

## **THE COURTESY CALL**

“Hello?”

“Hello.”

“Who is this?”

“Just a friend.”

“Is that you, Greg?”

“No... no, this isn't Greg.”

“Listen, uh, mate, I think you've got the wrong number.”

“You are Chris Gilroy of 15 Crescent Gardens. You have a wife called Marcy and a little boy called Sam. You are currently walking down the road on your way to work and you are wearing a lilac and white chequered shirt with a navy blue suit – did your wife really let you out like that, Chris? No, I definitely have the right number.”

“Who the hell is this? What do you want?”

“I have some news for you, Chris.”

“News? What sort of news?”

“You are going to die in just under a minute and a half's time.”

“What! What the fuck are you talking about? I'm not going to die!”

“Oh, but you are. And I'm afraid there's nothing you can do about it. I just thought I'd give you a ring to let you know that I'm about to pay you a visit.”

“A visit? Look, mate, I don't know who you are or but if you're trying to have a joke with me, it's *not funny*.”

“Ah, but it is quite funny when you think about it. How many people have you known to receive advance warning of their demise? If you're really quick you might be able to phone your wife to get in a few more 'I love you's' before it's all over. I'd hurry though, because you only have... oh, about a minute left.”

“You're sick mate, you know that? How did you get my phone number?”

“Does that really matter now?”

“No, no it's alright, I'll get it from my phone company and then I'm passing it straight over to the police!”

“That's a good idea. Shame you won't have time to implement it.”

“*Who are you!*”

“It really doesn’t matter who I am. This is all about you, Chris. We have a few seconds left to kill, if you will excuse the pun, before we’re done here. Anything you’d like to say before you go?”

“I’m hanging up now, this conversation’s *over!*”

“Yes, I’d say you’re right about that one. Oh, but before you go, there’s just one last thing.”

“*What!*”

“Mind that bus.”

*Chris Gilroy was hit by a number 80 bus on his way to work on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2005. The coroner recorded the death as accidental.*