Sorry, Wrong Number

By Lucille Fletcher
Operator? Operator?
- Your call, please.
I've been ringing Murray Hill 3-5097 for the last half hour.
The line is always busy.
Will you ring it for me, please?
Murray Hill 3-5097.
- One moment, please.
- My husband's office.
He should've been home hours ago.
I can't think what's keeping him...
or why that ridiculous wire should be busy.
They always close that office at 6:
Ringing Murray Hill 3-5097.
Thank you.
Hello? Hello?
Hello, Mr. Stevenson, please.
- I want to speak to Mr. Stevenson.
- Hello, George?
- Speaking.
- What number am I calling?
I got your message, George.
Everything okay for tonight?
- Yeah, everything's okay.
- Excuse me.
What's going on here?
I'm using this wire.

- It's still 11:

- 11:
- You got it all straight now?
- Yeah, I think so.

At 11:
goes around to the bar...
on 2nd Avenue for a beer.
Then I get in through the kitchen window at the back.
Then I wait till the train goes over the bridge...
in case her window is open
and she should scream.
Hello? Who is this?
I forgot to ask you.
Still don't wanna use the gun?
Make it quick. Our client doesn't
wish to make her suffer long.
Okay, George, don't worry.
There won't be any slipup.
And don't forget to take
the rings and bracelets...
and the jewelry
in the bureau drawer.
Our client wishes to make it look
like simple robbery.
Simple robbery.
That's very important.
Okay, okay.
Now, let me just check
the address again.
It's...
Hello?
- Your call, please.
- You've given me a wrong number.
I'm sorry, madam.
What number were you calling?
I was calling Murray Hill 3-5097...
That's my husband's office...
and instead, I was cut into
some other number that you dialed.
The wires must have crossed,
and I heard the most dreadful thing.
- A murder.
- Yes, madam?
And now, I want you to get that
wrong number back for me at once.
I'm sorry, madam.
I do not understand.
You dialed a number for me
just a moment ago...
Murray Hill 3-5097.
It was busy for so long, and
I asked you to get it and you did.
And then those...
those horrible men came on and...
Well, it's unnerved me dreadfully.
I'm an invalid.
I will connect you
with the chief operator.
Please.
- Chief Operator. May I help you?
- I'm an invalid...
and I've just had a dreadful shock
tonight over the telephone...
and I'm very anxious
to trace the call.
It was about a murder...
a terrible, coldblooded murder...
of a poor, innocent woman

tonight at 11:
I was trying to reach
my husband's office.
He should've been home hours ago.
I'm all alone tonight.
My nurse has the night off,
because my husband had promised...
As a matter of fact,
he had sworn he'd be home by 6:00.
I don't know any of the neighbors,
as we live permanently in Chicago.
Well, it so happens that
the couple I have working for me...
had some important date or other.
I don't know.
A movie, I suppose.
They said it was promised them
three weeks ago.
You could've thought they'd have
checked with me before leaving...
had some realization
of my condition.
But I've been ringing and ringing
the bell for nearly an hour...
hoping they'd come back
or something.
- There isn't a sound downstairs.
- Yes, madam.
So when I kept getting the busy signal in my husband's office...
I naturally dialed the operator and told her to try it, and she did. Then, out of a clear sky, I was cut into this ghastly conversation...
between two killers.
And now, I'd like you to trace it for me at once.
- Well, madam, that depends.
- Depends on what?
On whether the parties have stopped talking to each other.
Of course they've stopped talking to each other by now.
It was just a short call.
They weren't exactly gossiping.
And what is your reason for having this call traced, madam?
Do I have to have a reason when I overheard two murderers?
Isn't it obvious?
Now, look here, my good woman.
You probably don't understand, but a human being, a woman...
is going to be killed somewhere...
somewhere in this very city...
and this murder's going to take place tonight at 11:15.
Isn't that a good enough reason?
I quite understand, madam, but I would suggest...
that you turn this information over to the police.
Oh, for heaven's sakes, all this idiotic red tape!
You'd just sit there and let people die!
- Your call, please.
- Give me the police.
Yes, madam.
Ringing the police department.
Tick-tock, tick-tock.
Listen to the big tick-tock.
Isn't that nice?
That's better.
Say, maybe that's your mom
calling for you.
Precinct 17.
Duffy speaking.
Yes? Oh, yes, Mrs. Stevenson.
I remember you. What?
You what?
A murder?
Yes, go ahead.
But there's lots of people
by the name of George.
And as for the private patrolman
and 2nd Avenue and the bridge...
Do you know how many bridges there
are in the city of New York alone?
Not to mention Brooklyn,
Staten Island, Queens and the Bronx?
Telephones are very funny things.
Look, lady, a lot of murders are
committed in this town every day.
If we could stop them, we would.
But a clue that's so vague...
it's not much more use to us
than no clue at all...
unless you think there's
something phony about this call...
and somebody's planning
to murder you.
Me? Why, of course not.
That would be ridiculous.
I mean, why should anybody?
Well, you see? There's nothing
for you to worry about.
- Now, if you'll excuse me, please.
- Just a minute!
Will you please excuse me, ma'am,
for just one second?
I know, darling.
Why are you crying?
Be a good girl.
Everything's gonna be all right.
I'm sorry, ma'am, but I've got a couple
of other things here on my desk...
that require
my immediate attention.
Good night.
All right! Don't listen!
Who cares?
Henry.
Henry, why do you leave me alone?
- Hello?
- Is this Plaza 5-1098?
I have a person-to-person call
for Mrs. Henry Stevenson.
Chicago is calling.
This is Mrs. Stevenson.
One moment, please.
- Go ahead, sir.
- Hello, Leona?
- Hello, Dad.
- Is that you, sweetie?
- And how's my girl tonight?
- What are you doing, Dad?
- How's that?
- Can you talk?
- If I can talk?
- Can you talk?
Sure, sweetheart.
Go ahead, I can talk.
A murder?

**Tonight, 11:**
You called the police?
How come? Where's Henry?
Where's your nurse?
Henry told her she could, did he?
Well, then,
why didn't he come home?
Business? What business?
Didn't I tell him time and again
his first consideration is to you?
I'll worry about the business.
Dear, when the guy hasn't another
responsibility in the world...
and just because I'm not around
to check up on him.
Just forget about it.
Maybe just a gag.
Couple of actors, maybe,
on a radio program.
Radio? Radio program?
Sometimes happens.
No need to worry your head
on a hot night like this.
Honey, everybody...
Pardon me.
I wish you'd get the whole thing
over with and come home.
House is like a morgue without you.
Okay, I won't keep you, but
I just wanted to check up as usual.
- You'll call me tomorrow?
- I'll call you tomorrow night.
And pet, tell Henry to call me
at the office tomorrow morning.
I'll have a talk with him.
Number 99. 99.
Number 17. 1-7.
There's a telephone call
for Miss Elizabeth Jennings.
There's a telephone call
for Miss Elizabeth Jennings.
Number 46.
Miss Elizabeth Jennings
is wanted on the phone.
Number 23. 23.
Twenty-three!
That makes two fours.
All I need now is 14 or 65.
- Miss Jennings?
- Just a second, please.
We're getting pretty close now,
ladies...
to that super-duper
electric blanket...
donated by Bollcomb's Drug Store.
- And the next number is...
- You're wanted on the phone.
- A Mrs. Stevenson.
- Number 59.
- Bingo!
- Oh, baloney. What's the matter?
A Mrs. Stevenson wants
to speak to you on the phone.
- She said it's very important.
- Mrs. Stevenson?
Well, why, for heaven's sakes,
didn't you say so?
Hello? I beg your pardon.
I had no idea.
You're the last person on earth,
naturally, I'd ever keep waiting.
- Mr. Stevenson isn't home.
- Mr. Stevenson not home yet?
- Do you know where he is?
- Why, no, I don't.
He was supposed to
come home hours ago.
That is odd, isn't it?
Last time I saw him, he was
leaving to keep an appointment.
- Where?
- No, I don't know where.
But I do know he had a lunch date
with a young lady.
Oh, yes, rather good-looking.
She came into the office
this morning.
Said her name was Lord.
Mrs. Frederick Lord.
Seemed very anxious to see him.
Waited for him at least two hours.
Mr. Stevenson.
Someone to see you.
Some other time.
I told you, I'm busy today.
Hello, Henry.
- Don't you remember me?
- Why...
Why, sure, sure.
Well, now, what do you know?
Come in, won't you?
Yes, that's just the way
he greeted her, Mrs. Stevenson.
He didn't seem to be expecting her. But I'm sure she was somebody of importance to him. Unfortunately, I couldn't hear much of what they said. But the conversation wasn't very long... and I do know Mr. Stevenson made a date to meet her later. I'll be there in about an hour. Ask for Maurice. Thank you. I'll be there. I don't know why, but he didn't leave with her. I'll be back later this afternoon. If anyone calls, take the message. - I'll be in touch with you. - Yes, Mr. Stevenson. I don't know where he went after that, Mrs. Stevenson. All I know is, I never saw or heard from him again all day.

It was 6:
I was practically the last to leave except for Jimmy, the porter. No, he didn't even come back to get his messages. There was only one. Some man on Staten Island... who keeps calling him every week. A Mr. Evans. A regular pest he is too. But on the other hand, it's not at all unusual... for Mr. Stevenson to stay away all day. And I'm sure it's nothing to worry about. Now, I do hope I haven't let any cat out of the bag. But I'm sure it was all quite harmless.
Mr. Stevenson seems so devoted...  
speaks so beautifully of you.  
Did you like the flowers this week?  
I had the feeling...  
I mean, I thought...  
camellias might be sweet  
just for a change, you know.  
- Mr. Stevenson, please.  
- He's not in. Who's calling?  
- Mr. Evans. When do you expect him?  
- I don't know.  
- He should be here any minute.  
- You know where I could reach him?  
I'm sure I don't know where  
Mr. Stevenson is. Call back later.  
Would 15 minutes be all right?  
I haven't much time.  
- I'm leaving before midnight.  
- All right. Fifteen minutes.  
Thank you. And you'll tell him  
I called in case he does come in?  
The name is Evans.  
It's very important.  
Yes, all right.  
Hello, this is  
the Lord residence.  
I'd like to speak  
to Mrs. Lord, please.  
Mrs. Lord?  
One moment, please.  
- That for me, Pete?  
- No. A lady for Mommy.  
I don't know why you're not asleep.  
Will you do something  
about Peter still being up?  
Now, where was I?  
Oh, yes.  
"...that the said  
Henry Stevenson did..."  
- Is that Bayonne or Cicero there?  
- Bayonne.  
The Bayonne Plant  
of the Cotterell Corporation.  
Headquarters on Staten Island?
- Hello?
- Hello, Mrs. Lord?
- This is she.
- This is Mrs. Henry Stevenson.
I don't believe we've met,
but I understand...
you saw my husband this afternoon.
- Yes, yes.
- As it so happens, Mrs. Lord...
my husband hasn't
come home this evening.
I can't locate him. I thought
perhaps you might give me some idea.
- Oh, yes.
- I can't hear you, Mrs. Lord.
- Will you please speak up a little?
- Oh, certainly.
Is there anything wrong? You're not
keeping something from me, I hope.
Oh, no, no.
Could I call you back, please?
- Call me back? Why?
- Because I...
- It's my bridge day, you know.
- What's that?
What has bridge got to do with it?
Excuse me...
but I don't understand you
at all, Mrs. Lord.
I'm sorry. And then...
there's that excursion
to Roton Point.
- Who is it?
- Look, Mrs. Lord...
are you trying
to make fun of me?
Just in case you don't happen
to know it, I'm a hopeless invalid.
- I'll give you the recipe.
- What are you talking about?
Is my husband there with you?
Is he? Tell me the truth!
It's three eggs separated, two measuring cups of milk... a third of a cup of shortening. Cream the shortening with sugar, then add a tablespoon of flour. Leona, just a minute. This is Sally. Sally Hunt, Leona. Sally? Sally Hunt? I'm sorry to be so ridiculous, but I can't talk now. Mommy, you want me to ask Daddy to stop typing so you can talk better? - Darling, please go to sleep. - All right, Mom. It's impossible to explain now. I'll call you back as soon as I can. - Now, where's she gone? - Yes, dear? I thought you'd gone out again. Joe'd like a bottle of beer. Got any on ice? No, Fred, I don't believe so. But I'll go down to the store. - Okay, honey. - Thanks, Sally. - Let's see. Where were we? - Better start a new paragraph. Sally Hunt. May I cut in? You don't mind, do you, Sally? It's an old Spanish custom... the hag line. I'm Leona Cotterell. What's your name? - This is Mr. Henry Stevenson. - Hello, Henry. Shall we dance? If you don't mind, miss, it's the man who does the picking. All right, go ahead. Why don't you get somebody your own speed? That is... I'm sure there are better dancers around.
You'll do all right. Leona knows her way around the floor.
Did you say your name was Cotterell?
That's right.
There's a big drug company named Cotterell. Any connection?
I'm afraid there is.
My father owns it.
You mean J.B. Cotterell?
- Anything wrong with that?
- No, it's just that...
I've always pictured J.B. Cotterell as a walking tube of toothpaste.
What do they call you...
the Aspirin Heiress?
I believe it's the Cough Drop Queen.
You know, there's nothing wrong with your dancing.
- Do you do a lot of it?
- Not at places like this.
Oh. You're from out of town?
Well, that depends on what you call out of town.
Oh, I don't know. Harvard?
- Are you trying to be funny?
- What do you call out of town?
- Grassville.
- What college is up there?
No college.
Just steel pipes and mica parts.
I'm sorry.
I didn't know.
That's all right.
To be perfectly frank with you...
I never even finished high school, not that I wouldn't have liked to.
Neither did my father.
He never got past the seventh grade.
- You don't say?
- My father always says...
"If a man hasn't any talent for making money...
college won't knock it into him.
And if he has a talent
for making money...
why should he waste his time
in college?"
There's something in that too.
Your old man ought to know...
when it comes to making money.
- Well, I'll be getting along now.
- Just a minute.
What do you say
we sit the next one out?
What for?
I've got my own car off campus
just outside the main gate.
It's a Lagonda. I just got it
from Europe. Did you ever drive one?
Never heard of it. Besides, Sally's
probably looking all over for me.
What difference does that make?
This is a public dance, isn't it?
Don't worry.
She'll never even miss you.
But what about me missing her?
Or did that idea ever strike you?
Come on.
Don't be silly.
For once, I'm not kidding.
Neither am I.
So long, Miss Cotterell.
I'm sorry I can't oblige that
Lagonda or whatever you call it.
I'd never put the two of you
together in a million years.
- Why?
- Well, you're both so different.
You belong in different worlds.
You don't belong here
in Grassville, Henry.
- What makes you say that?
- Just a feeling.
I've been around a good deal,
and I...
I think I can spot the real thing
Isn't that Grassville over there?
- Guess we'd better turn around.
- Why?
- It's nice here.
- Think so?

Stick around a few years
and see how much you like it.

Henry, that woman back there
in the house...

who opened the door for me,
was she your mother?
- My mother's dead.
- That's strange.

So is mine.

She died when I was born.
- What was your mother like?
- I don't know.

You mean she died young too?

She died last year,
but I never knew her.

All she was to me was just a line of
wet clothes hung across the kitchen.
A mess of greasy pots and pans
piled in the sink.

All I ever saw of her was...
a pail of soap and a mop and her
old run-over shoes in the closet.

It's funny, I guess, but...
when I saw her lying there in
the undertaking parlor last year...

she seemed to me like
somebody I hardly knew.

I don't know why I'm telling you.

There's nothing nice about my life.
- Cigarette?
- Thanks.

What's the matter?

Nothing.

What do you do here in Grassville?

I have a job.

Just a meal ticket...
till I can save up enough
to get out of here.
- What kind of a job?
- I work in a drug store.
A drug store?
Well, that is a coincidence.
A heck of a coincidence.
I work in a drug store...
and your father owns
a hundred of 'em.
Would you like to meet him?
- Who are you kidding?
- Nobody.
I think Dad
will like you very much.
You're young, healthy,
ambitious...
and you probably know
the drug business upside down.
I wouldn't say that, Leona.
That's nice.
Call me Leona again.
I just work in a drug store.
That's a different thing.
But I like you,
and that's a different thing too.
Like me, like you.
Come on.
We're both acting like a couple
of kids playing cat and mouse.
Besides, what does a dame like you
want with a guy like me?
May I?
Dad is coming to New York
on business next weekend.
I'm cutting my classes on Saturday.
Want to come with me?
I don't quite know how
to say it, Leona...
Well, say it and get it over with.
I'm leaving in a few minutes.
You've been seeing a lot of Henry
in the past few weeks, haven't you?
What about it?
- I just felt I ought to warn you.
- Warn me?
Henry's not the kind of man
to play around with.
Don't play around with him
anymore, please.
Who says I'm playing
around with him?
Well, he's just not your type...
and you know it
as well as I do.
- I like your nerve.
- Henry's poor, Leona.
He's been bitterly poor
all his life.
That wouldn't matter to some boys,
but it does matter to him terribly.
I've known him all my life.
Henry's father was a drunkard.
He'd work one day and drink up
every penny in the house the next.
There were eight children.
So? What has all this got to do
with the price of eggs?
Leona, don't turn his head...
or he'll never be able
to find himself again.
You mean you can't stand
the competition.
- That's not the point.
- Oh, applesauce.
In case you don't know it, I happen
to think a great deal of Henry.
I happen to think he's much
too good for that town of yours.
I never said he wasn't.
And if I want to make something
of him, show him a good time...
introduce him to people,
that's my business.
And if I want to marry him,
that's my business too.
Marry him?
You don't mean that.
You couldn't possibly.
- Why couldn't I?
- Because...
Because I happen to be
in love with him, Leona.
So am I, and I don't go around
rationalizing my emotions either.
When I want something,
I fight for it.
And I usually manage to get it.
But the fellow has nothing, honey.
No background...
no education, no training.
And what did you have when
you started in Amarillo, Texas?
Look, honey, I've spent money
on your education...
taken you abroad, given you
everything in the world.
What do you want
to throw yourself away for?
- I love him.
- Love him? Oh, come on.
If I really thought you did,
you know I'd be the first to...
What's the matter?
You make me laugh.
Why don't you be honest
with yourself just once?
What does it matter to you
if I love him or not?
All you want is for me to stay here
with you for the rest of your life.
Well, honey, what parent doesn't
want to hold on to his child...
until he's sure she has something
better than what he's given her?
Don't be silly.
You've become so dependent on me...
you won't be happy until
I feel the same way about you.
Haven't I always let you do
anything you ever wanted to do?
But marriage is something else.
I've worked hard. I've built up
a big business, just for you.
You yourself wouldn't want to see
some worthless cluck of a husband...
- Leave me alone!
- Leona, don't!
You don't care about me. You think
only of yourself and your business.
You're hateful!
Selfish and hateful!
Don't, please. Try and be calm.
You'll make yourself sick.
What good is your wonderful money
and your business if I'm dead?
That's what you want to do...
drive me into my grave!
But you don't care just as long
as your business is safe!
- How can you say a thing like that?
- Oh, go away!
Don't touch me!
I said, don't touch me!
- Don't you dare touch me!
- Leona, darling.
I'm sorry.
I didn't mean...
We'll talk this over again, dearest.
Maybe we can work something out.
I, Leona, take thee, Henry...
I, Leona, take thee, Henry...
- to my wedded husband...
- to my wedded husband...
- to have and to hold...
- to have and to hold...
- from this day forward...
- from this day forward...
I, Leona, take thee, Henry...
Henry, hurry up, darling.
I've reserved a table at Maxine's.
The opera starts at 7:30.
You know how I hate being late.
- In a minute, sweetheart.
- Where's your wallet?
My wallet?
Must be in my coat pocket.
This is Sally again. I'm sorry I had
to be so mysterious just now...
but I couldn't talk...
my husband was there.
It certainly was rather odd,
to say the least.
This whole thing must seem
very peculiar to you, Leona...
hearing from me
after all of these years.
But I had to see Henry again today.
I've been so worried about him.
Worried? About what?
Well, it's a little bit difficult
for me to explain...
but about five weeks ago, Fred...
He's my husband and he works in
the district attorney's office.
- That's interesting.
- What's interesting?
Drink your milk, Peter.
What were you saying, dear?
Kind of a funny coincidence
I read in the paper...
about an old boyfriend of yours.
What old boyfriend?
Didn't you used to be stuck
on a guy named Henry Stevenson?
I used to know him, yes.
What's he done?
He just got his picture
in the paper... he and his wife.
"Mr. And Mrs. Henry Stevenson...
She is the former Leona Cotterell...
the Cough Drop Queen
of Lake Forest, Illinois...
have taken a house for
the summer in New York City."
"Mrs. Stevenson, in poor health
for several years...
is here to consult the eminent
specialist, Dr. Philip Alexander."
"Mr. Stevenson is a vice president
of the Cotterell Corporation."
A cough drop queen?
That's funny.
Whoever heard of a cough drop queen?
- He looks so different.
- Do you think so?
- What are you saving it for?
- Case I'm working on just now.
Toast is burning.
Fred, I know it's supposed
to be a secret...
but why did you tear out
that clipping?
What possible connection
can Henry Stevenson have to you?
No connection to me. It's just
a hunch I'm working on right now.
- What's it about?
- A special investigation I'm doing.
Henry hasn't done anything, has he?
I'm sorry, honey,
but that's one too many questions.
Say, don't tell me
you're still stuck on the guy?
Don't be silly.
- Finished, Peter?
- Yes, Mom.
Lord speaking.
Yes, Joe.
Oh, you did?
Oh, great.
Well, how about Stevenson?
What? Oh, yeah?
Well, now, that's pretty good news.
He fell for it, eh?
Well, sure we'll go.
Tell Harpootlian to line it up.
Yes, five thousand's enough.
Have it in hundred-dollar bills,
be sure they're marked...
and keep your mouth shut,
for Pete's sake.
Okay. Thursday.

About 6:
Right, Joe.
You'll probably think it wasn't any of my business, Leona... and I suppose it wasn't, but anyway

**at 6:**
I went down to South Ferry.
I don't know what I expected to see. As a matter of fact, there wasn't much I could see at first. But obviously, the stage was all set for something. Joe... He's Fred's closest friend and is on his staff... was there. There was another man with him. I guess he was this Harpootlian they've mentioned... the one who was to bring the $5,000 in marked money. Are you sure Fred knows where we're supposed to meet him? Here he is.
- Sorry. I'm a little bit late.
- Come on. Let's go.
It may all sound silly to you now, Leona... my spying on them and poking around like that... but something told me I had to find out what was up. I don't know. I still can't explain why... but I...
I just followed them. It was one of the weirdest days I've ever spent.

Have you ever been to Staten Island, Leona? Some parts of it, of course, are thickly settled. But other parts seem to exist in a kind of dream... like the lonely beach we went to that day. It was quite a desolate place,
far out on the island. No one was in sight except... yes, a young boy... who was digging for clams by the water's edge. Further down at the end of the beach, there was nothing... but a few broken-down shacks. In back of them, an old deserted house. A second later, I saw Fred and the other two men... walking up toward the end of a small road leading to the beach. I couldn't quite make out if they talked to the clam digger or not. Anyhow, they entered one of the shacks... that looked to me like an abandoned lunch stand. It was then that my attention was drawn to this strange-looking house. It looked absolutely empty... as though it hadn't been lived in for years. And yet, Leona, a freshly-painted sign was in front. "20 Dunstan Terrace." It seemed to belong to somebody called Evans... W. Evans. I waited there watching I'd say for about an hour. Nothing happened. And then... just as I was beginning to think it was all a wild goose chase... I saw something, something quite strange. They were in there for a good half hour. And when they finally came out, at first I didn't notice anything. All I thought of was how to get out of their way...
so they wouldn't see me, as they were heading straight toward me. But when they got close and passed right in front of me... I saw Fred was carrying the briefcase. I didn't see my husband until he came home late that night. I was dying to ask about what happened there... and what connection it could possibly have with Henry... but I didn't dare. And now, unless we do something drastic, it may be too late. Madam, your five minutes are up. Please deposit five cents for the next five minutes. Just a minute, please. I know I have another nickel. There. Are you still there, Leona? Yes, I'm here, but this is one of the queerest things I've ever heard. I know. I just didn't seem to be able... to connect Henry with all of this mysterious activity either. That's why I went to see him today... to find out the truth from him. - And did you? - Scarcely. I'm awfully sorry, but it took much longer than I thought. - I hope they took good care of you. - Yes, thank you. Two martinis, please. By the way, tell Louise I'm expecting a call. - It's very important. - Yes, sir. Well, how have you been, Sally? It's been a long time. Yes, Henry. Eight years.
How's old Grassville these days?
I don't know.
I haven't been there for years.
Well, you wanted to see me.
What was it about?
Well, it isn't easy
for me to explain.
You see, I've thought about you...
a great deal in the past years,
and, well, yesterday...
Two martinis. Extra dry as always.
Thank you.
Well, here's to...
here's to good old Grassville.
Tell me all about it.
What's happening up there?
I just told you, I'm not living
in Grassville anymore.
I'm married now,
and I live in New York.
Well, what do you say?
Anybody I know?
No, he's a lawyer.
As a matter of fact...
he works in the district attorney's
office on special assignments.
That's why I wanted...
Sir, would you like to order now?
No thanks. In a minute.
Maurice...
who is that man
sitting behind me?
I don't know, Mr. Stevenson.
I'm sorry.
Thanks. Forgive me.
You were saying? What's the matter?
Do you want something else?
I don't care for anything.
Then if you don't mind,
I'm kind of thirsty.
What I'm trying to say is this.
A few days ago...
I saw a picture of you
in the paper about your being...
the vice president of the Cotterell Company.
- Sounds beautiful, doesn't it?
- You are still married to Leona?
Sure, I'm still married to Leona.
Still live in Chicago.
Still work for my father-in-law.
Biggest drug business in the country.
What do you do there?
Push buttons, like all the other vice presidents.
- I mean it, seriously.
- So do I.
I'm the Invoice King. I supervise all the little invoices...
that are made out on all the stuff that goes into the Cotterell bilge.
Thousands of little okays made out on little pieces of paper...
not to mention five carbon copies.
- How about some food? Waiter?
- Yes, sir?
Tell Albert we're ready for lunch.
I don't mean to be inquisitive.
I only mean this for your own good.
My husband was making out a report yesterday.
- Your call, Mr. Stevenson.
- Thank you.
Will you excuse me, Sally?
Order something. I'll be right back.
I waited a while, then...
Please deposit five cents for the next five minutes.
But I haven't got another nickel.
Leona, I'll have to call you back.
I wanted to say Henry never came back from that telephone call...
and he is in trouble...
desperate trouble.
Fred's working on some kind of report for headquarters tonight.
The case seems to be coming to
a head, and he's been telephoning.
I've heard him mention Henry's name
over and over again.
And there's someone else in it too...
someone called Evans.
Your five minutes are up, madam.
Waldo Evans. He owns the house
on Staten island... the one I saw.
Pardon me, madam,
but your five minutes are up.
Just a minute.
Would you give me some change?
I must make another telephone call.
I'm sorry.
We're closing up now, lady.
But I...
Who is it?
Who is it?
Wait a minute.
I'm coming.
Can you hear me?
I'm all alone here.
Who is it?
For heaven's sake, who is it?
I can't come down!
I'm on the top floor, and I'm sick!
Oh, wait a minute.
Don't go away. I need help.
Please! Please, don't go!
Can't you hear me?
Can't you hear me?
I had to call you from the subway.
It's Sally.
Can you hear me better now?
The stores around here are closed
by now, and I couldn't find a booth.
I've been home since I spoke to you,
and more has happened.
There was a police car standing in
front of the house when I got there.
It seems that house on
Staten Island... the one I saw...
was burned down this afternoon.
The police threw a cordon around it.
They captured three men... but this Waldo Evans escaped.
But who is this Waldo Evans?
And, for heaven's sakes,
what is his connection with Henry?
I still haven't found out, Leona,
but I do know...
the whole thing has something to do
with your father's company.
My father's company?
Well, that's absurd.
My father called me from Chicago
tonight. He never mentioned a word.
Now, look,
let's get this thing straight.
- Who's been arrested and why?
- Three men. I don't known why.
And why do you think
Henry's one of them?
I didn't say he was. I only know
he is involved somehow terribly.
Did they say he'd been arrested
or was going to be?
Then what are you talking about?
Why are you calling me like this?
Are you still jealous that I took
Henry away from you years ago?
Can't you bear to see me happy?
Can't you stop telling lies
and making trouble, even now?
What's the matter with you?
Hello? Hello!
- Want some?
- No, no, thanks.
I got kind of a hunch that
maybe we ought to call the chief...
before we go downtown.
The train's here.
We'll be there in ten minutes.
- You can call him then.
- Okay.
Hello?
Yes, this is Plaza 5-1098.
- What is it?
- This is Western Union.
I have a message
for Mrs. Henry Stevenson.
Is there anyone there
to receive the message?
- This is Mrs. Stevenson.
- The telegram is as follows.
"Mrs. Henry Stevenson,
43 Sutton Place, New York, New York.
Darling, terribly sorry,
but last minute remembered...
annual drug convention meeting,
Boston, tomorrow.
Taking next train out.
Back Sunday morning.
Keep well. All my love.

Signed:
That is all, madam. Do you wish us
to deliver a copy of the message?
Hello? Hello, madam?
Then I wait till the train
goes over the bridge...
in case her window is open
and she should scream.
Our client says the coast is clear.
I got your message, George.
Everything okay for tonight?
Where's Henry? Business?
What business?
Sometimes days have gone by when
Mr. Stevenson hasn't come in.
Henry is in trouble,
desperate trouble.
"Darling, terribly sorry.
Taking next train out.
Back Sunday morning."
Dr. Smith's office.
No, the doctor's not in right now.

About 11:
- Thank you.
- Dr. Alexander's office.
No, madam, the doctor's not in.
May I take the message?
What was that, madam?
No, I could not say.
If you'll give me your name
and telephone number.
Yes, madam, I'll write it down.
Mrs. Stevenson.
Mrs. Henry Stevenson. Yes.
Plaza 5-1098.
I'll try to reach him for you.
Pardon me, sir.
Your office is calling.
Oh, thanks.
Sorry, honey, I'll be right back.
- Order another drink, will you?
- Oh, that horrible old phone.
- I hope it's nothing important.
- It won't be.
Not tonight.
Doctor, I thought you'd never call.
You must come right over.
Oh, come, come. I'm sure
it's not as bad as all that.
- Let's try to find out what's wrong.
- Everything's wrong.
I want you to come over at once!
I'm afraid I can't tonight,
Mrs. Stevenson.
Besides, we've gone into this
so many times before.
If you'd just make up your mind
to try to cooperate...
with your husband and me
in our plan of action.
Plan of action?
What are you talking about?
Mrs. Stevenson,
you know as well as I do.
I explained in my letter
over a week ago.
What letter? I never received
any letter from you.
But then, surely your husband...
- Hasn't he spoken to you?
- What about?
I must say, I don't understand.
Look, Mrs. Stevenson, I'm afraid
this is not quite the time...
or the place
to go into all that.
If you try to get some sleep
and compose yourself...
- perhaps we can discuss it tomorrow.
- You'll discuss it now!
Do you hear me? Now!
This very minute!
All right, Mrs. Stevenson.
Will you hold the phone
for a second, please?
Could you transfer this call
to the booth, please?
I'm sure we can.
Will you switch the doctor's call
to the booth? Hold on a moment.
Hello, are you still there,
Mrs. Stevenson?
- Yes, Doctor, yes!
- If you insist upon knowing...
your husband called at my office
for the diagnosis of your case...
I'd say about ten days ago.
I discussed your condition with him
thoroughly at that time.
It was then that I told him...
From all accounts,
your wife's illness...
seems to date far back
into her early childhood.
There were at times comparatively
long periods of good health.
- Is that true?
- Yes, I suppose so.
You mean you knew nothing of your
wife's illness when you married her?
No.
How soon after your marriage
did it first manifest itself?
Well, I...
I don't remember the date exactly. I should say it was a couple of years after we were married. You see, Doctor, we were living with her father then... in Chicago at Lake Forest. Marie, will you get me Mrs. Stevenson's bag? Look, honey, about lunch today, I... I'd like to have Mrs. Stevenson's bag.
- Yes, madam.
- How much do you want?
How much do I...
I'm sorry to disappoint you, dear, but it isn't what you think. I wrote Ferguson's telephone number in your notebook last night.
- Yes? And?
- I was just going to tell you...
I have a date for lunch with him today. You're having lunch with me today. It's Friday. I know, dear, but I won't be able to make it. This date with Ferguson's rather important. More important than me, I suppose? It isn't that. It's just that I had a talk with him last night... and he asked me to drop by.
- It's about a job.
- A job? You have a job. Madam, is this the suit you're going to wear? Marie, I'd like to speak to Mrs. Stevenson alone.
- But madam is late already.
- Will you get out, please?
What I mean to say, dear... and I've been meaning
to say it for weeks, is that...
I don't belong to
your father's organization.
Sure, I married his daughter.
So I'm a vice president now.
I have a nice office, my name
on the door, even a secretary.
What do you want to do,
run the place after six months?
But at least I'd like to hope that
someday I'd get a chance to try.
But working for your father
is like running in a dream.
No matter how hard you try,
you know you'll never get anywhere.
- Nonsense. Dad despises deadwood.
- Sure.
Only I happen to be his son-in-law.
I'm not blind, Leona.
As long as I'm married to you,
he'll never give me a real chance.
You're making mountains
out of molehills.
I'm trying to be honest with you.
I don't wanna just graft off
your charity the rest of my life.
I want a chance...
a chance on my own.
Only you're not getting the chance.
I won't have you traipsing around.
Just because Dad doesn't
go falling all over himself...
you're not going to throw away
a million-dollar business...
for an idle whim.
It happens to be
my business too, you know.
And to think my own husband
turns up his nose at it.
Now, will you ring for Marie,
please? I'm late already.
And call Ferguson and tell him
you changed your mind. Hurry up.
But I didn't change my mind, Leona.
- You mean you're still going?
- Yes.
I'm sure one day you'll see it'll be better for both of us.
Henry, wait!
No, you're not going, not as long as you're my husband.
Leona. Come on.
Don't be silly.
- Give me that key.
- You can't do this to me!
Nobody's ever done it!
Nobody! Nobody!
Would you please stop it and give me that key?
Please, if you love me at all, don't do this.
Henry, I beg you.
I promise you, I'll talk to Dad.
I'll do anything, anything you want, only don't leave me!
- Don't go away!
- Give me that key.
No, I won't!
I won't! I won't!
Don't leave me!
You're hurting me!
Henry, please, I love you.
Henry, don't, I beg you.
Good evening, Wilkins.
Good evening, sir.
- Mrs. Stevenson upstairs?
- Yes, sir. She's upstairs.
What is this?
Anybody sick?
I beg your pardon, sir?
Henry, come here.
I want to talk to you.
What's the matter?
It isn't Leona, I hope.
It is. She had an attack today...
a heart attack.
- She almost died.
- A heart attack?
Come in. There's something
I wanna discuss with you.
You two have any words
this morning?
Yes, but what's that got to do
with Leona's heart?
Weren't you supposed
to have lunch together today?
I'm asking you, why didn't you
have lunch with my daughter today?
- I had to see somebody else.
- She didn't object to it, eh?
Yes, as a matter of fact,
we had an argument over it.
- A rather private one.
- About what?
Look, if you don't mind,
I'd like to see my wife.
You'll see her
when she's ready to see you.
Now, wait a minute, Mr. Cotterell.
What's this all about?
Sit down, Stevenson.
Leona's had a heart condition
since she was a little girl.
Her mother died of it
the day she was born.
Leona can't stand being treated
the way you did this morning.
She hasn't before, and she's not
going to be now by you or anyone.
What happens if once in a while her
husband has an opinion of his own?
I don't give a hoot
about your opinions. Have them.
Think anything you'll like.
But while you're in this house...
you do what my daughter
tells you to do.
I don't think this is the time
for this kind of a discussion...
but as long as you insist,
I might as well tell you.
The argument I had with Leona was about a very important decision.
- Oh, nonsense.
- A decision I made... as much for the sake of my wife's future as for mine.
And now, if you'll excuse me. It was for the sake of her future that you had lunch with Ferguson? Well, did you get the job? No, I didn't.
You think you're so bright. Bill Ferguson sells me two million dollars worth of dyes every year. Who do you think he's going to care more about, you or me?
- So that's what's happened.
- Now, let's see. Who else in Chicago would you like to have lunch with... about a job?
Go ahead. I'm open to suggestions. Face up to it, Stevenson. You haven't a chance. Just as long as you're my son-in-law... you're working for Cotterell's and nobody else.
Come on, Stevenson. Stop being a kid. If you really cared for Leona the way I do... you'd have done the same thing in my place. Besides, you haven't done so badly for yourself. Even if you think you have, it's a whole lot better than Grassville. Now, you'd better go and see Leona. She's asking for you.
Maybe I shouldn't have given in like that, Doctor. Maybe that was the moment to pull out.
Yes, things
might have been different.
But somehow, I couldn't.
Probably, the old man wasn't
altogether wrong about me.
No, I couldn't go back
to Grassville anymore.
I suppose from that day on
I began to... to compromise...
always with the one hope in the back
of my mind that somehow, someday...
I'd win out on my own.
How long did this attack
of Mrs. Stevenson's last?
She got well pretty quickly.
For a while, everything
seemed to straighten out.
I was given a new office,
even a new title.
But it wasn't long before
we were back where we started.
- She suffered another attack?
- Yes, several.
I remember one day in particular.
It was about a year later.
I had an idea that I thought...
I hoped might help the situation.
It's the first steps on your left.
Shall I open...
- I have the key right here.
- Very good, sir.
- This way, Leona.
- Don't you think it's about time...
you let me in on this
jolly little secret?
- Let me show you first.
- Just a minute.
If it's another apartment,
I don't want it.
But you haven't even seen it.
It's really something.
It has terraces all the way around,
a 45-foot living room, a bar.
I've told you a thousand times,
we don't need an apartment.
It isn't an apartment
I'm looking for, Leona.
What I want is a home...
a home of our own.
We just can't go on living
with your father forever.
I don't see why not.
There's plenty of room,
it's comfortable. I like it.
Besides, who's going to pay
for this little thing?
- Well, I hope eventually I will.
- Eventually.
In the meantime it's my money. I'm
the one who's going to pay for it.
You're so naive. You're like
a little boy with a box of candy.
I can't just throw my money away
on everything you happen to see.
- There's a limit.
- Sure there's a limit.
I'm supposed to follow you around
like a pet dog tied to a chain.
I'm supposed to like whatever
crumbs you want to throw me.
- Don't be ridiculous.
- You've got me sewed up 16 ways...
for three meals a day
and pocket money.
That's all you married me for...
my money.
- I should've known it.
- Stop it, Leona.
Let's not go to pieces.
Please, will you listen to me?
You hate me. You're bored with me.
All you want to do is get away.
Okay, I'm bored... bored stiff.
Who wouldn't be...
with that neat little routine
you've got cooked up for me?
What do I do but
keep running back and forth...
between that rotten office
and that stuffy house of yours?
What do I have? Nothing.
Nothing of my own.
Not even the studs on my shirt
nor the matches in my pocket.
How can you say this to me?
Remember? You told me once
I'd love this kind of life.
Do you wanna know something? I do
delight it now more than you'll ever know.
I wanna be my own boss,
profiting by every bit of it.
Not just a stooge on the outside
looking in. Get it?
- Get me some water, quick.
- It isn't I wanna be without you.
I could love you still,
if only you'd try to understand.
I feel ill.
I came to know her better,
of course, after a while.
I held my temper in better
about everything.
But even so, no matter
how hard I tried...
her attacks increased in violence
and became more and more frequent.
Sometimes it was just some
little thing that'd set her off.
And then, I guess
it was about a year ago...
she just seemed to give up hope
of ever getting well...
and took to her bed
more or less permanently.
When we left for New York,
Dr. Vernet in Chicago...
told me she didn't have
much of a chance.
Since then it's been more
and more like a nightmare.
I don't know exactly how
to tell you this, Mr. Stevenson.
It will probably be quite a shock to you.
But if you wanna know the truth about your wife.
There's nothing wrong organically with her heart.
It's sound as a bell.
I've examined her thoroughly.
Your evidence confirms what I thought all along.
- That is?
- Her condition is mostly mental.
She's what we call a cardiac neurotic.
Her attacks don't spring from any physical weaknesses.
They're brought on by her emotions, her temper and her frustrations.
The whole thing is probably quite unconscious on her part.
The pattern was laid out by her father.
The mother died of heart failure.
He was always so sure the child was affected to.
Subconsciously, she learned to deceive him... simulate a false condition.
Marriage continued the process.
I'm sorry.
It must have caught.
I hope I didn't break anything.
That's all right.
The number plate snapped off.
That's all.
Of course, I'm not saying that your wife isn't a sick woman.
Mentally she's very sick and her attacks are real enough.
They give her acute distress, even pain.
Given proper psychiatric treatment, she may snap out of it entirely.
Live on for years and years.
Thank you very much, Mr. Stevenson.
You've been most helpful.
I'll call Mrs. Stevenson tomorrow.
There's a psychiatrist she should see.
Just a minute.
I wish you could wait a few more
days, Doctor. Could you?
- I'd like to think this over.
- Think it over?
Well, yes, you see,
she's so easily upset...
I think maybe I ought to prepare
her... get her used to the idea.
Well, naturally
it will be quite a shock.
Perhaps a few days more or less
won't matter very much.
Maybe you can write a letter. Might
make it easier for her to take...
and it would give me
more time to talk to her.
Well, it's an extremely
delicate matter, Mr. Stevenson.
But if you think you can manage it,
let's try it that way.
Give me a ring in a couple of days.
I'll write a letter to your wife.
Thanks, Doctor.
Thank you very much for everything.
That's just the way I left it
with him, not two weeks ago.
I simply don't understand because
I wrote you as we planned on...
let me see now...
a week ago last Friday.
I'll call you back
later tonight.
Now just try to
lie back and relax.
I believe I prescribed a sedative
for you, didn't I?
Well, then just double the dose.
Hello?
Hello, Mrs. Stevenson.
Hello?
Liars, liars, liars!
Liars, liars, liars!
- Hello?
- Mrs. Stevenson?
This is Mr. Evans.
Has Mr. Stevenson come in yet?
No, he hasn't.
He won't be back till Sunday.
Will you please, please, Mr. Evans, tell me what this is all about?
Why are you calling him every five minutes? Who are you?
I've already told you, Mrs. Stevenson.
My name is Evans...
Waldo Evans.
I'm very sorry if I've annoyed you...
but there are certain names and addresses...
that are important... very important for Mr. Stevenson to know.
So, if you'll be good enough to take the following message...
What are you talking about?
I can't take any messages now!
If you'll please tell Mr. Stevenson the house at 20 Dunstan Terrace...
has been burned down.
I burned it down.
Also please tell Mr. Stevenson... that I do not believe it was Mr. Morano... the name is spelled M-O-R-A-N-O... who betrayed us to the police... as Mr. Morano has already been arrested.
So there's no necessity for the money now.
- Morano? Who's Morano?
- Thirdly...

will you please tell Mr. Stevenson
that I escaped...
and I'm now
at the Manhattan address.
However, I do not expect
to be here after midnight.
If he wishes to find me,
he may call the number...
Bowery 2-1000.
I believe that's all. If you'll be
so good as to read it back to me.
Read it back to you?
Are you insane?
Don't you realize
I'm a terribly sick woman?
I'm very sorry for you,
Mrs. Stevenson.
Perhaps it would be
better to tell you...
before the true facts
are garbled...
by the police.
It happened on the second Monday
in January of last year.
The place was your father's plant
at Cicero, Illinois.

- Working late?
- I'm afraid so, Mr. Stevenson.
Catching up a little.
I lost a little time last week.
Anything I can show you,
Mr. Stevenson?
No. No, thanks. Just curious.
I've always been curious about
this department, what you do here.
This is where the formulae for the
products are developed, isn't it?
I suppose you could put it
that way.
Many ingredients which go into
the various pharmaceuticals.
We break down the raw materials
into their various components.
- Many of them extremely rare.
- Is that so?
And what do you do with all this after you break it down?
Why, it goes into the Cotterell products.
I know, but in the meantime, before you ship it out, where is it?
I'm afraid that's a company secret, Mr. Stevenson.
But I suppose being Mr. Cotterell's son-in-law...
It'd never do to leave it lying around loose.
It's quite precious, you know.
- You're the man in charge of it.
- Well, I suppose I am.
- Doesn't it ever worry you?
- Worry me, Mr. Stevenson?
Pardon me.
- Thank you.
- What I mean is... being responsible for all this.
For instance, suppose you were ever to make a mistake?
A mistake?
I've been working here for 15 years and I'm sure no one's complained.
Of course, of course.
I was just... how shall I say... curious, that's all.
Well, I quite understand, Mr. Stevenson.
Cigarette?
No. No, thank you.
I don't smoke.
That's how I first became acquainted with your husband, Mrs. Stevenson.
About a month later
I was waiting for my bus as usual.
- Wally!
- Good evening, Mr. Stevenson.
- Hop in.
- Sure it's not too much trouble?
- No trouble at all.
- Well, thank you then.
This is certainly a treat.
- Very beautiful car, Mr. Stevenson.
- It's my wife's.
Oh. I've never owned a car.
They've always seemed
a bit too mechanical for me.
Personally I prefer a brace of
spanking horses and a good carriage.
I was brought up around horses,
you know. In Surrey.
And I suppose one never gets
it out of one's blood.
- Do you care for horses?
- No, not very much.
You're missing a great deal.
They're such fine creatures.
So powerful, and at the same time,
so gentle and affectionate.
I often wish that I owned
a small number of them.
You don't say.
Only I'd never keep them in
the stable. That's far too cruel.
I'd let them be free as nature
intended in a very large meadow.
Every day I'd go down there with
carrots and sugar and stroke them.
As a matter of fact, I've already
picked out the perfect spot.
It's near Dorking, England.
There's a bit of land there,
all green grass and shade trees.
With a beautiful brook.
Horses do love a brook.
I'd price it every now and then,
just for my own amusement.
But it always seems just a little...
how shall I say... beyond me.
Sounds nice.
Why is it beyond you? Haven't you saved enough at that job of yours?
Well, Mr. Stevenson, the high cost of living. I've become a bit overanxious on occasion for ready money...
and lost out on foolish speculations. But I'm putting a little aside now every month...
and someday, a very distant one, when I've retired from my job...
Why wait? What good is a dream when you're too old to enjoy it? That's quite a truism, Mr. Stevenson. The zest does go out of things with the encroachments of old age. You said it, Wally. You can't live on dreams forever. Waiting only weakens your dream. My motto is, "If you want something, get it now."
It's the next turn on the right, Mr. Stevenson. Number 54. Well, good night, Mr. Stevenson. And thanks ever so much. Wally. About that conversation we had at the lab last month. I've been thinking, there might be a way out after all. A way out? Why, whatever do you mean, Mr. Stevenson? - To have that meadow in England. - How so, Mr. Stevenson? - By making a mistake here and there. - A mistake? - Nobody has to know. - Please. I better be going. - Wally! Wait a minute. - Yes, Mr. Stevenson? I've got it all figured out. The differences need to be so slight, and nobody ever has to know.
A chemist like you ought to be able to work miracles.
- Work miracles, Mr. Stevenson?
- Certainly.
Look what you've done for the company. What have you gotten out of it?
Nothing. Nothing but the dirty end of the stick. Come on.
Don't be silly.
I've already talked the whole thing over with somebody else.
You talked this over?
With whom?
A man named Morano. He'll take everything we can get and unload it.
You know what a fence is?
We'll split the money three ways.
- You... a drug thief?
- No, not necessarily.
Cotterell company makes a lot of products we can dispose of.
How could you?
- You're so young and fine.
- Yes, I'm young.
Young enough not to dream. There are things I wanna do, big things... and the only way to get them is to be strong, to be...
What's the use of talking? I'm sorry I brought the whole thing up.
I trusted you because, well, I thought you were my kind of person.
- I guess I was mistaken.
- But what if we were caught? Why should we be caught?
Morano has it all figured out. For once there's an advantage in being Cotterell's son-in-law. It's just that I... I wouldn't want to see you take that chance alone.
May I come in?
We weren't caught, Mrs. Stevenson, for nearly seven months.
From March 9 to September 14 we weren't caught.
I never saw Mr. Morano. I merely carried out our mutual plan.
And every Friday afternoon Mr. Stevenson handed me the money.
By September 14 of last year, I had saved the sum... of $7,555.49.
But it was nearly afternoon of that day...
When did you get it?
It came this morning in the interoffice mail.
I don't understand it.
I never said a word.
That's why I'm sure they must suspect.
If they suspected you, they'd have fired you or called the police.
I can't help feeling this transfer to New Jersey is a sign.
A warning.
I'm sure of it!
A sign of what?
To stop this. Mr. Stevenson, I just can't go on any longer.
Shut up!
Now, what do you mean by this kind of drivel?
- Money doesn't seem important now.
- Maybe not to you.
Look, you stupid fool. We've been stooges. Morano's kicked us around.
Now we can get rid of him. Your transfer is what I was looking for.
We're much better off operating from Bayonne.
You'll be your own boss... a partner with me.
I'll tell Morano you've been laid off. The setup's over.
Then we'll establish headquarters for ourselves back East.
We'll operate on our own
and split Morano's share.
Don't you think that's dangerous?
I'm just a chemist.
- I don't know anything about that.
- But I do.
I've been doing research and I'll
teach you. I'll give you an idea.
This is the Cotterell plant
at Bayonne.
New York.
Staten Island.
One and half months later
we began operations...
on Staten Island,
New York.
Our headquarters were an abandoned
house at 20 Dunstan Terrace...
which I purchased
for Mr. Stevenson.
Here, twice a week after work...
I would come from
your father's Bayonne plant.
And here, Mr. Stevenson
would mail me...
or telephone his instructions
from Cicero.
The character of our work
now became more complex...
inasmuch as I was directly
selling the products...
as well as removing them
from the plant.
A little over
three months ago...
Mr. Stevenson arrived in New York
himself to supervise the work.
But unfortunately,
it was at that time...
that the final chapter of
our enterprise was being written.
Pardon me?
Come right in. Good evening.
This is the professor?
Wally, this is Morano.
Morano?
Yes, that's right. You didn't expect me, did you, Professor?
With the assistance of Mr. Evans...
That is the name, isn't it?
Yes, sir.
With the assistance of Mr. Evans...
we'll proceed with our business.
As I was saying, Stevenson, according to our information...
and we have accurate sources...
since you decided to disassociate yourself from us...
you've accumulated quite a stock...
of which you have been able to dispose of only one-third.
That leaves quite an amount hanging around loose, doesn't it?
Where is it?
I don't know anything about it.
You don't, huh?
How about you, Professor?
As Mr. Stevenson just said, we don't know, I'm sorry to say.
Well, so am I.
All right, boys.
Leave him alone or I'll...
- Hold it, fellas.
Or you'll what, Stevenson?
Look, Stevenson. Size doesn't count in our business.
We all know you're a big, strong guy. We all know you can fight.
This isn't the way you'll settle the difference...
our organization has with you.
Now there's one thing I haven't told you yet.
We had a...
what'll I call it...
a board meeting last Thursday.
And the vote was seven to one against you. That's pretty bad.
I'm not saying
I didn't argue the point...
but if you insist on being stubborn
there's nothing I can do.
Stop beating about the bush!
What do you want?
Now you're talking.
Now let's just relax for a second.
I'm sure the professor would like
to get a load off his feet.
It's a long way from here
to Bayonne, isn't it?
It's all right. Mr. Stevenson,
give them what they want.
- You can take everything I've got.
- Shut up!
Since you started your own business,
we've suffered quite a loss.
Now if you were to turn back
what you've accumulated...
and pay us, say, $200,000
for our injured feelings...
I might get the board
to reconsider their decision...
provided you both continue working
under our humble supervision.
You know as well as I do
I don't have that kind of money.
But you've got good connections...
a rich father-in-law, a rich wife.
Lot of good that does. Why do you
think I went into this business for?
But I thought I read somewhere about
your wife being sick, even dying.
So what about it?
She's got insurance, hasn't she,
made out in your name?
I'm pretty sure the board
would give you, say, 90 days...
to raise the money
on something like that.
- Why 90 days?
Isn't that what the doctor said?
Yes, that's what he said, but...
What's that?
Just a IOU to make it legal.
Everything can be straightened out without any trouble.
Suppose something happened and she didn't... I mean, if she got...
I wouldn't worry about it, Stevenson.
You've got a doctor's word for it.
They know their business.
I wouldn't say you had much of a choice anyhow.
That happened on the evening of the 23rd of this past April.
I need not describe Mr. Stevenson's distress...
when four days ago the IOU came due.
As I understand it, Mr. Stevenson saw Mr. Morano...
but his request for an extension was most heartlessly refused.
I have not seen either Mr. Stevenson or Mr. Morano since.
And now, inasmuch as I have already given you the final message...
I believe the rest explains itself quite simply.
Mr. Evans, where's my husband?
Where's Mr. Stevenson now?
I wish I knew, Mrs. Stevenson.
If you tried the Bowery number.
The Bowery number?
That I gave you in the message.
If you'll check it over with me...
I can't! I can't!
I'll repeat it for you, Mrs. Stevenson, once more.

Point one:
at 20 Dunstan Terrace...
was burned down this afternoon
by Mr. Evans.

Point two:
Mr. Evans escaped.

Point three:
Mr. Morano has been arrested...
so it would not be necessary
to raise the money.

Point four:
who tipped off the police.
But it doesn't matter.
Just give me the Bowery number.
The one for Mr. Stevenson.

Point five:
is at the Manhattan address.
But he's leaving now and
may be found at Bowery 2-1000.
  - Bowery 2-1000.
  - Yes, after midnight.
Good night, Mrs. Stevenson.
Thank you very much.
Good night.
Bowery 2-1000.
  - Is Mr. Stevenson there?
  - Mr. Who?
Mr. Stevenson.
Mr. Henry Stevenson.
  - I was told to call by a Mr. Evans.
  - Just a minute. I'll see.
  - Stevenson's the name?
  - Yes, that's right.
Hold the phone.
No, he's not here, ma'am.
Mr. Evans said he might be expected.
Could I leave a message?
A message, ma'am? We don't take
no messages here, ma'am.
They wouldn't do no good.
No? Well, what number is this?
What... What am I calling?
Bowery 2-1000, ma'am...
the city morgue.
- Your call, please.
- Operator, give me the police now.
- Ringing the police department.
- No, wait a minute.
Get me a hospital.
I can't be alone, I'm telling you!
- Hurry! Hurry!
- One moment, please.
Operator! Operator,
what about the hospital?
Hello, operator!
Operator! Operator!
- Bellevue.
- Is this the hospital?
- Yes.
- I want the nurse's registry.
- Whom do you wish to speak to?
- I want the nurse's registry.
I want to hire a trained nurse immediately for the night.
Pardon me just a second.
And what were you saying?
I said I want to hire a trained nurse. I need her immediately!
We understand that, but in the first place this is a city hospital.
All I know is that I'm a sick woman and I'm all alone...
in this horrible empty house!
I overheard a telephone conversation a while ago...
about... about a murder...
a murder to be

**committed at 11:**
I don't know what's happened to my husband.
If something isn't done,
I'm afraid...
- What was that?
- What was what, madam?
That click just now
on my telephone.
Like someone lifted the receiver
from the extension downstairs.
- I didn't hear it, madam.
- Well, I did.
There's someone in this house.
There's someone in the kitchen
and they're listening to me now...
Who is it?
Who's there?
New Haven is calling Mrs. Henry
Stevenson. Is she there?
Yes, but I haven't
any time to talk now.
I have a person-to-person call
from Mr. Henry Stevenson.
Do you not wish
to accept the call, madam?
Did you say Mr. Stevenson from...
from New Haven?
- Do you wish to accept the call?
- Yes, I'll take it.
One moment, please.
Go ahead, New Haven.
- Go ahead, sir.
- Hello? Darling?
- Henry! Where are you?
- I'm on my way to Boston, dear.
Stopping off between trains
in New Haven. Did you get my wire?
- Yes, I got it.
- Just thought I'd check up on you.
Sorry I couldn't reach you by phone,
but I knew you'd be all right.
Well, I'm not all right.
There's someone in this house
right now. I'm sure of it.
Honey, how could there be?
Don't tell me you're still alone.
Of course I'm alone! Who'd be here?
You promised to be home at 6:00.
- I explained to you in my wire...
- I've been alone for hours.
I've been a prey
to horrible calls.
I want you to call the police.
Tell them to come over at once.
Honey, you know you're safe
in that house.
It's locked and
there's a private patrolman.
You're in the heart of New York City
and the telephone's beside your bed.

Henry, what do you know...
What do you know about
a man named Waldo Evans?
Waldo Evans?
Why? Why do you ask?
He called me up. I had
a long talk with him about you.
  - About me? What about me?
  - He told me some terrible things.
Some of it sounded insane, but
there were other parts sounded true.
You mustn't listen to every crazy
crackpot. Try to forget about it.
They said you'd been stealing
from Dad's company.
  - Is that true, Henry?
  - True?
Of course not!
What a crazy idea.
Well, he left some kind
of a message for you.
The house on Staten Island,
and the police knew everything
and Morano had been arrested.
  - Are you still there, Henry?
  - Yes, I'm here.
They said you were a criminal,
Henry... a desperate man.
And Evans said...
Evans said you wanted me to...
to die.
And that money, Henry,
that money those people wanted.
Why didn't you ask me for it?
I would've given it to you
if it would've saved your life.
- I'll give it to you now.
- That's all right. Forget it.
I didn't mean to be
so awful to you, Henry.
I only did it
because I loved you.
And I thought
you didn't love me.
And that you'd go away
and leave me.
- I want you to do something for me.
- Will you forgive me first?
I want you to try...
Listen. I want you to try
to get out of bed.
- I can't!
- You've got to.
Get out of bed and go to the window.
Scream out into the street.
I can't move, Henry!
I'm too frightened!
Keep trying. Otherwise you've only
got three more minutes to live.
Don't talk to me anymore. Get out
of that bed. I confess everything.
I did steal from your father,
and I was so desperate I tried...
I arranged to have you...
Henry, there's somebody
coming up the stairs!
- Get out of that bed! Walk, Leona!
- No, I can't.
Henry, save me!
I'll burn for it if they get me.
They'll find out from Morano!
Please don't!
Please!
Please, I'll give you anything!
Please, no! No!
- Ready with your party.
- Leona, hello!
Sorry, wrong number.