

## WALTER by Murray Schisgal

Laura -- 50s

FEMALE -- COMIC

In a funeral parlor, a wife does not believe her husband is really dead.

Hello, Walter. (Slight pause.) It's me. Your wife. (Slight pause.)

I bet you thought you'd never see me again. I bet you thought you could lie and cheat and walk away without facing the music. That was your style, wasn't it? Doing things and walking away as if it had nothing to do with you. This time you're mistaken. You are very much mistaken. You have a lot of explaining to do, mister. You're not getting off this easy, not this time. Oh, no. Ohhh, no. What you did . . . I still can't believe it. That I could have been so stupid, so blind, for so many years . . . Is it true, Walter? Did you sleep with all those women? (Slight pause.) Did you have a girlfriend in Chicago and another one who was under nineteen in Detroit? (Slight pause.) Did you sleep with my cousin Henry at Scotty's bar-mitzvah party? (Slight pause.) The week I visited my parents in Florida with the kids, did you bring a hooker into the apartment? Did she knock on our neighbor's door at two o'clock in the morning and ask them for a can of tuna fish? Is that true or false? How many were there, Walter? I want a definite figure. Everybody's been telling me stories, all week long I've been hearing stories about you, and I want a direct answer. Look at me. Look me straight in the eyes so I know you're not lying. (Slight pause.) Whose silk panties from Saks Fifth Avenue did I find in your chest of drawers? They weren't mine. I buy seconds in Korvettes. (Slight pause.) I'll tell you something, Walter. I don't believe you're dead. I really don't. I think this is another lie of yours. If you wanted to talk, you'd talk. Nothing ever shut you up before. (Slight pause.) I have to know the truth. From you. How do you expect me to raise the kids when I'm so mad and angry that I can't see straight? What am I supposed to do with the rest of my life? Every time I hear your name mentioned I wanna explode, I wanna . . . Sit up! Sit up! We're getting to the bottom of this whether you like it or not! What I don't understand is why you fooled around with other women. Didn't I give you enough? Didn't you yourself say I gave you complete satisfaction? Didn't you say on many, many occasions, that you had it up to here! (Hand across her throat.) Were you lying to me when you said that, Walter? Was it my fault? Look at me. I said look at me! I'm warning you, I'm not going to let them bury you until I get a satisfactory answer. Talk. Go ahead. Talk.