

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 could do anything.

MARTIN: (PATRONIZING) Yes, m'am.

AGNES: 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 listening to me?

MARTIN: Ehh? Oh, yes, m'am..

AGNES: 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...

MARTIN: Mmmm, yes, yes, I see. When was all this, m'am?A

AGNES: About 8 minutes ago. Oh, then you can do something! You do understand!

MARTIN: What's your name m'am?

AGNES: Mrs. Stevenson. Mrs. Elbert Stevenson.

MARTIN: And your address?

AGNES: Fifty-three...FIVE THREE North Sutton Place. That's near a bridge. The Queensborough Bridge -- you know -- And we have a private patrolman on our street...

MARTIN: Yeah...

AGNES: And Second Avenue is...

MARTIN: And, ehh, what was that number you were calling?

AGNES: Murray Hill 4-0098 but -- that wasn't the number I over heard. I mean, Murray Hill 4-0098 is my husband's office.

MARTIN: MmmHm.

AGNES: He's working late tonight -- and I was trying to reach him to ask him to come home...

MARTIN: Yes...

AGNES: I'm an invalid, you know -- and it's the maid's night off and I hate to be alone even though he says...

MARTIN: Yeah, well...

AGNES: ...as long as I have the telephone here right beside my bed...

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

AGNES: The telephone company said they couldn't check the call! The parties have stopped talking! I've already taken care of that!

MARTIN: Oh, you have!

AGNES: Yes, and personally, I feel you ought to do something 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 track it down, they'll have already committed the murder!

MARTIN: Yeah, well, we'll take care of it. Don't you worry...

AGNES: I say 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 very far...

MARTIN: You said...

AGNES: 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.

MARTIN: Well, what makes you think the murder is going to be committed in your neighborhood, m'am?

AGNES: Well, I - I - I don't know, only the coincidence is so horrible: Second Avenue, the patrolman, the bridge...

MARTIN: Yeah, well, Second Avenue you know, is a very long street, m'am. And you know how many bridges there are in the city of New York alone. Not to mention Brooklyn, Staten Island and Queens and the Bronx...

AGNES: I know all that!!

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

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

MARTIN: Well, maybe it was a long distance call you overheard.

AGNES: No!!

MARTIN: You know, telephones are funny things. Now, look, why don't you look at it this way: Supposing you hadn't broken in on that telephone call. Supposing you got your husband the way you always do. You wouldn't be so upset, would you?

AGNES: I - I - well I suppose not. But it sounded so inhuman, so cold blooded...

MARTIN: Well, a lot of murders are plotted in this city everyday, m'am. We manage to prevent almost all of them, but a clue of this kind is so vague, it isn't much more use to us than no clue at all...

Hello. HELLO!... Oh -- what's the matter with this phone? --
HELLO. HELLO --

SFX: *SLAMS PHONE*

SOUND: *PHONE RINGS ONCE AND STOPS*

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

SFX: *SLAMS PHONE. PICKS UP PHONE AND DIALS OPERATOR*

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

SFX: RINGING

OPERATOR: Your call, please?

AGNES: 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, look!
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: What seems to be the trouble?

AGNES: 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 or so and when I pick it up there's no one there...

OPERATOR: I am sorry. If you will hang up, I will test it for
you.

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

OPERATOR: I'm afraid I cannot do that, I...

-AGNES: You can't! And why? Why may I ask?

OPERATOR: The dial system is automatic. If...

AGNES: (*OHHH! Frustrated*)

OPERATOR: ...someone is trying to dial your number, there is no way to check whether the call is coming through the system or not...

AGNES: (Arghh)

OPERATOR: ...unless the person who is trying to reach you complains to his particular operator.

AGNES: 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: I will try to check the trouble...

AGNES: Check it!! Check it!!!

OPERATOR: ...for you m'am.

AGNES: Oh, what's the use of talking to you! You're so stupid!

SFX: SLAMS PHONE DOWN.

AGNES: I'll fix her.

SFX: FRANTIC DIALING, RINGING

AGNES: How dare she speak to me like that. How dare she speak to me like that.

OPERATOR: Your call, please.

AGNES: 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 that's ever been my privilege--- Oh -- give me the business office at once!

OPERATOR: You may dial that number direct.

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

OPERATOR: The number is in the directory or you may secure it by dialing infor...

AGNES: Listen here! You -- what's the use!

SFX: SLAMS PHONE. ALMOST INSTANTLY PHONE RINGS

AGNES: (*To herself*) Oh, for heavens sake! I'm going out of my mind!

SFX: *PICKS UP PHONE*

AGNES: 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 ya 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*) If Elbert would only come home.

SFX: PHONE RINGS

AGNES: (*crying*) Oh, let it ring. Let it go on ringing. I won't answer it. I won't answer it this time. If it goes on ringing all night, I won't answer it. (*sobbing*) I won't answer it.

SFX: RINGING STOPS

AGNES: It stopped. Why did it stop ringing all of a sudden? What time is it? Where's my clock? Where is it? Five to eleven. They've decided something. They're sure I'm home. They've heard my voice answering. That's why they've been ringing.

SFX: DIALING, RINGING

AGNES: Oh, where is she? Why doesn't she answer?

OPERATOR: You-er call, please?

AGNES: Where were you just now! Why didn't you answer? Give me the police department.

SFX: DIALING, BUSY SIGNAL

AGNES: (*loud groan*)

OPERATOR: I'm sorry the line is busy, I will call you when...

AGNES: Busy!! That's impossible. The police department can't be busy. There must be other lines available.

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

AGNES: NO! I've got to speak to them now. It may be too late. I've got to talk to someone...

OPERATOR: What number do you wish to speak to?

AGNES: I don't know but there must be someone to protect people besides the police department (*hysterical, catching her breath-hyperventilating*) a detective agency—a — a

OPERATOR: You will find agencies listed in the classified directory...

AGNES: I don't have a classified! I mean I'm too nervous to look it up. I don't know how to use the book...