“Sorry, Wrong Number” Study Guide

1. What is the main conflict in the play? How is it resolved?

Mrs. Stevenson has overheard a plotted murder but can’t get anyone to help her. In the end, the conflict is resolved when she is murdered.

1. You need to know the characteristics of a drama.

Cast of characters, Dialogue, Stage Directions.

1. How would you describe Mrs. Stevenson? What effect does her personality have on the plot.

Because Mrs. Stevenson is always upset and freaking out about everything, most of the people she speaks to don’t take her seriously.

1. What inferences can we make about the identity of “the client”?

Because her husband is conveniently out of town that night, we can infer that he may have something to do with her murder.

1. What is the point of the scene between Duffy and the Lunch Attendant?

This adds humor to an otherwise rather serious play.

1. What is the effect of the dialogue between Mrs. Stevenson and the Third Operator?

She becomes even more frustrated than before.

1. What hints do we find in the text about the possible identity of the victim?

When she is speaking to Duffy and she says, “That’s near a bridge.. And we have a private patrolman on our street.”

1. How does the title (and the line from which it was taken) affect the plot?

When George says “Sorry, wrong number” to Duffy at the end of the play it leads Duffy to think nothing was wrong, so he doesn’t investigate.

1. How does the setting contribute to the plot of this drama?

Because Mrs. Stevenson is an invalid, most of the action takes place in her room to which she is confined. This helps to increase her sense of isolation and vulnerability. She can’t even investigate when she thinks she hears people downstairs.

1. How does the author build suspense through the play?

We know what time the murder is supposed to occur, so, as Mrs. Stevenson is making call after call and not getting anywhere, we know that time is quickly running out.