

The Perfect Lie Cast List

6 Male, 5 Female, 2 M/F, and Extras M/F

KING JAMES (M) the king of the castle who has summoned the Bard.

QUEEN ANNE (F) the queen of the castle; she loves a clever story (not from the Jester).

BARD (M/F) a skilled storyteller who is serious and territorial about his profession.

JESTER (M/F) professional funny-man of the court who is also territorial.

KING (M) the king in the story who worries about keeping up appearances, but has no problems with lying.

FOREIGN MINISTER (M) an honest man who doesn't understand his role as royal liar for the king.

PETER PIPER (M) a poor peasant from a place called Poppycock.

WISE WOMAN (F) an old woman with a penchant for unusual flowers.

SHEPHERDESS / LISA (F) a young shepherdess with a penchant for unusual sable lambs/ a commoner in the lying contest, round 2.

SIR SHERMAN OF SHROPSHIRE / DUKE DRAGO FROM THE DESERT DUNES (M) a contestant in round 1/ a contestant in round 2.

LADY LANA OF LAUGHLIN / LADY MONICA (F) a contestant in round 1/ a contestant in round 2.

DUKE DOOGIE OF DOON DOUGLAS / WILEY O'REILLY (M) a contestant in round 1/ a leprechaun: a giant, hulking leprechaun. Cast the biggest actor you can find.

FARM GIRL (F) an honest farm girl who could use a pot of gold.

EXTRAS

LIGHT GUY (M/F) He/she has no speaking lines but controls the lights. And he likes sandwiches.

EXTRAS (M/F) Courtiers for the Royal Table, Servants, Guards, and Pages

Sample Pages

QUEEN ANNE: Jester, have you seen the Bard? We are ready for his tale.

JESTER: (*Mock shock.*) He's not here? How unprofessional!

KING JAMES: Where is that Bard? Guards, summon the Bard at once. *(If you have no GUARDS, just have the KING look off-stage.)*

JESTER: *(Aside.)* Good luck finding him. *(Short pause.)* Uh, milord, while you are waiting, perhaps I could tell a tale.

QUEEN ANNE: *(Looks to KING.)* I suppose so. Until the Bard gets here.

JESTER: Your confidence is overwhelming. *(Beat.)* Lords and ladies of the court, permit me to present for you a tale, in truth, about a perfect . . . untruth. *(Enter the BARD.)*

BARD: Excuse me, Jester, but it is my job to narrate the tale for these good folk. I can take the story from here.

KING JAMES: And where have you been?

BARD: *(Looks at Lord Rumormore in audience.)* Someone told me that Shakespeare was in the village. Thanks a lot. *(To KING.)* My apologies, sire. Even if Shakespeare were in the village *(Glares at Lord Rumormore.)*, I would never neglect my Bardic responsibilities.

JESTER: And I don't neglect my Jestic responsibility.

BARD: Jestic?

JESTER: I put the "jestic" in "majestic." Come on, I can liven up your story.

BARD: I don't need your help. You can just run along. *(JESTER begins to exit.)* Now, then, your majesty, this tale concerns a falsity—

JESTER: Are you sure I can't help you?

BARD: I'm fine. Please leave. *(JESTER goes out the door. BARD sighs in relief.)* This tale concerns an untruth—

JESTER: *(Pops his head back in.)* I really think I could add to this tale.

BARD: I told you I'm fine! *(JESTER goes back out the door.)* This tale concerns no ordinary fib—

JESTER: *(Runs back through the door.)* It's about a lie, already! A perfect lie! Get to the point, bard!

BARD: *(Glares at JESTER.)* I was doing fine on my own! Now, you have ruined the build-up!

JESTER: Oh. You mean all those words had a purpose?

BARD: *(Tries to maintain his temper.)* It is the art of story-telling. There are many literary devices of which you are not aware.

JESTER: Continue then. I will observe and learn.

BARD: Amateur. Now . . . where was I? Oh, yes. The tale of the perfect lie. Once upon a time in a castle far, far away, there lived a very shrewd and savvy king. At this time, there were many small realms in the land run by many . . . small kings. Not that I am saying they were all short, but rather small in their focus, shall we say. You see, it all started with a meeting of the kings of the Isles. *(He freezes in place. A long silence.)*

JESTER: What are you doing now?

BARD: *(Out of the side of his mouth, still frozen.)* Waiting.

JESTER: Oh. *(Another pause.)* For what?

BARD: *(Still frozen.)* For the fade out.

JESTER: Oh. *(Another pause. Looks at Bard's clothing.)* Been washing with bleach again, have we?

BARD: *(BARD breaks frozen position in frustration with JESTER.)* No. A fade out is when the action shifts from one group of characters to another. It is used in flashbacks, flash-forwards, and to move the action from the narrator to the story. *(BARD remembers that he should be frozen in place, and resumes the position.)*

JESTER: One of those literary devices you were talking about?

BARD: *(Frozen.)* Yes.

JESTER: Oh. *(Another pause.)* It doesn't seem to be working.

BARD: *(Frozen.)* We have to wait for the guy controlling the lights to fade out our lights and bring up the lights on another part of the stage.

JESTER: Oh. *(Another pause.)* Maybe he went out for a sandwich.

BARD: *(Becomes unfrozen and unglued.)* No, he hasn't gone out for a sandwich. He's probably waiting for you to shut your big mouth so that he has some silence to— *(The lights fade.)*

JESTER: *(Becomes frozen and speaks out of the side of his mouth.)* Ssshhh. Can't you see that we are in the middle of a fadeout? Amateur. *(BARD becomes enraged and chases JESTER off*

stage left. They pass the KING and FOREIGN MINISTER who are entering from stage left. The lights are still down.)

KING: This won't do, Mr. Foreign Minister! This simply won't do! *(They are passed by the BARD and JESTER.)* Who was that?

FM: I believe they were the narrators, my king.

KING: Oh. *(Pause.)* Why have I never seen them before?

FM: They are supposed to exit quietly during the fadeout. We aren't supposed to notice them.

KING: Oh. *(Pause.)* Why is it so dark?

FM: Well, the light man is supposed to bring the lights up on the fade-in.

KING: Oh. *(Pause.)* Maybe he went out for a sandwich.

FM: I think he's just lazy. I mean, anyone who answers an ad for a job involving "light work" — *(The lights go up, then go down.)*

KING: I believe you hurt his feelings. *(The lights go up and down, signaling "yes.")*

FM: Just what we need. Touchy techies.

KING: Well, you'd best apologize, so that we can get on with this scene. *(Lights come up full.)*

FM: *(Squinting into lights.)* I'm sorry that I called you lazy, incompetent, and stupid.

KING: But you didn't call him incompetent and stupid.

FM: Oops.

KING: And that's your whole problem. You don't lie well.

FM: Should we get back to the scene then?

KING: Right. Of course. Where was I?

FM: "This won't do, Mr. Foreign Minister! This simply won't do!"

KING: This won't do, Mr. Foreign Minister! This simply won't do!

FM: But your majesty . . .

KING: I was humiliated. I told you to make up some excuse for my missing the meeting of kings so that I could go hunting. Now, what excuse did the Foreign Minister for the King of Wales give for his King's absence?

FM: He said that the King of Wales regrets his absence, but he was trapped below ground with the fairy folk and would not make the meeting until he had cleaned the bloody rags of the banshee.

KING: And the Foreign Minister to the King of Scotland?

FM: He said that the King was sorry that he couldn't make it, but he was fishing for a giant sea serpent. He had to find the tallest tree in the forest for his rod, weave seven thousand ropes together for his line, find the largest ship's anchor for his hook, and bait his hook with seven whales.

KING: And the Foreign minister to the King of Ireland?

FM: He said that unfortunately his King was busy battling giants. He needed time to capture the Dragon of Ulster for his steed and rip the Tower of London from its foundations for his lance.

KING: And what excuse did you give for me?

FM: (*Mumbles.*)

KING: I can't hear you.

FM: I said that you had . . .

KING: Go on.

FM: The sniffles.

KING: The sniffles. The other kings are off performing heroic feats against mythical monsters and I— AND I—had the sniffles!

FM: You know, sniffles can turn into a nasty cold.

KING: That's not the point. I needed a grand lie to keep up appearances. This simply won't do. I need a new foreign minister. I need a better liar.

FM: (*Shocked and worried.*) No, your majesty!

KING: Yes, I'm afraid you're sacked, then. But don't worry; I'll still keep you on in some position that doesn't require lying.

FM: But, but, that takes me completely out of politics, my king.