

David was a real rumormonger. His gossips went round and round and created many ripples among the neighborhood, for a while.

One night, David had a dream. A great hand appeared over him and pointed down at him. He was immediately seized with an overwhelming sense of guilt. The next day he went to confession. He got the old parish priest Father O' Rourke. He told him the whole thing.

"Is gossiping a sin?" he asked the old man. "Was that the hand of the God Almighty pointing a finger at me? Should I be asking your absolution, Father? Tell me, have I done something wrong?"

"Yes," answered Father O'Rourke. "Yes, you ignorant badly brought up man. You have borne false witness against your neighbors. You have played fast and loose with their reputation and you should be heartily ashamed."

David apologized and asked for forgiveness.

"Not so fast," says Father O'Rourke. "I want you to go home. Take a pillow up on your roof, cut it open with a knife, and return here to me."

So David went home, took a pillow off his bed, a knife from the drawer, went up the fire escape to his roof and stabbed the pillow. Then he went back to the old parish priest as instructed. "Did you gut the pillow with the knife?" Father says.

"Yes, Father".

“And what was the result?”

“Feathers” David said. “Feathers everywhere, Father.”

“Now, I want you to go back and gather up every last feather that flew out on the wind,” said Father O’Rourke.

“Well,” he said, “ It can’t be done. I don’t know where they went. The wind took them all over.’

**“And that,”** said Father O’Rourke, **“ is gossip.”**