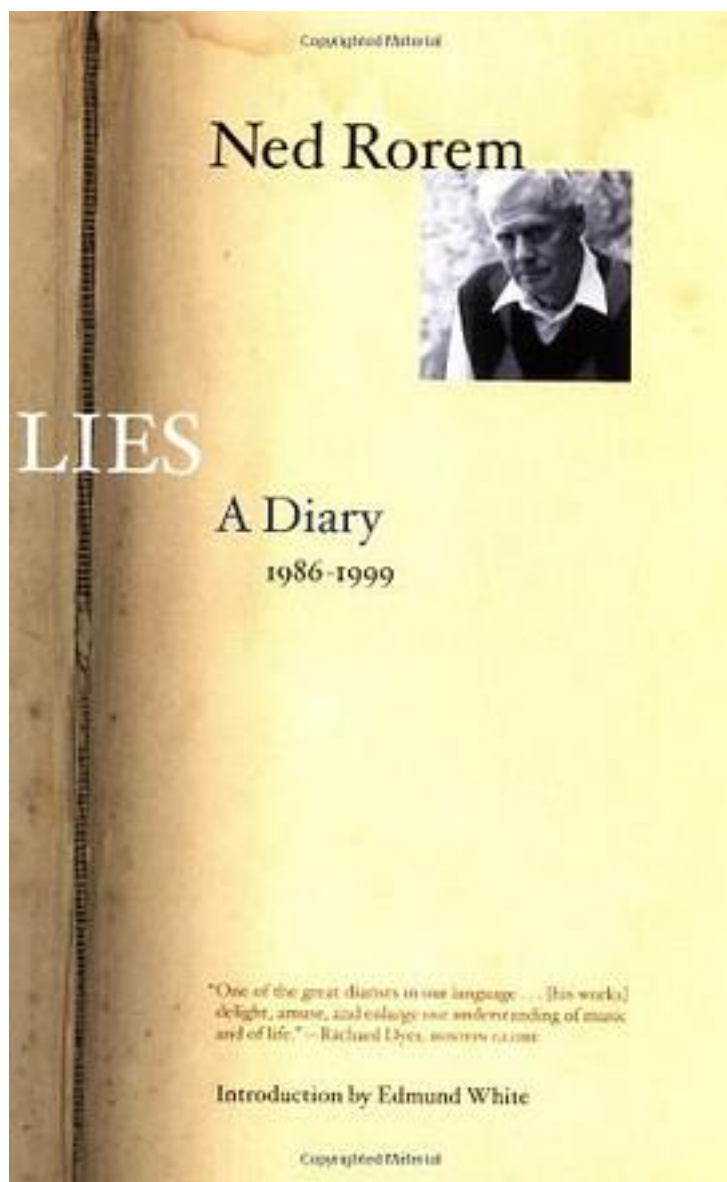


Lies



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What does it really mean to be dead? This is the question that vexes Isobel because as far as the outside world is concerned she is dead. The book springs from a case of mistaken identity. Isobel, mother of three adult children and an anthropologist has officially been pronounced dead following a boat accident in a remote part of the Guatemalan jungle. But Isobel is very much alive and is hiding in a remote shack in the jungle. She isn't ready to tell the world she's still alive and she's not sure whether she ever will. The news of her own death is especially ironic because as an anthropologist, she studies death rituals. Serena, Isobel's daughter, studies weather. Her father has some form of Alzheimer's and with her mother now supposedly dead, she is trying to write the family history before it is lost. Above all, she is obsessed with the story of Simon, her father's father who was in a shipwreck and survived three days at sea before being rescued. The story of his life has become a family legend together with the tales her father told about The Battle of Formigues and the story of Li Po. Ever since she was a child, Serena has been tantalised by these stories, always asking questions, turning the 'facts' over in her mind, always trying to piece the 'truth' together. Yet the irony is that she isn't investigating the one story she really should.

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