

If—

Tom Scott

If you can tell a lie when all about you
Demand the truth and nothing less from you;
If you can break the trust that was placed in you,
And do this with no shred of conscience too;
If you can make the desperate who are waiting
For vital kit that might just save their lives,
Wait long weeks more through your prevaricating,
And shift the fault away from your own lies;

If you can make your dream of power your master
And serve it with no other earthly aim;
If you can mete out chaos and disaster
And always make a scapegoat take the blame;
If you can bear to hear the lies you've spoken
Puffed by the press to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the hopes and dreams of others, broken,
And use all men and women as mere tools;

If you can simulate concern for others
When all the while you could not give a toss,
And gamble with the lives of fathers, mothers
And never turn a hair about their loss;
If you can kill the heart and soul within you
And carry on long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to you: 'Hold on!'

If you can get the tabloid press to love you,
So that its hacks lend you their common touch,
Then neither foes nor two-faced friends can hurt you,
And you'll be free to get away with much;
If you can fill each TV airtime minute
With bullshit and not care it's overdone,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And – which is more – you'll be PM, my son!

(with apologies to Rudyard Kipling)