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## Gumption

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*Caleigh  
Burgess*

# Gumption

I came across a park bench, though it wasn't in a park. And I wouldn't actually call it a bench, though specimens, of what sort I don't know, were perched upon it. They were human enough but they seemed to twitch and chirp like canaries in line for coalmines.

As I approached, the creatures' tweeting grew more and more frantic. I stepped back immediately and their voices quieted again. Forward: again, a chirp. Back: silence.

I just stared for a moment and then I thought to pluck up the courage to move forward again. I then pondered the phrase "to pluck." Where did it come from? Plucking only brought feathers to mind. These thoughts were twirling around my head frantically when I found myself in front of the animals. They were staring at me as curiously as I stared at them.

"Is courage like a feather?"

Neither answered. They just looked at me with their heads cocked to the side. I wasn't comfortable with their leering.

"You know, you pluck feathers. You also pluck up the courage to ask a question that apparently is considered frivolous by some."

It was then that the bench turned its head to join his gaze with the creatures.

"You've got a lot of gumption coming around here and asking a question like that."

"I'm sorry, I don't quite understand."

The bench stood up, knocking his squawking former occupants to the ground.

"Figures. You're probably one of them."

"One of what? I don't understand."

"Get out of here, will you?" His screeching intensified. "What more do you want? You have our feathers. You want our voices, too?"

He turned and began to run with his arms outstretched. The featherless wings weren't capable of lifting him into the air, though his arms continued to flap until he became but a dot in the distance.