

## He Said and She Said, by Alice Gerstenberg

Enid invites two of her friends over for dinner. One is Diana, childhood friend of both Enid and her husband, Felix. Another is Mrs. Packard, older than the rest of the company she is in, and a woman of status and respect. However, Mrs. Packard shows herself unworthy of that respect when she begins spreading rumors to Diana and Enid about the other person, and though she claims not to believe them herself, she continues to sow discord between not only Enid and Diana, but also Enid and Felix. What Mrs. Packard could possibly gain from her destructive actions is unclear, but in any case, we can see she is enjoying herself.

If Mrs. Packard really cared about her friends, she should have asked Enid and Diana together about what she had heard, whether it was true, because she cared about their wellbeing. Instead, she causes division, without much thought of what the outcome might be.

*Proverbs 6:12, 14, 15, 19 "A naughty person...deviseth mischief continually... Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy...[the Lord hateth] a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." 1 Peter 4:15 "But let none of you suffer...as a busybody in other men's matters."*

Mrs. Packard does pay for her actions when Diana comes up with a plan that will in the end expose Mrs. Packard for who she really is. Though Mrs. Packard deserves her end, we wonder whether Diana's lie can be excused. The Bible says that the only acceptable lie is one that protects against the wicked seeking to take life. We can argue that Diana was protecting life in the sense of protecting a reputation, but it's uncertain whether that would hold its own against what the Bible might have to say. It seems more likely that Diana lied in the hope of hurting Mrs. Packard right back, which would make Diana's actions wrong, though Mrs. Packard might very well deserve it. We encourage you to search the Scriptures for yourself concerning the matter. But one thing is for sure: Mrs. Packard's gossip is unexcused, and as the Bible says, she will suffer sudden calamity. We urge you to stay out of gossipers' company and not partake of their actions.