

## Honesty

I wouldn't know how to exist if I had to handle the red hot facts of life without the soothing balm of my imagination. I've always considered it my natural right as a pig-headed Irishman to make up my own reality. Not bothered by inconvenient facts, I construct more suitable details and arrange them to my liking. I think everyone should get a memory like mine. We would all be a lot happier about ourselves.

To my wife I always make an effort to be honest, sort of. I employ a sparkle in my eye when I relate a fable, so she can tell I'm only kidding, like showing your fingers are crossed. But as we get older and our vision blurs, I guess she can't see the telltale twinkle anymore. Or she just isn't looking. So now she says it's easier to never believe anything I say. But I think that's a bit unfair, since I never go to bed at night without owning up to the truth, if I can remember it that late in the evening.

I could try to change my evil ways, but at my age we'd both be dead before I regained her confidence. So I have to resort to drama for emphasis when I'm trying to make a point. Yesterday, I told her that if she persisted in squirting that goddamned bugaboo juice at the Lady Bugs on the side porch and messing up my windows, Darwin's law of natural selection would take over and only the big ones would survive. They would breed even bigger ones and soon we'd have Lady Bugs as large as puppies clomping up the porch stairs and asking for Tricks or Treats. She said Darwin was a spineless pacifist.

Another problem is it's getting more difficult to remember what is fact or fiction and to whom I lied about what. The other day, I told 84 year old Willard from down the road that the woodchucks were so populous in the garden this year, I demanded Deputy Waldon serve them with an eviction notice.

"You told me that story," he said.

"No, I didn't, Willard. You're fibbing to me."

"Why would I lie about you prefabricating?"

"Just because you're ornery."

Willard gulped. "Don't tell the missus!" he said. "She rolls up Viagra coupons in my socks."

"I said *ornery*, Willard."

"Well, you shouldn't procrastinate."

"The word is prevaricate, Willard."

"No, that's when you buy insurance."

"What?" I said.

"Yes, you know, like when you sign your will."

"What the hell are you talking about, Willard?"

"Your house," he said, "the money! She gets it all when you die!"

"What has that got to do.....?"

But Willard rushed on.

"And then she loses 50 pounds and takes your money and gets a killer makeover and buys a Corvette and goes to Las Vegas and marries a jih guy low.

"Willard, you mean a gigolo!"

"Now THAT would make anyone ornery enough to prevaricate," said Willard.

I keep forgetting. Willard is better at this than I am.

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The Press at Windswept Farm



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