

Lies

**If I ever thought of these as lies,
I soon came to see them as part of
the etiquette of poverty — a means of
getting by for the poor and also a gift
we give to the rich, a practice that lets us
avoid talking about the uncomfortable
differences between us.**

Over time, it becomes second nature.

**Observing this etiquette doesn't feel
dishonest because its falsehoods recognize
the deeper truth that many of society's
institutions are hostile to the poor.**

**Lying to the landlord keeps a roof over our
heads. Lying to the social worker keeps our
family together. Lying to ourselves allows us
to believe it's all going to be OK,
somehow, someday.**

Joshua Hunt, New York Times, July 13, 2022