Early in our life we are taught not to lie, and yet, has not society made liars of all of us? When we are small we are fairly truthful, but as we grow older, we learn to lie more fluently and easily. By "lying", I do not mean the deliberate telling of a falsehood in order to bring harm to someone, but rather the telling of a falsehood to "protect" the feelings of someone. For instance, you go to a house party. You arrive there before the others do, and you sit around and talk. Their two and one-half year old daughter takes a liking to you and starts bringing her dolls. She piles dolls on your lap until you think she must have a monopoly on all the dolls in the country. Your lap is getting rather full and she has trouble making the one doll stay. As she tries to perch it somewhere on you, the guests who have arrived by now are giggling and saying "isn't she just too divine?" and the parents think it's just wonderful the way she has taken a liking to Mr. X. You think it would be "wonderfully divine to paddle her little canoe," but you say "she's very cute" or words to some such effect.

Well, the little girl finally leaves you as more guests and children arrive and you relax in your chair, immensely relieved. It is not long, however, before you become involved in a boresome talk with some old gentleman. Pardon me, did I say talk? I meant lecture, as he does not give you a chance to get in a word. As his "lecture" is in progress, the hostess comes in and asks you to "kindly move your chair, as she would like that card table behind it." Now, if it were an ordinary chair, it would not be so bad, but this is one of those massive, old-time, leather, over-stuffed chairs and you pull and tug until finally you have moved it sufficiently. The hostess smiles and says "thank you Mr. X I'm sorry to have disturbed you," And you smile back: (and perhaps utter the only true statement of the evening) as you say "not at all."

It is not long again, however, until some other long-winded old gentleman has you in his clutches. You think "ye Gods, I hardly get rid of one, when I am begged by another." Just as that moment lunch is announced and you say to the old gentleman, "Well, they seem to be breaking up our most interesting discussion."

You do not like the sandwiches they serve, and you wish they had been more liberal with the ice cream. When offered more, however, without, batting an eye, you become a "cheerful liar" and "politely" say: "No thank you, I enjoyed every bit of the lunch but I couldn't eat another bite."

After lunch you get your coat and hat and bid the host and hostess good night, tell them what a perfectly wonderful time you had, and as you slam the car door shut and savagely step on the starter you mutter - "phooey".

- Carroll Zick - '37