

## From Empowered

By Don Zolidis

ELLEN, 40ish, a Mom and a high-powered investment banker.  
AMARYLLIS, 14, a girl scout.

ELLEN (*into headset*)

Taylor? Hold my calls. I'm in an important meeting. I said hold my calls you twit. Come with me.

AMARYLLIS

Are you still talking into your headset?

ELLEN

No. Talk to me. Explain your situation.

AMARYLLIS

Um... okay uh –

ELLEN

You've already failed.

AMARYLLIS

What?

ELLEN

I don't like to repeat myself. You've already failed. As soon as you stutter or say um... it's over. I've made a judgment about you. Like that. I've decided that you are useless and not a force to be reckoned with.

AMARYLLIS

I'm only a girl scout.

ELLEN

*Only* a girl scout? Did those words just come out of your mouth? *Only* a girl scout? The girl scouts are the closest thing we have in this country to pure, unfiltered, naked aggression. You think you're selling cookies? You're not selling cookies. You're selling empowerment. You're selling the glorious struggle to overcome your simple origins and empower yourself to conquer the world. You think this isn't training for global domination? Think again. So when you say only a girl scout that's like saying you're only an M1A1 Abrams tank. You are the future. Embrace it.

AMARYLLIS

Okay, well my situation is that I'm the worst salesgirl in my troop.

ELLEN

I believe that.

AMARYLLIS

And we're having a sales contest. The winner gets a mutant unicorn and the loser gets kicked out.

ELLEN

Sounds about right.

AMARYLLIS

So I want to learn how to sell.

ELLEN

Do you?

AMARYLLIS

Yeah I just said that.

ELLEN

Do you really want to learn how to sell?

AMARYLLIS

Yes.

ELLEN

Consider what you're asking. At this point you're a child – you're innocent, you walk down the street and you think big puffy dreams about the future and princesses and kissing frogs. But if we open this door together, that universe is forever dead to you. Childhood is over. Adulthood is over. Godhood has begun.

AMARYLLIS

I just want to sell some cookies.

ELLEN

No – if I teach you, you will be more than just one girl selling a few cookies here and there. You will be queen. You understand me? You want a unicorn? I've got fifty unicorns on a ranch in Montana that no one knows about. You can have a dozen of them.

AMARYLLIS

You have a dozen unicorns?

ELLEN

I have them in a rainbow of colors.

AMARYLLIS

Wow.

ELLEN

This isn't about a little sales competition. This is about your fate. Will you become the greatest girl scout in the history of the world? Or will you die trying?

AMARYLLIS

Yes.

ELLEN

What did you say?

AMARYLLIS

Yes!

ELLEN

You want this?

AMARYLLIS

Yes!

ELLEN

Say goodbye to your former life and say hello to awesome.

AMARYLLIS

Okay. Goodbye former life. Hello awesome.

ELLEN

You will be the daughter I never had.

AMARYLLIS

What about Beenie?

ELLEN

I'm so over her. First – I want you to give me a demonstration of your technique.

AMARYLLIS

What technique?

ELLEN

Try to sell me some cookies.

AMARYLLIS

Okay... um...

ELLEN

Don't say um! You say um one more time I'll pull out your tongue.

AMARYLLIS

Okay. Well then... uh... would you like to buy a box of girl scout cookies?

ELLEN

Why would I want to do that? They're fattening.

AMARYLLIS

Some of them are, but they're not that fattening.

ELLEN

Get out of here before I call the police. I enjoy watching them hunt down little girls.

AMARYLLIS

Okay. Well bye then.

ELLEN

That's it? That's your pitch?

AMARYLLIS

You said no.

ELLEN

So what? I say no to everything.

AMARYLLIS

It just didn't seem like you were going to buy anything.

ELLEN

How much money do you think I make in a year?

AMARYLLIS

I don't know. A lot.

ELLEN

How many girl scout cookies do you think I could buy?

AMARYLLIS

A lot of girl scout cookies.

ELLEN

And yet I bought nothing from you because I said they were fattening. And you agreed with me.

AMARYLLIS

They are fattening. It says here on the box.

ELLEN

Who cares what it says!

AMARYLLIS

I don't want to lie.

ELLEN

You don't want to lie? Is that what you just said? How do you imagine you're going to sell anything if you're not lying about it?

AMARYLLIS

I don't know, with good products and –

ELLEN

Shut up. Rule number 1: Lie. Lie about the product. Lie about yourself. Lie about everything. Rule number 2: There is no rule number 2.

AMARYLLIS

I don't know if I can do that.

ELLEN

You can and you will. Lie.

AMARYLLIS

Well I guess I could stretch the truth –

ELLEN

No no no – truth stretching is for politicians. We're trying to sell something. I want a giant, enormous gigantic lie. Make it up. Make them buy it. Force them to buy it. Let's say I'm a consumer – there are eight hundred different kinds of cookies out there. How am I going to possibly pick just one? It's paralyzing, I walk down the aisle – there are too many choices. I'm frozen in place, my life is about to end, I'm about to have a heart attack because I don't know which cookies to buy. You... you – could save my life. Decide for me. Put the cookies in my hands. Make me eat them. Tell me I'll like them. Make me feel like a good person because I bought those cookies. Make them cool. Make them awesome.

AMARYLLIS

All of that?

ELLEN

Yes. Go big or go home. And I want you to go huge.

AMARYLLIS

All right. Hey I've got some cookies for you.

ELLEN

For me? I don't know – they're so fattening.

AMARYLLIS

Not these cookies.

ELLEN

These cookies aren't fattening? How do you know that?

AMARYLLIS

There have been like thirty scientific studies on these cookies, and people who eat them actually lose weight.

ELLEN

There have been scientific studies?

AMARYLLIS

By the best scientists. But the government doesn't want you to know the results of those studies because they want to keep these cookies for themselves.

ELLEN

That darn government.

AMARYLLIS

But you can strike back. You can raise your voice for freedom. If you purchase just one box –

ELLEN

Time out. One box? One box – why are you trying to only sell me one box? Go big or –

AMARYLLIS

Go bigger. Right.

ELLEN

Time in.

AMARYLLIS

Although the effects of the cookies are cumulative. Which means that you have to keep eating them to maintain your weight loss.

ELLEN

Oh.

AMARYLLIS

You'll need to go through two boxes per week to maintain weight – otherwise you'll just put it back on again.

ELLEN

Two boxes a week? That sounds like a lot.

AMARYLLIS

Is your health worth a lot? I mean, I guess I could sell these cookies to other people and they would look more beautiful, but it would be a shame for you to lose out on this opportunity.

ELLEN

Okay. I'll do it.

AMARYLLIS

I'll draw up a contract.

*(ELLEN gets out of character.)*

ELLEN

Now that is how you win that unicorn.

AMARYLLIS

Oh my gosh that felt great! I was lying and there were absolutely no consequences to my actions!

ELLEN

Welcome to the world of finance.

*To read the rest of this play, contact me at [donzolidis@gmail.com](mailto:donzolidis@gmail.com)*