

Generic Radio Workshop Script Library (BACK)**Series: Suspense****Show: Sorry, Wrong Number (Agnes Moorehead's personal copy)****Date: May 25 1943**

This script scanned from Agnes Moorhead's personal copy of the script as archived at the Wisconsin State Historical Society, Madison, WI. In this version the show is a one-woman tour-de-force, except for the police se

MUSIC: Theme music up and play throughout opening.

ANNOUNCER: Roma Wine presents (dramatically) SUSPENSE.
Roma Wine, made in California for enjoyment throughout the world.

VOICE 1 (WOMAN): Salut!

FX: CLINKING OF GLASSES

VOICE 2: (Man) (Slightly Spanish sounding) To your health, senora!

ANNOUNCER: Roma Wine toasts the world. The wine for your table is Roma Wine, made in California for enjoyment throughout the world.

MAN IN BLACK: This is the man in black, here to introduce this weekly half hour of (dramatically) SUSPENSE. Tonight, from Hollywood, we proudly present one of the most compelling actresses of our time, Miss Agnes Moorehead. Miss Moorhead appears in a new 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 from murder from claiming an innocent victim, is tonight's tale of SUSPENSE. If you have been with us on these Tuesday nights you will know that Suspense is compounded of mystery and suspicion and dangerous adventure. In this series are tales calculated to intrigue you, stir your nerves, to offer you a precarious situation then withhold the solution until the last possible moment. And so it is with, "Sorry, Wrong Number" and the performance of Agnes Moorehead, we again hope to keep you in (dramatically) SUSPENSE.

(MUSIC FADE OUT)

ANNOUNCER:

Before we take you to the scene of tonight's story, let's take a little journey of a different kind. We'll let a bottle of Roma Wine serve as Alladin's flying carpet. I touch the label and--Presto!--we are all transported to that capital of gaiety, Havana, Cuba.

MUSIC:

PIANO BAR MUSIC UP SOFTLY IN BACKGROUND

And now we find ourselves in the charming Pan-American Club. At a table nearby and American tourist has just voiced her delight at the uncommon beauty of the scene. And then her Cuban companion responds...

CUBAN VOICE:

You in America also have much that is uncommon to boast of. Such as this marvelous tasting wine we are enjoying this minute. To enjoy this uncommon fine quality, Cuban imports this wine from your distant California. It is your superb Roma Wine.

MUSIC:

PIANO FADES OUT AS ANNOUNCER CONTINUES

ANNOUNCER:

Now just realize what it means when other countries import Roma Wine from such great distances. Such international esteem must mean that Roma Wines are truly magnificent in quality. And then consider this: You here in America need pay no high import duty nor expensive shipping charges. For these fine Roma Wines come from Roma's own wineries in the heart of the rich California wine grape district. Because so many Americans do realize this good fortune, Roma Wines are America's largest selling wines. So why deny yourself this taste delight? Try an expensive bottle of tangy, appetizing Roma Sherry, or a hearty Roma Burgundy, or any of the marvelously enjoyable Roma Wines. But remember, these days your dealer may be temporarily out of the type you prefer. Then, please try again. Ask for R-O-M-A, Roma Wine. Made in California for enjoyment throughout the world.

MUSIC:

THEME MUSIC BEGINS

THE MAN IN BLACK: The producers and sponsors of Suspense, the Roma Wine Company of Fresno, California, feel that tonight's story is so unusual that it merits a departure from established radio formulas. Therefore, tonight's Suspense will be presented without commercial interruption. And now, here is Miss Agnes Moorehead, starring in Lucille Fletcher's, "Sorry, Wrong

Number."

MUSIC: THEME FADES AND PHONE NOISES BEGINS

AGNES: (Clicking telephone) Oh, how awful -- How unspeakably awful... Operator! Operator! I've just been cut off... Well, Operator, I was supposed to be calling Murray Hill 4-0098, but it wasn't. Some wires must have got crossed. I was cut into a wrong number -- and I -- I've just heard the most dreadful thing -- something about a -- murder -- and --

Operator, you'll simply have to retrace that call at once ... I know it was a wrong number and I had no business listening -- but these two men -- they were cold-blooded fiends -- and they are 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 just got to ...

It doesn't matter what number I was calling. This was a wrong number and you dialed it for me. And we've got to find out what it was -- immediately. Oh, why're you so stupid? It doesn't matter what number I was calling ... What time is it? Oh -- I don't want the chief operator . . . I think it's perfectly shameful. Now, look -- it was obviously a case of some little slip of the finger. I told you to try Murray Hill 4-0098 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 simply fail to see why you couldn't make that same mistake again -- on purpose -- why couldn't you try to dial Murray Hill 4-0098 in the same careless way?

All right, dial Murray Hill 4-0098 -- only carelessly. Please. Thank you. Oh -- busy! I know Murray Hill 4-0098 is busy!

(Clicking receiver frantically) Operator! Operator! You didn't try to get that wrong number at all. I asked you explicitly. And all you did was dial correctly. Can't you for once forget what number I'm calling and do something for me . . . Well, I want to trace that call -- it's my civic duty -- and it's your civic duty -- to trace that call -- and apprehend those dangerous killers -- and if you won't -- -- alright, get me the chief operator . . . Oh . . . Very well, please do.

(To herself) All this talk -- can't make anyone understand ... It takes so much time to get anyone ...

(On phone) 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 11: 15. Can you trace it for me? Can you track down those men? . . . It depends? It depends on what? Has it been disconnected ? Of course it's been disconnected! That was at least five minutes ago -- and they didn't seem to be the type that would make a long call... My name -- is Mrs. Stevenson. Mrs. Elbert Stevenson. But -- listen -- My telephone number is Plaza 3-2093. But -- if you go on wasting all this time --- Why do I want the call traced? Why? Oh -- Oh, no reason. 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 -- 11: 15 tonight. And I thought the police ought to know. No ... I haven't reported it to the police ... Well --- no. Not yet... Yes, but mean while-- Oh, or heavens sake! You mean to tell me I can't check this call as a private individual when there's going to be a murder, without getting tied up in all this red tape? Why -- it's perfectly idiotic! I'll -- call the police. Oh!

(SLAMS DOWN RECEIVER)

(To herself) Ridiculous! I never heard of such nonsense -- police department -- I can't see why you have to go through all this business.

(Picks up phone, dials Operator) The Police Department -- get me the Police Department -- please. Oh, dear -- do you have to dial? Can't you ring them direct?

(To herself) All this time wasted.

(On phone) Police Department? Oh -- this is Mrs. Stevenson. Mrs. Elbert Smythe Stevenson of fifty-three, 5 - 3 --North Sutton Place. I'm calling to report a murder ... I mean -- 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. Yes, positively. It was a perfectly definite murder -- I heard their plans distinctly -- two men were talking -- and they were going to murder some woman at 11: 15 tonight -- She lived in a house near a bridge ... Are you concentrating on this? You sound sleepy.

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 use a knife ... Well, -- it's unnerved me dreadfully -- and I'm not well -- and I'm very nervous ... Oh, dear, may name is Mrs. Stevenson. Mrs. Elbert Stevenson . . . Oh, may address is Fifty-three North Sutton Place. That's near a bridge. The Queensborough Bridge -- you know -- And we have a private patrolman on our street -- and Second Avenue is the next street . . . Oh, well, I was calling Murray Hill 4-0098 but -- that wasn't the number I over heard. I mean, Murray Hill 4-0098 is my husband's office. He's working late tonight -- and his line was busy 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 out -- and I -- You'll look into it? The whole thing calls for a search -- a complete and thorough search of the whole city. 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 ... Oh, I don't know ... Only, the coincidence is so horrible. It sounds like this neighborhood. Second Avenue -- the patrolman -- the bridge... Yes, and maybe it wasn't a long distance call I overheard. I'm all alone and very nervous... My maid, Eloise -- she's a big girl -- she weighs two hundred pounds -- she's too lazy to bring up my breakfast tray -- it's her night out and my husband, Elbert -- he's crazy about me -- he just adores me -- waits on me hand and foot --scarcely left my side sick I took sick twelve years ago -- he's working at -- I don't care how many other matters you have on your desk. This is not routine! It's murder, and it requires immediate attention... Oh -- you -- you -- you -- idiot!

(SLAMS PHONE)

Idiot! Idiot ! Stupid -- stupid... Oh -- why doesn't Elbert come home? Why doesn't he?

(DIALS OPERATOR)

(To herself) I'll dial the operator again -- I just can't --

(Into phone) Operator -- for heavens sake -- will you ring that Murray Hill 4-0098 number again? I can't think what's keeping him so long ... Well, try, try -- I don't see why he doesn't answer. It makes me so nervous. I can hear it -- you don't have to tell me -- I know it's busy.

(SLAMS PHONE)

If I could only get out of this bed for a little while. If I could get a breath of fresh air -- or just lean out of the window -- and see the street ...

SOUND: Telephone rings

AGNES: (Picking up phone instantly) Hello -- Elbert? Hello. Hello. HELLO!... Oh -- what's the matter with this phone? -- HELLO. HELLO --

(SLAMS PHONE)

SOUND: Phone rings again once

AGNES: (Picking up phone instantly) Hello? Hello ... Oh, for heavens sake -- who is this? Hello -- hello. HELLO.

(SLAMS PHONE. PICKS UP PHONE AND DIALS OPERATOR)

(To herself) Who is trying to call me? What are they trying to do to me?

(Into phone) Operator -- I don't know what's the matter with this telephone but it's positively driving me crazy. I've never seen such inefficient, miserable service .. Now, look -- I'm an invalid, and I'm very nervous -- and I'm not supposed to be annoyed much longer ... Well, everything seems to be the trouble -- 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 -- ringing and ringing and ringing every five seconds or so -- and when I pick it up -- there's no one there... I don't want you to test my phone for me -- I want you to put that call through -- whatever it is... Oh -- you can't do that! And why, may I ask? And meanwhile I've got to sit here, in my bed, suffering every time that phone rings -- imagining everything --- you're not trying to check the trouble for me! Oh -- what's the use of talking to you! You're so stupid! But - But - I know the dial system is automatic. Oh -- young woman, I don't know your name. But there are ways of finding out. And I'm going to report you to your superiors for the most unpardonable rudeness --- Oh -- give me the business office at once! Dial it direct? I'll do no such thing! I don't even know the number... Oh -- you -- what's the use!

(SLAMS PHONE. ALMOST INSTANTLY--)

SOUND: Phone rings

AGNES: (To herself) Oh, dear -- oh for heavens sake!

(PICKS UP PHONE)

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, I say! If you don't stop ringing me I'm going to call the police, do you hear? HELLO -- hello.

(Sobs) Yes, this is Plaza 3-2098. I'm sorry, I'm sorry... Who? Oh... Western Union... Yes, this is Mrs. Elbert Stevenson... Will you read the telegram, please.

Yes, that's the address .. "Darling. Terribly sorry. Tried to get you the last hour but the line busy. Leaving for Boston eleven p.m. tonight on urgent business. Back tomorrow afternoon. Keep happy. Signed, Elbert."

(Breathlessly, to herself) Oh -- no....

(Into phone) No -- I don't want a copy of the message.

(Mechanically) Good night.

(HANGS UP)

(To herself) Oh, Elbert -- how could you? How could you?

(SOBS)

When you knew I was going to be alone. I can't be alone tonight. Well, 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 -- to a little consideration.

(PICKS UP PHONE, DIALS INFORMATION--4-1-1)

Information? I want to telephone number of HENCHLY Hospital .. NO, I don't know the street address. It's a very small, private and exclusive hospital where I had my appendix out two years ago -- HENCHLY, H - E - N - C - H - L - Y -- Please hurry, and please, what is the time? Oh -- for heavens sake, I've no time to dial! What is the number of HENCHLY Hospital? Butterfield 3-9970.

(HANGS UP. PICKS UP AND DIALS BU 3-9970)

Is that HENCHLY Hospital? I want the Nurses Registry. I said, I want the Nurses Registry, at once. I want a trained nurse. I want to hire her immediately -- for the night... The nature of the case is nerves. I'm very nervous. I need

soothing -- and companionship. You see, my husband is away -
- and I'm -- No, I'm not under a doctor's care at the
moment. I was a patient in your hospital two years ago and
after all, I do expect to pay this person for attending me
... Well, this is an emergency case and absolutely
necessary. I'm a sick woman -- I -- 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. A woman is going to be murdered when a train
crosses a bridge...

(beginning to yell) ... in fact, if someone doesn't come at
once -- I'm afraid I'll go out of my mind! ... Miss Phillips
.. And do you have to wait until Miss Phillips comes in? And
when do you expect Miss Phillips in? She went out to supper
at eleven o'clock? Eleven o'clock! But it's not eleven yet
.. Where's my clock? Oh -- my clock's stopped. I thought it
was running down. What time is it? ... Fourteen minutes past
eleven? (Pause) What was that? That? Why that click -- just
now -- in my own telephone -- as though someone had lifted
the receiver off the hook -- off the extension telephone
downstairs ... But I did hear it. There's someone in this
house -- someone downstairs -- in the kitchen -- and they're
listening to me now ... There ...

(HANGS UP)

(To herself) I won't pick it up. I won't let them hear me.
I'll be quiet -- and they'll think -- But if don't call
someone now -- while they're still down there -- there'll be
no time.

(PICKS UP PHONE. DIALS OPERATOR)

(To herself) I've got to get that operator.

(Into phone) Operator! Operator! -- I -- I'm in desperate
trouble -- I -- I don't dare speak louder. I -- There's
someone listening. Can you hear me now? 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 the -- Oh, there it is.
Did you hear it? He's put it down. He's put down the
extension phone. He's coming up the stairs. Give me the
police department. Give me the police. I can hear him. Hurry
-- hurry --

SOUND: Noise of train crossing the bridge starts with the mounting
tension. At the top of the tension the train WHISTLES and
Agnes screams.

(AS TRAIN FADES, WE HEAR A PHONE RINGING AND THEN A VOICE)

SERGEANT MARTIN: Police department -- Precinct 43 -- Sergeant Martin speaking ... (Pause) ... Police department... Precinct 43 -- Sergeant Martin speaking ... Yes, sir -- What, sir? Wrong number? Okay. Good night, sir...

MUSIC: Theme up loudly and play for several seconds, then come to a climactic end.

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

MUSIC: Loud chord--fade after last word.

THE MAN IN BLACK: ...SUSPENSE.

ANNOUNCER: Did you know that these Roma Wine Suspense dramas are setting a record for the millions of delighted listeners they are attracting? We want you to feel that by tuning in the Suspense program every week you can count on real radio enjoyment.

Well in even more dramatic style, the popularity of Roma Wine is even more record-breaking, because Roma Wines are by far America's largest selling wines. Millions make sure of great wine enjoyment simply by asking for Roma Wine. Here's something else these millions have discovered: You don't need fancy glassware or a special occasion to enjoy these zestful, taste-delighting Roma California Wines. Roma Wines possess lip-smacking flavor and zest because they come from Roma Wines own wineries right in the heart of the magnificent California wine grape district. And you can enjoy them as a daily delight because the cost is only pennies a glass. Ask for R-O-M-A, Roma Wine--made in California for enjoyment throughout the world.

MUSIC: Theme up and play until the end.

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 Tuesday when Mr. Donald Crisp and Mr. John Loda will start in the Suspense play called, "The Extra Guest."

The producer of these broadcasts William Spier, along with Norman MacDonald the director and Lud Gluskin the musical director and Lucille Fletcher, the author, collaborated on tonight's SUSPENSE.

ANNOUNCER: Money invested in War Bonds now helps to insure a healthy, prosperous post-war America--the kind of America we will want for our children as well as ourselves. Don't forget then, join us next Tuesday for another tale well calculated to keep you in...

MUSIC: Loud chord

ANNOUNCER : ... (dramatically) SUSPENSE. Presented by Roma Wine. R-O-M-A, Roma Wine. Made in California for enjoyment throughout the world. This is CBS, the Columbia Broadcasting System.

MUSIC: THEME PLAYS A FEW SECONDS AND THEN FADES OUT.