

MY SCALE IS LYING TO ME

By Scott Mullen

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SYNOPSIS: When a woman brings her bathroom scale back to get a refund, the clerk is stunned to realize that the scale doesn't display weight—but words. Soon another customer is wrapped up in the scale's declarations and an entanglement is discovered. After the truth is revealed the weight of this payback may just break the scale.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 females)

WANDA (f) 20s-40s. A harried housewife.
(66 lines)

SHELLY (f) 20s-40s. A somewhat-snobby
 store clerk. *(55 lines)*

CINDY (f) 20s-40s. A pretty woman in a
 dress. *(29 lines)*

TIME: Present day.

SETTING: A store.

AT START: *SHELLY stands onstage, behind a counter. WANDA enters, carrying a scale.*

WANDA: Excuse me. *(Beat.)* Excuse me.

SHELLY: Yes?

WANDA: I'd like to return this scale, and get my money back.

SHELLY: We can only do that if it's defective.

WANDA: It's absolutely defective. It lies.

SHELLY: Really.

WANDA: You don't believe me?

SHELLY: Maybe you don't like what it is saying.

WANDA: What are you saying?

SHELLY: Our scales are very accurate.

WANDA: Not this one.

SHELLY: Well, that's easy enough to prove.

SHELLY pulls another scale from behind the counter. She walks around the counter, puts her scale on the floor, then stands on the scale.

SHELLY: It's perfect. Try it. See if it's different than yours.

WANDA: I guarantee it will be different.

SHELLY: Go ahead.

WANDA hands her purse to SHELLY, walks over to SHELLY'S scale, and steps onto it. They both look down.

SHELLY: Uh-huh.

WANDA: This weight seems right.

SHELLY: Gaining weight as we grow older is not uncommon.

WANDA: First off, you shut your mouth. Secondly, that's not what my scale says.

WANDA gets off and moves off to her own scale. She stands on it, and beckons SHELLY over to look. SHELLY looks, and does a double take.

SHELLY: Are those words?

WANDA: Yes.

SHELLY: "Your husband is cheating."

WANDA: That's what it says.

SHELLY: It's not supposed to do that.

WANDA: You think?

SHELLY: I didn't even know it could make words.

WANDA: I'm pretty sure it didn't say anything about that on the box.

SHELLY: Did you throw away the box?

WANDA: Yes.

SHELLY: That's a problem.

WANDA: No! I want a full refund. And an apology.

SHELLY: We only give refunds if a product is defective.

WANDA: This seems pretty defective.

SHELLY: Defective meaning inaccurate.

WANDA: My husband is not cheating on me! My scale is lying to me!

SHELLY: Why would it do that?

WANDA: I don't know.

SHELLY: It has been my experience that a scale is much more honest than a husband.

WANDA: My husband loves me!

SHELLY: Have you smelled his shirts?

WANDA: What?

SHELLY: Stick your face right into his laundry. Take a deep whiff. If there's any strange perfume, you'll smell it.

WANDA: I'm not going to smell his dirty laundry!

SHELLY: You need to listen to honest advice from friendly sales clerks. Or bathroom scales.

WANDA: How would a scale know if my husband cheated?!?

SHELLY: Energy fields.

WANDA: What?

SHELLY: Electronic devices are very sensitive to tension in the air.

WANDA: That's ridiculous.

SHELLY: And yet there it is.

WANDA: Do you sniff your husband's laundry?

SHELLY: I'm... not currently married. But I have sniff-tested my boyfriend's shirts from time to time. They're clean. Except for man-sweat. But my man's sweat smells awesome.

WANDA: Step on my scale.

SHELLY: What?

WANDA: Step on it. I want to see what it says for you.

SHELLY: No.

WANDA: Are you afraid?

SHELLY: No.

WANDA: Then do it.

SHELLY moves toward the scale. She hesitates, and then stands on it. She looks down. WANDA moves next to her.

SHELLY: Oh. This isn't right.

WANDA: "Your boyfriend is cheating." Ha!

SHELLY: It's totally inaccurate!

WANDA: Exactly.

SHELLY: There's no way this is right.

WANDA: So give me my money back.

SHELLY: Unless it is.

WANDA: What?

SHELLY: Barry has been working late a lot.

WANDA: Sometimes people work late.

SHELLY: And he's not as affectionate as he used to be.

WANDA: The scale is a liar!

SHELLY: That rat bastard...

WANDA: No! He loves you!

SHELLY: Does he?

WANDA: How could he not?

SHELLY: You don't know.

WANDA: The scale doesn't know!

SHELLY: I think maybe it does.

WANDA: No! My husband is not cheating!

SHELLY: My boyfriend is.

WANDA: Stop it. Let's try someone else.

Browsing on the other side of the stage is CINDY.

WANDA: Excuse me, we're trying to settle an argument. Can you step on this scale?

CINDY: Why?

SHELLY: We're just trying to see if it's accurate.

CINDY: You're not going to hurt me, are you?

WANDA: What?

CINDY: Nothing.

SHELLY: Please. Step on the scale.

CINDY steps on the scale. She looks down.

CINDY: What the heck?

SHELLY: What does it say?

CINDY: It says "Your butt looks lumpy in that dress".

WANDA: A-ha!

CINDY: I don't like this scale.

SHELLY: Her butt does look lumpy.

CINDY: Hey!

WANDA: I think her butt looks great. The scale lies.

CINDY turns, trying to get a good look at her butt.

SHELLY: It's all smushed and uneven.

CINDY: It's not lumpy!

WANDA: Even if it is lumpy, it's not the dress's fault. The dress is helping it.

SHELLY: The dress does nothing for her butt. The scale knows. I'm going to kill him.

CINDY: What's happening?

WANDA: I'm trying to convince her the scale is lying. Back me up.

SHELLY: It's not lying!

CINDY: What else is the scale saying?

SHELLY: It said my boyfriend was cheating on me. And her husband.

CINDY: Oh, crap. Crap.

WANDA: What?

CINDY: I guess my butt is lumpy.

WANDA: What?!?

CINDY: *(To WANDA.)* The reason I'm here is because I followed you.

Because I wanted to tell you that—I didn't know he was married when I started seeing him. Your husband.

WANDA: Now you're lying.

CINDY: His name is Alan Prentiss. He works at Bixby, Hollins and Cowgill.

WANDA: That bastard.

CINDY: I confronted him, and he told me his wife was an evil witch.

But you don't seem that bad. You said nice things about my butt.

WANDA: I lied! I needed to believe the scale was lying! But your butt is horrible! The scale is right!

SHELLY: I told you.

WANDA: You're just a vile seductress who lured him with her charms.

CINDY: That didn't happen.

SHELLY: Not with that butt.

CINDY: Hey! There's nothing wrong with my butt!

WANDA: I bet he loves me more.

WANDA steps onto the scale. Looks down. Sags. Steps off.

WANDA: No. He doesn't.

CINDY: Really? He loves me more?

WANDA: Apparently.

CINDY steps onto the scale. Looks down. Steps off.

CINDY: No.

WANDA: What—he loves us the same?

SHELLY: Maybe ask the scale who he loves the most.

WANDA: Okay. Who does Alan love the most?

WANDA stands on the scale. The other women move next to her. All look down.

CINDY: Who the heck is Anita Johnson?

WANDA: That's not you?

CINDY: No.

They eye SHELLY.

SHELLY: It's not me.

WANDA and CINDY: That jerk!

WANDA: We need to get him.

CINDY: We do.

WANDA: Where it hurts him the most.

CINDY: We could kill him.

WANDA: He is insured.

SHELLY: Don't be planning a murder in my department!

WANDA: I know he's got lots of money stashed away. If we just knew the bank accounts and passwords—

They all look down at the scale.

CINDY: No way.

WANDA: Can it be that easy?

CINDY: I have a pen and a scrap of paper. *(Fishes them out.)*

WANDA: What are Alan's secret bank accounts and passwords?

WANDA steps onto the scale. CINDY moves to her side. They look down.

CINDY: Whoa.

CINDY scribbles on the paper. When she finishes, WANDA steps off, and sticks out her hand. CINDY gives it to her without hesitation.

CINDY: Clean him out.

WANDA: You want to help? Then maybe get some coffee?

CINDY: I'm in.

WANDA and CINDY pick up their shoes, and head off. SHELLY almost heads after them, then realizes she's not included. She sadly watches them go.

SHELLY: Bye... don't be strangers! (*Looks down at the scale.*) Who's my boyfriend cheating with? (*Hesitates, then steps onto the scale. Looks down.*) What? Arnold?! No wonder I smelled man-sweat!

Blackout.

THE END