

Doris's relationships with others

Although Doris is the only character to appear on stage in the play, we learn a lot about other characters and her relationships with them. Decide what we can deduce about her and others in her life by looking at these quotations:

I should never have tried to dust. Zulema says to me every time she comes, "Doris. Do not attempt to dust. The dusting is my department. That's what the council pay me for. You are now a lady of leisure. Your dusting days are over." Which would be all right provided she did dust.

Find other quotations about Zulema and analyse what they show us about her and Doris's relationship with her.

These are the opening lines of the play which implies this is an overriding worry of Doris's. Zulema seems to be issuing instructions to Doris and although Doris obviously is not impressed with Zulema's work she doesn't tell her which suggests Doris is too nervous to complain.

The sneck's loose, that's the root cause of it. It's wanted doing for years. I kept saying to Wilfred, "When are you going to get round to that gate?" But oh no. It was always the same refrain. "Don't worry Mother. I've got it on my list." I never saw a list. He had no list. I was the one with the list.

Find other quotations about Wilfred and analyse what they show us about him and Doris's relationship with him.

This is the first time we hear about Wilfred and it seems a really negative introduction. Words such as, "I kept saying" suggest that Doris asked Wilfred over and over again but despite this he did not do as she asked him. His use of the word 'mother' might be seen as either an old-fashioned term of endearment or it might be a sad reminder of the fact they wanted children but didn't have any. Doris's comment, "I was the one with the list," implies she felt she was in charge.

Find other quotations about the following characters and analyse what they show us about them and Doris's relationship with them: strangers who pass the house; the neighbour; the child in the garden; religious callers; the midwife; people in care homes; the policeman.