

# ***A Slip of the Tongue***



***By Robert Prins***

# *A Slip of the Tongue*

*By Robert Prins*

Brr, brr. Brr, brr.

My siblings, my beautiful fiancée and I were on my grandparent's deck, about to have a swim in their pool, when the telephone rang. My grandparents were out and we were there by ourselves. I paused for a second, unsure of what to do. Should I answer it, just in case it was important, and potentially freak out some unsuspecting caller? Or should I let it ring and pretend that no one was home? I decided to answer the ringing telephone just in case it was important.

"Hello?" I said.

There was a slight hesitation from the caller. Then they asked, “Is Annie there?”

That threw me a little bit, because while my grandmother’s name was Annie, I was used to her being called Oma. It took a second, but I recovered my wits and replied in my best grown-up male voice. “Sorry, she’s not home at the moment...” I then thought I had better explain who I was in case they thought I was some sort of intruder. I had a choice. Choices can be confusing. In the split second it took to decide whether I should say that she was my grandmother, or that I was her grandson, I mixed the two up and added in my deep male voice, “...but I’m her granddaughter. Can I take a message?”

I don’t think I sounded much like a granddaughter judging by the responsive “click” in the phone’s earpiece. Of course, the anonymous caller on the other end of the phone was not the only one to notice my mishap. My two siblings and potential wife were rolling around the ground in laughter at the fact that I had announced myself as my grandmother’s granddaughter.

Thirty-five years later I still get reminded of it.



# *A Slip of the Tongue*

*What happens when you answer a  
phone call that is not for you and not  
even on your phone?  
How do you explain who you are to an  
unidentified caller?  
And what happens if you get it wrong?*



Published by

**Thinky Things**

[www.thinkythings.com](http://www.thinkythings.com)