, wasn't it? Didn't I come from the union of these two? Don't I come under the umbrella of that sacred promise? Huh? Don't I? (*The scoreboard registers three points for Home.*) Yeah, that's right. Thank-you for seeing my point. Now this next — this I won't have to argue for. This one's clear-cut. Dear old Momma and me, about, oh, eleven years back. (*beginning the scene*) Mom?

MOM: Yes, Liz?

LIZ: Johanna said her mom and dad are splitting up.

MOM: Oh, really? That's terrible.

LIZ: Johanna has to move to Alabama.

MOM: I'm sorry, Sweetheart. That's going to be hard for you. You have a lot of fun with her, don't you?

LIZ: Why are her Mom and Dad splitting up?

MOM: Well, I don't know. I don't really know them. When is Johanna moving?

LIZ: In a month.

MOM: Well, we'll have to get the two of you together again soon.

LIZ: Are you and Daddy going to split up?

MOM: No, Elizabeth. You don't have to worry about that. We'll always be together as a family.

Three points for Home as MOM exits.

LIZ: Wasn't that sweet? One great big precious fat lie. But I bet you know what's coming now, don't you? Without further ado, then, let's run the scene we've been hinting at for a good (*regarding scoreboard*) 24 minutes now. Guaranteed to bring a smile to your face and a skip to your step.

Point for Guest as DAD and MOM come out.



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