

Sorry, Wrong Number

MUSIC: Bernard Herrmann's "Suspense" theme

THE MAN IN BLACK: "Suspense!" ...

MUSIC: Theme continues for a bit ... then under.

THE MAN IN BLACK: This is the Man in Black, here to introduce Columbia's program ... "Suspense." Tonight, as we premiere our new Saturday evening series on the air, Miss Agnes Moorehead returns to our stage to appear in the study in terror by Lucille Fletcher called, "Sorry, Wrong Number." This story of a woman who accidentally overheard a conversation with death, and who strove frantically to prevent murder from claiming an innocent victim, is being repeated by popular request as tonight's tale of ... suspense. If you've been with us before, you will know that "Suspense" is compounded of mystery and suspicion and dangerous adventure. In this series are tales calculated to intrigue you, to stir your nerves, to offer you a precarious situation and then ... withhold the solution ... until the last possible moment. And so it is with the story "Sorry, Wrong Number" and the performance of Miss Agnes Moorehead, we again hope to keep you in ...

MUSIC: Up, dramatically.

THE MAN IN BLACK: ... suspense!

MUSIC: out.

SOUND: Number being dialed on telephone -- then a busy signal.

MRS. STEVENSON (a querulous, self-centered neurotic): Oh -- *dear* ... !

SOUND: Slams down receiver impatiently and dials operator. Rings four times.

OPERATOR (on filter): Your call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: Operator, I've been dialing Murray Hill 7-0093 now for the last three quarters of an hour and the line is always busy. I don't see how it *could* be busy that long. Will you try it for me, please?

OPERATOR (on filter): I will be glad to try that number for you. One moment, please.

SOUND: Operator dials number under following:

MRS. STEVENSON (rambling, full of self-pity): I don't see how it could be busy all this time. It's my husband's office. He's working late tonight, and I'm all alone here in the house. My health is very poor and I've been feeling so nervous all day.

OPERATOR (on filter): Ringing Murray Hill 7-0093.

SOUND: Telephone ringing. All clear. Mrs. Stevenson sighs in relief. Rings four times. The receiver is picked up at the other end.

MAN'S VOICE (filter) (heavy, tough voice): Hello?

MRS. STEVENSON: Hello...? (a little puzzled): Hello. Is-is Mr. Stevenson there?

MAN'S VOICE: (as though he had not heard): Hello? (louder) Hello?

2ND MAN'S VOICE (filter) (also over telephone but farther away. A very distinctive quality): Hello.

1ST MAN: Hello. George?

GEORGE: Yes, sir. This is George speaking.

MRS. STEVENSON (louder and more imperious): Hello. Who's this? What number am I calling, please?

1ST MAN: I'm here with our client.

GEORGE (pleased): Oh ... good. Is everything okay? Is the coast clear for tonight?

1ST MAN: Yeah, George. He says the coast is clear for tonight.

GEORGE: Okay, okay.

1ST MAN: Where are you now?

GEORGE: In a phone booth. Don't worry. Everything's okay.

1ST MAN: Very well. You know the address?

GEORGE: Yeah, yeah, I know. At eleven o'clock the private patrolman goes around to the bar on Second Avenue for a beer.

1ST MAN: That's right. At eleven o'clock.

GEORGE: I will make sure that all the lights downstairs are out.

1ST MAN: There should be only one light, visible from the street.

GEORGE: Yeah, yeah, I know. At eleven-fifteen a train crosses the bridge. It makes a noise, in case her window's open and she should scream.

MRS. STEVENSON (shocked): Oh! ... Hello? What number is this, please?

GEORGE: Okay. I understand, I tell you. That's eleven-fifteen, the train.

1ST MAN: Yeah. You remember everything else, George?

GEORGE: Yeah, yeah, I make it quick. As little blood as possible ...

MRS. STEVENSON gasps in horror.

GEORGE: ... because ... (as if amused) our client does not wish to make her suffer long.

1ST MAN: That's right. You'll use a knife?

GEORGE: Yes. A knife will be okay. And afterwards I remove the rings and the bracelets and the jewelry in the bureau drawer. Because ... our client wishes it to look like simple robbery. Don't worry. Everything's okay. I never ma--

SOUND: The conversation is suddenly cut off. Again Mrs. Stevenson hears a persistent buzzing signal.

MRS. STEVENSON (clicking phone): Oh... ! Oh, how awful. How unspeakably awful!

SOUND: She hangs up, then picks up phone and dials, mumbling "Operator" to herself, among other things. Ring thrice.

OPERATOR (filter): Your call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON (unnerved and breathless): Operator, I've just been cut off.

OPERATOR (filter): I'm sorry. What number were you calling?

MRS. STEVENSON (rapidly): Why, it was supposed to be Murray Hill 7-0093 but it wasn't. Some wires must have crossed -- I was cut into a wrong number and I -- I-I've just heard the most dreadful thing -- something about a-a murder and -- operator, you simply have to retrace that call at once!

OPERATOR (filter): I beg your pardon? May I help you?

MRS. STEVENSON (frantic): Oh, I know it was a wrong number, and I had no business listening, but these two men -- they were cold-blooded fiends -- and they were going to

murder somebody, some poor innocent woman, who was all alone in a house near a bridge and we've got to stop them -- we've got to --

OPERATOR (filter) (patiently): Uh, what number were you calling, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: Well, that doesn't matter. This was a *wrong* number. And *you* dialed it for me. And we've got to find out what it was immediately!

OPERATOR (filter): What number did you call?

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh, why are you so stupid? What time is it? Do you mean to tell me you can't find out what that number was just now?

OPERATOR (filter): I'll connect you with the Chief Operator.

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh, I think it's perfectly shameful. Now, look. Look -- it was obviously a case of some little slip of the finger. I told you to try Murray Hill 7-0093 for me. You dialed it but your finger must have slipped and I was connected with some other number -- and I could hear them, but they couldn't hear me. Now, I-I-I simply fail to see why you couldn't make that same mistake again on purpose -- why you couldn't *try* to dial Murray Hill 7-0093 in the same sort of careless way --

OPERATOR (filter): Murray Hill 7-0093?

MRS. STEVENSON: Yes!

OPERATOR (filter): I'll try to get it for you.

MRS. STEVENSON: Well, thank you.

SOUND: Operator dials -- then the busy signal.

OPERATOR (filter): I'm sorry. Murray Hill 7-0093 is busy. I'll call you in twenty minutes--

MRS. STEVENSON (frantically clicking receiver): Operator! Operator! Operator! Operator!

OPERATOR (filter): Your call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: You *didn't* try to get that wrong number at all. I asked you explicitly and all you did was dial correctly.

OPERATOR (filter): I'm sorry. What number are you calling?

MRS. STEVENSON: Well, can't you, for once, forget what number I'm calling and do something for me? Now I want to trace that call. It's my civic duty and it's your civic duty to trace that call and to apprehend those dangerous killers -- and if *you* won't...

OPERATOR (filter): I will connect you with the Chief Operator.

MRS. STEVENSON: Please!

SOUND: Rings four times.

MRS. STEVENSON (under her breath): Oh, dear ...

SOUND: The phone picks up.

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): This is the Chief Operator.

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh, uh, Chief Operator. I want you to trace a call, a telephone call, immediately. I don't know where it came from, or who was making it, but it's absolutely necessary that it be tracked down. Because it was about a murder that someone's planning -- a terrible, cold-blooded murder of a poor innocent woman, tonight, at eleven-fifteen.

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): I see.

MRS. STEVENSON (high-strung, demanding): Well, can you trace it for me? Can you track down those men?

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): I'm not certain. It depends.

MRS. STEVENSON: Depends on what?

CHIEF OPERATOR: It depends on whether the call is still going on. If it's a live call, we can trace it on the equipment. If it's been disconnected, we can't.

MRS. STEVENSON: Disconnected?

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): If the parties have stopped talking to each other.

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh, but *of course* they must have stopped talking to each other by *now*. That was at least five minutes ago and they didn't sound like the type who would make a long call.

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): Well -- I can try tracing it. May I have your name, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: Mrs. Stevenson. Mrs. Elbert Stevenson. But, listen --

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter) (interrupting): And your telephone number, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: Plaza 4-2295. But if you go on wasting all this time --

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): Why do you want this call traced, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: Wha--? I-- Well -- no reason. I-I mean, I merely felt very strongly that something ought to be done about it. These men sounded like killers -- they're dangerous, they're going to murder this woman at eleven-fifteen tonight and I thought the police ought to know.

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): Have you reported this to the police?

MRS. STEVENSON: Well ... No. Not yet.

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): You want this call checked purely as a private individual?

MRS. STEVENSON: Yes, yes. But meanwhile --

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): I'm sorry, Mrs. Stevenson, but I'm afraid we couldn't make this check for you and trace the call just on your say-so as a private individual. We'd have to have something more official.

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh, for heaven's sake. You mean to tell me I can't report that there's gonna be a murder without getting tied up in all this red tape? Why, it's perfectly idiotic! (beat) Well, all right. I'll call the police.

CHIEF OPERATOR (filter): Thank you. I'm sure that would be the best way to--

SOUND: She slams down receiver.

MRS. STEVENSON: Ridiculous! Perfectly ridiculous!

SOUND: She dials Operator. Rings five times.

MRS. STEVENSON (under her breath): The thought of it! ... I can't see why I have to go to all this trouble... (impatient at the third ring) Oh ...!

SOUND: Operator finally picks up.

OPERATOR (filter): Your call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: The Police Department. Get me the Police Department -- *please!*

OPERATOR (filter): Thank you.

SOUND: Operator dials.

MRS. STEVENSON (frustrated): Oh, dear! Do you have to *dial*? Can't you ring them direct?

OPERATOR (filter): Ringing the Police Department.

SOUND: Rings three times. Mrs. Stevenson keeps muttering under her breath.

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter) (bored with his night duty assignment): Police Station, Precinct 43, Sergeant Martin speaking.

MRS. STEVENSON: Police Department? Ah, this is Mrs. Stevenson -- Mrs. Elbert Smythe Stevenson of 53 North Sutton Place. I'm calling up to report a murder. I mean (fumbling for words) -- the murder hasn't been committed yet but I just overheard plans for it over the telephone -- over a wrong number that the operator gave me. I've been trying to trace down the call myself -- but everybody is so *stupid* -- and I guess in the end you're the only people who can do anything.

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter) (not too impressed by all this): Yes, ma'am.

MRS. STEVENSON (trying to impress him): It was a perfectly definite murder. I heard their plans distinctly. Two men were talking and they were going to murder some woman at eleven-fifteen tonight. She lived in a house near a bridge. (beat) Are-are you listening to me?

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): Yes. Uh, yes, ma'am.

MRS. STEVENSON: And there was a private patrolman on the street. He was going to go around for a beer on Second Avenue. And there was some third man-- a client who was paying to have this poor woman murdered. They were going to take her rings and bracelets and-and use a knife... Well -- it-it's unnerved me dreadfully -- (reaching the breaking point) -- and I'm not well -- and I feel so nerv--

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): I see. (Stolidly) When was all this, ma'am?

MRS. STEVENSON: About eight minutes ago. (relieved) Then-then you can do something? You *do* understand --

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): What is your name, ma'am?

MRS. STEVENSON (impatient): Mrs. Stevenson. Mrs. Elbert Stevenson.

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): And your address?

MRS. STEVENSON: 53 North Sutton Place. Five-three North Sutton Place. *That's* near a bridge. The Queensboro Bridge, you know and -- and-and we have a private patrolman on *our* street... and Second Avenue --

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): And what was that number you were calling?

MRS. STEVENSON: Murray Hill 7-0093. But that wasn't the number I overheard. I mean Murray Hill 7-0093 is my husband's office. He's working late tonight and I was trying to reach him to ask him to come home. I'm an invalid, you know, and it's the maid's night off and I *hate* to be alone, even though he says I'm perfectly safe as long as I have the telephone right beside my bed.

SERGEANT MARTIN (stolidly) (filter): Well, we'll look into it, Mrs. Stevenson, and see if we can check it with the telephone company.

MRS. STEVENSON (getting impatient): But the telephone company said they couldn't check the call if the parties had stopped talking. I've already taken care of *that*!

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter) (a faint hint of sarcasm): Oh, you have?

MRS. STEVENSON (high-handed): Yes. And, personally, I feel you ought to do something far more immediate and drastic than just check the call. What good does checking the call do if they've stopped talking? By the time you tracked it down they'll already have committed the murder.

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter) (giving her the "brush off"): Well, we'll take care of it. Don't you worry.

MRS. STEVENSON: Well, I'd say the whole thing calls for a search, a complete and thorough search of the whole city. Now, I'm very near the bridge and I'm not far from Second Avenue -- and I know I'd feel a whole lot better if you sent around a radio car to this neighborhood at once!

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): And what makes you think the murder's going to be committed in your neighborhood, ma'am?

MRS. STEVENSON: Well, I -- Oh, I don't know. Only the coincidence is so *horrible*. Second Avenue -- the patrolman -- the bridge.

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): Second Avenue is a very long street, ma'am. And you know how many bridges there are in the city of New York alone?

MRS. STEVENSON: Yes, I know--

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): Not to mention Brooklyn, Staten Island, Queens, and the Bronx.

MRS. STEVENSON: I know that!

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): How do you know there isn't some little house on Staten Island on some little Second Avenue you've never even heard about? How do you know they're even talking about New York at all?

MRS. STEVENSON: But I heard the call on the New York dialing system.

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): Maybe it was a long-distance call you overheard.

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh, don't--

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): Telephones are funny things. Look, lady, why don't you look at it this way? Supposing you hadn't broken in on that telephone call? Supposing you'd got your husband the way you always do. You wouldn't be so upset, would you?

MRS. STEVENSON: Well, no, I suppose not. Only it sounded so inhuman -- so cold-blooded.

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): A lot of murders are plotted in this city every day, ma'am. We manage to prevent almost all of 'em.

MRS. STEVENSON: But--

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): But a clue of this kind is so vague -- it isn't much more use to us than no clue at all.

MRS. STEVENSON: But, surely, you --

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): Unless, of course, you have some reason for thinking this call was phony and -- that someone may be planning to murder you.

MRS. STEVENSON: Me? Oh -- oh, no -- no, I hardly think so. I -- I mean, why should anybody? I'm alone all day and night. I see nobody except my maid, Eloise, and -- she's a big girl, she weighs two hundred pounds -- she's too lazy to bring up my breakfast tray and -- the only other person is my husband, Elbert. He's crazy about me -- he-he just adores me. He waits on me hand and foot. He's scarcely left my side since I took sick, well, twelve years ago....

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): Well, then, there's nothing for you to worry about. Now, if you'll just leave the rest of this to us, we'll take care of it.

MRS. STEVENSON (not completely mollified): But what will you *do*? It's

so late ... it's nearly eleven now!

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter) (more firmly): We'll take care of it, lady.

MRS. STEVENSON: Will you broadcast it all over the city? And send out squads? And warn your radio cars to watch out -- especially in suspicious neighborhoods like mine --

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): Lady, I *said* we'd take care of it. Just now I've got a couple of other matters here on my desk that require immediate attention. Good night, ma'am, and thank you.

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh, you--! You--!

SOUND: She slams down the receiver hard.

MRS. STEVENSON: Idiot! Oh, now, why did I hang up the phone like that? He'll think I *am* a fool! (Pause) Oh -- why doesn't Elbert come home? Why doesn't he? Why doesn't he come home?

SOUND: She sobs, mutters, and dials the operator. Rings five times.

OPERATOR (filter): Your call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: Operator, for heaven's sake, will you ring that Murray Hill 7-0093 number again? I can't *think* what's keeping him so long!

OPERATOR (filter): I will try it for you.

SOUND: Operator dials under following:

MRS. STEVENSON: Well, try! Try! (to herself) I don't see why he doesn't answer it...

SOUND: Busy signal.

OPERATOR (filter): I'm sorry. Murray Hill 7-0093 is busy. I will--

MRS. STEVENSON (nasty): I can hear it. You don't have to tell me. I know it's busy...

SOUND: She slams down the receiver and sighs.

MRS. STEVENSON (nervously querulous): If I could only ... get out of this bed for a little while. If I could get a breath of fresh air, just lean out the window and see the street ...

SOUND: The phone bell rings. She picks it up instantly.

MRS. STEVENSON: Hello, Elbert? Hello? Hello? Hello?! Oh, what's the *matter* with this phone? HELLO! HELLO!

SOUND: She slams down the receiver. A second's pause. The phone rings again, once. She picks it up.

MRS. STEVENSON: Hello? Hell--? Oh, for heaven's sake, who *is* this? Hello, Hello, HELLO!

SOUND: She slams down receiver.

MRS. STEVENSON (to herself): Oh, who's trying to call me ... ?

SOUND: Dials Operator. Rings four times.

MRS. STEVENSON (to herself, on the second ring): Why doesn't she answer?

OPERATOR (filter): Your call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: Hello, Operator, I don't know *what's* the matter with this telephone tonight, but it's positively driving me crazy. I've never seen such inefficient, miserable service. Now, now, look. I'm an invalid, and I'm very nervous, and I'm *not* supposed to be annoyed. But if this keeps on much longer...

OPERATOR (filter): What seems to be the trouble, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: Well, everything's wrong! I haven't had one bit of satisfaction out of one call I've made this evening! The whole world could be murdered for all you people care. And now my phone keeps ringing and ringing and ringing and ringing every five seconds and when I pick it up there's no one there!

OPERATOR (filter): I'm sorry. If you will hang up, I will test it for you.

MRS. STEVENSON: I don't want you to test it for me! I want you to put that call through, whatever it is, at once!

OPERATOR (filter): I'm afraid I cannot do that.

MRS. STEVENSON: You can't?!? And why -- why, may I ask?

OPERATOR (filter): The dial system is automatic.

MRS. STEVENSON gasps in exasperation.

OPERATOR (filter): If someone is trying to dial your number, there is no way to check it if the call is coming through the system or not -- unless the person who's trying to reach you complains to his particular operator.

MRS. STEVENSON: Well, of all the stupid -- and meanwhile I've got to sit here in my bed, suffering every time that phone rings, imagining everything ...

OPERATOR (filter): I will try to check the trouble for you.

MRS. STEVENSON: Check it! Check it! That's all anybody can do! Oh, what's the use of talking to you? You're so *stupid*!

SOUND: She slams down he receiver.

MRS. STEVENSON (to herself): Oh, I'll fix her! Of all the impudent ... How dare she speak to me like that? How dare she?

SOUND: Dials Operator.

MRS. STEVENSON (to herself): Call the operator ...

SOUND: Rings five times.

MRS. STEVENSON (to herself, on the second ring): Oh, why does it take so long?

OPERATOR (filter): Your call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: Young woman, I don't know your name. But there are ways of finding you out. And I'm going to report you to your superiors for the most unpardonable rudeness and insolence it's ever been my privilege-- Give me the business office at once!

OPERATOR (filter): You may dial that number direct.

MRS. STEVENSON: Dial it direct? I'll do no such thing! I don't even know the number...

OPERATOR (filter): The number is in the directory or you may secure it by dialing Information.

MRS. STEVENSON: Listen, here, you-- Oh, what's the use!

SOUND: Slams down the receiver.

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh, dear ...

SOUND: Almost instantly the phone rings.

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh, for heaven's sake, I'm going out of my mind! Out of my--

SOUND: She picks up the receiver.

MRS. STEVENSON: Hello?! HELLO! Stop ringing me, do you hear? Answer me! Who is this? Do you realize you're driving me crazy? Who's calling me? What are you doing it for? Now stop it! Stop it! Stop it! HELLO! HELLO! I-I-If you don't stop ringing me, I'm going to call the police, do you hear?! THE POLICE!

SOUND: She slams down the receiver.

MRS. STEVENSON (sobbing nervously): Oh, if Elbert would only come home!

SOUND: The phone rings again sharply, seven times under the following:

MRS. STEVENSON (to herself): Oh, let it ring. Let it go on ringing. It's a trick of some kind. I won't answer it. I won't. I won't. I won't, even if it goes on ringing all night. Oh, you ring. Go ahead and ring.

SOUND: The phone suddenly stops -- then silence.

MRS. STEVENSON (a terrified note in her voice): Stopped. Now, now what's the matter? Why did they stop ringing all of a sudden? Oh... (hysterically) What time is it? Where did I put that ... clock? Oh, here it is. Five to eleven ... oh, they've decided something. They're sure I'm home. They heard my voice answer them just now. That's why they've been ringing me -- why no one has answered me --

SOUND: She picks up the phone.

MRS. STEVENSON (to herself): I'll call the operator again.

SOUND: She dials Operator. Rings five times.

MRS. STEVENSON (to herself, on the second ring): Oh, where is she? Why doesn't she answer? Why doesn't she answer?

OPERATOR (filter): Your call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: Where were you just now? Why didn't you answer at once? Give me the Police Department.

SOUND: Operator puts call through. Busy signal.

OPERATOR (filter): I'm sorry. The line is busy. I will call you--

MRS. STEVENSON: Busy? But that's impossible! The Police Department can't be busy. There must be other lines available.

OPERATOR (filter): The line is busy. I will try to get them for you later.

MRS. STEVENSON (frantic): No, no! I've got to speak to them *now* or it may be too late. I've got to talk to *someone*!

OPERATOR (filter): What number do you wish to speak to?

MRS. STEVENSON (desperately): I don't know! But there must be someone to protect people beside the police department! A-a-a -- detective agency -- a --

OPERATOR (filter): You will find agencies listed in the Classified Directory.

MRS. STEVENSON: But I don't have a Classified! I mean -- I'm-I'm too nervous to look it up -- and I-I don't know how to use the--

OPERATOR (filter): I'll connect you with Information. Perhaps she will be able to help you.

MRS. STEVENSON (agonizedly): No! No! (Furiously) Oh, you're being spiteful, aren't you? You don't care, do you, what happens to me? I could die and you wouldn't care.

SOUND: Hangs up receiver. Phone rings.

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! I can't stand any more.

SOUND: She picks up receiver.

MRS. STEVENSON (yelling frenziedly into phone): Hello! What do you want?! Stop ringing, will you?! Stop it...!

3RD MAN (filter): Hello, is this Plaza 4-2295?

MRS. STEVENSON (in a more subdued voice): Yes. Yes, I'm .. I'm sorry. This ... this is Plaza 4-2295.

3RD MAN (filter): This is Western Union. I have a telegram here for Mrs. Elbert Stevenson. Is there anyone there to receive the message?

MRS. STEVENSON (tying to calm herself): I'm ... I'm Mrs. Stevenson.

3RD MAN (filter): The telegram is as follows: Mrs. Elbert Stevenson, 53 North Sutton Place, New York, New York. Darling. Terribly sorry. Tried to get you for last hour, but

line busy. Leaving for Boston eleven P.M. tonight, on urgent business. Back tomorrow afternoon. Keep happy. Love. Signed, Elbert.

MRS. STEVENSON (breathlessly, almost to herself): Oh, no --

3RD MAN (filter): Do you wish us to deliver a copy of the message?

MRS. STEVENSON: No. No, thank you.

3RD MAN (filter): Thank you, madam. Good-night.

SOUND: Western Union hangs up.

MRS. STEVENSON (mechanically): Good-night.

SOUND: She hangs up.

MRS. STEVENSON (suddenly bursting out): Oh, no. No -- I don't believe it. He couldn't do it. He couldn't do it. Not when he knows I'll be all alone. It's some trick -- some fiendish trick --

SOUND: She dials Operator. Rings five times.

MRS. STEVENSON (to herself, sobbing): ... some trick .. why doesn't she ...?

OPERATOR (filter): Your call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON: Operator, try that Murray Hill 7-0093 number for me, just once more, please.

OPERATOR (filter): You may dial that number direct ...

SOUND: Mrs. Stevenson hangs up.

MRS. STEVENSON (wretchedly): Oh ...

SOUND: She picks up and nervously dials the number direct, sounding out the numbers under her breath. It goes through, ring after long ring. Seven times. No answer.

MRS. STEVENSON: Oh ... He's gone. He's gone. Oh, Elbert, how could you? How could you --?

SOUND: She hangs up the phone.

MRS. STEVENSON (sobs, pitying herself): How could you? I-I can't be alone tonight. I can't. If I'm alone one more second, I'll go mad. I don't care what he says -- or what the expense is -- I'm a sick woman ... I'm entitled ... I'm entitled ...

SOUND: She dials Information. Rings three times.

INFORMATION (filter): Information. May I help you?

MRS. STEVENSON: I-I want the telephone number of Henchley Hospital.

INFORMATION (filter): Henchley Hospital? Do you have the street address?

MRS. STEVENSON: No. No. It's somewhere in the seventies. It's a very small, private, and exclusive hospital where I had my appendix out two years ago. Henchley -- uh, H-E-N-C --

INFORMATION (filter): One moment, please.

MRS. STEVENSON: Please hurry. And please -- what is the time?

INFORMATION (filter): You may find out the time by dialing Meridian 7-1212.

MRS. STEVENSON (irritated): Oh, for heaven's sake ... I've no time to be dialing ...

INFORMATION (filter): The number of Henchley Hospital is Butterfield 7-0105.

MRS. STEVENSON: Butterfield 7-0105.

SOUND: She hangs up before she finishes speaking, and dials number even as she speaks. Rings four times.

WOMAN (solid, firm, practical) (filter): Henchley Hospital. Good evening.

MRS. STEVENSON: Nurses' registry.

WOMAN (filter): Who was it you wished to speak to, please?

MRS. STEVENSON (high-handed): I want the nurse's registry, at once. I want a trained nurse. I want to hire her immediately for the night.

WOMAN (filter): I see. And what is the nature of the case, madam?

MRS. STEVENSON: Nerves. I'm very nervous. I need soothing -- companionship. You see, my husband is away and I'm--

WOMAN (filter): Have you been recommended to us by any doctor in

particular, madam?

MRS. STEVENSON: No. But I really don't see why all this catechizing is necessary. I just want a trained nurse. I was a patient in your hospital two years ago. And after all, I do expect to *pay* this person for attending me.

WOMAN (filter): We quite understand that, madam. But these are war times, you know.

MRS. STEVENSON: Well--

WOMAN (filter): Registered nurses are very scarce just now -- and our superintendent has asked us to send people out only on cases where the physician in charge feels that it is absolutely necessary.

MRS. STEVENSON (high-handed): Well, it *is* absolutely necessary. I'm a sick woman. I'm-I'm very upset. Very. I'm alone in this house -- and I'm an invalid -- and tonight I overheard a telephone conversation that upset me dreadfully. In fact (beginning to yell) if someone doesn't come at once, I'm afraid I'll go out of my mind!

WOMAN (filter) (calmly): I see. Well -- I'll speak to Miss Phillips as soon as she comes in. And what is your name, madam?

MRS. STEVENSON: Miss Phillips? And when do you expect her in?

WOMAN (filter): Well, I really couldn't say. She went out to supper at eleven o'clock.

MRS. STEVENSON: Eleven o'clock! But it's not eleven yet! (She cries out) Oh -- oh, my clock *has* stopped. I *thought* it was running down. What time is it?

WOMAN (filter) (pausing as though glancing at wrist watch): Just fifteen minutes past eleven....

SOUND: Telephone receiver being lifted on the same line as Mrs. Stevenson's.

MRS. STEVENSON (crying out): What-what was that?

WOMAN (filter): What was ... what, madam?

MRS. STEVENSON: That -- that click -- just now, in my own telephone. As though someone had lifted the receiver off the hook of the extension telephone downstairs.

WOMAN (filter): Well, I didn't hear it, madam. Now, about this--

MRS. STEVENSON (terrified): But I *did*. There's someone in this house.

Someone downstairs in the kitchen. And they're -- they're listening to me now. They're --

SOUND: Mrs. Stevenson hangs up.

MRS. STEVENSON (in a suffocated voice): I won't pick it up. I -- I won't let them hear me. I'll be quiet and they'll think... (with growing terror) Oh, but if I don't call someone now while they're still down there, there'll be no time... .

SOUND: She picks up receiver and dials Operator. Ring three times.

OPERATOR (filter): Your call, please?

MRS. STEVENSON (in a desperate whisper): Operator. Operator. I'm in desperate trouble.

OPERATOR (filter): I'm sorry. I cannot hear you. Please speak louder.

MRS. STEVENSON (Still whispering): I don't dare. I -- there's someone listening. Can you hear me now?

OPERATOR (filter): I'm sorry.

MRS. STEVENSON (desperately): But you've got to hear me. Oh, please. You've got to help me. There's someone in this house. Someone who's going to murder me. And you've got to get in touch with ...

SOUND: Click of receiver being put down on Mrs. Stevenson's line.

MRS. STEVENSON (bursting out wildly): Oh -- there it is. There it is. Did you hear it? He's put it down -- he's put down the extension phone. He's coming up... (her voice is hoarse with fear) He's coming up the stairs. Give me the Police Department ... the police department ... police department ... give it to me ...

OPERATOR (filter): One moment, please -- I will connect you.

SOUND: Call is put through.

MRS. STEVENSON: I can -- I can hear him. He's nearer. (weakly) Oh, I hear him, I hear him. Hurry. Hurry. Hurry.

SOUND: As Mrs. Stevenson becomes incoherent with fear and begins to scream, a train approaches and roars over a nearby bridge. As it fades, we hear a body thump to the floor. Then it passes and we hear the phone still ringing at the other end. The telephone is picked up.

SERGEANT MARTIN (filter): Police Department, Sergeant Martin speaking ... Police Department. Sergeant Martin speaking ... Police Department. Sergeant Martin speaking ... Police Department. Sergeant Martin speaking.

GEORGE (same distinctive voice as in beginning of play): Police Department? Oh, I'm sorry. Must have got the wrong number. Don't worry. Everything's okay.

MUSIC: Up and out.

THE MAN IN BLACK: And so closes "Sorry, Wrong Number" -- starring Miss Agnes Moorehead, tonight's tale of ...

MUSIC: Bernard Herrmann's theme music kicks in.

THE MAN IN BLACK: ... suspense!

MUSIC: Theme continues under the following:

THE MAN IN BLACK: This is your narrator, the Man in Black, who conveys to you Columbia's invitation to spend this half-hour in suspense with us again next Saturday when we'll have another starring Hollywood cast headed by Miss Dolores Costello with Martin Koslick, Ian Wolfe and George Zucco. The producer of these broadcasts is William Spier, who with Ted Bliss, the director, Lud Gluskin, the musical director and Lucille Fletcher, the author, collaborated on tonight's "Suspense" ...

MUSIC: Out.

ANNOUNCER: This is CBS, the Columbia Broadcasting System.

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