

THE MALTESE FALCON

The Maltese Falcon

By Dashiell Hammett

Based on the original Black Mask serial
And adapted for the stage by Jeff Zimmer

THE MALTESE FALCON

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THE MALTESE FALCON

*Dedicated to the memory of Dashiell Hammett, Sam Spade
and the legendary black bird.*

THE MALTESE FALCON

CAST: 8 M, 3F

MILES ARCHER (35+)	Spade's partner
SGT. POLHAUS (35+)	Spade's cop friend
SAM SPADE (35+)	Private detective
BRIGID O'SHAUGHNESSY (24+)	Beautiful con artist
LT. DUNDY (45+)	Cynical cop
EFFIE PERINE (19+)	Spade's loyal secretary
IVA ARCHER (35+)	Archer's sexy widow
JOEL CAIRO (25+)	Shady European grifter
WILMER COOK (19+)	Young gunman
CASPER GUTMAN (50+)	Ruthless treasure seeker
CAPTAIN JACOBI (40+)	Ship captain

Time: 1929

Place: San Francisco

THE MALTESE FALCON

The Maltese Falcon made its debut at the Lincoln Stegman Theatre in North Hollywood, California, produced by the Emmanuel Lutheran Theatre Ensemble (ELATE), with the following cast featured in the production:

Miles Archer	Greg Varnau
Sgt. Tom Polhaus	John Woodley
Sam Spade	Elijah Barnes
Brigid O'Shaughnessy	Kappa V
Lt. Dundy	Eric Maragoto
Effie Perine	Sara Locke
Iva Archer	Kelly Anderson
Joel Cairo	Jose Cervantes
Wilmer Cook	James Kanuch
Casper Gutman	Christopher Aruffo
Captain Jacobi	Steven Kirk

Produced by Sara Locke and Steven Kirk
Directed by Jeff Zimmer
Lighting Design by Jamie Hitchcock
Falcon Graphic by Michael Wykowski
Poster by Terry Bratcher

Special thanks to Steven and especially Sara for making this show happen.

THE MALTESE FALCON

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ACT 1

SCENE 1

The stage is dimly lit. The setting is a dark alley.

ARCHER. *(O.S.)* What the hell? No! No! *(We hear a single GUNSHOT. ARCHER, wearing a trenchcoat and hat, staggers on stage and falls to the ground, dead. Police sirens sound as the lights fade to black.)*

SCENE 2

Lights up on the same alley. Archer's body is now covered with a SHEET. A police detective, Tom POLHAUS is crouched down by the body. He wears a hat and trench coat. He hears a small commotion off stage.

VOICE. *(O.S.)* Hey you can't go down there! That's a crime scene!

POLHAUS. It's all right, let him through. *(Sam SPADE enters. He is about thirty-five and rugged looking. He wears a hat and overcoat and smokes a cigarette.)* Hello, Sam. I figured you'd want to see it before they took him away.

SPADE. Thanks, Tom. What happened?

POLHAUS. Got him right through the pump. With this. *(Polhaus shows him a HANDGUN wrapped in a handkerchief.)* A Webley. English, ain't it?

SPADE. Yeah. Webley-Fosbery semi-automatic revolver. Thirty-eight, eight shot. How many gone out of it?

POLHAUS. One shot. You've seen this before?

SPADE. I've seen Webley-Fosberys. So he was standing *here* and the man that shot him stands *over there*? *(Spade indicates where he thinks the killer fired from.)*

POLHAUS. Closer. Powder burns on his coat. You wanna see him? *(Polhaus reaches for the sheet covering Archer's body.)*

SPADE. No. You've seen him. You'd see everything I could.

POLHAUS. His gun was tucked away on his hip. It hadn't been fired. He had a hundred and sixty-some bucks on him. Was he working, Sam?

SPADE. He was supposed to be tailing a fellow named Floyd Thursby.

POLHAUS. What for? *(Spade doesn't answer.)* What for?

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SPADE. We were trying to find out where he lived. Don't crowd me, Tom. I have to go break the news to Miles' wife.

POLHAUS. It's tough, him getting it like that. Miles had his faults same as the rest of us, but I guess he must've had his good points too.

SPADE. I guess so. *(Spade exits. Blackout.)*

SCENE 3

SPADE. *(V.O.)* But I didn't go tell Miles' wife. Instead, I called Effie, our secretary, and asked her to do it. I needed time to think. I thought back to earlier that afternoon when it all started.

Lights up on Spade and Archer's office. It is earlier that same day. BRIGID Wonderly is attractive, in her mid-twenties. She sits in a chair beside a desk while Spade sits behind it. She wears GLOVES. There is a hat rack in the room with a trenchcoat on it.

BRIGID. I came here to San Francisco looking for my sister, Corinne. My sister is only seventeen-- she left New York and came here with a man named Floyd Thursby. Mama and Papa are in Europe. I've got to get her back home before they return.

SPADE. You haven't found her?

BRIGID. No. But I ran across *him*. Floyd Thursby. He wouldn't tell me where Corinne is, but he promised to bring her to see me this evening at the hotel. The St. Marks. He promised to come himself if she wouldn't. *(Archer enters. He wears the same trench coat and hat from scene one.)*

ARCHER. Oh, excuse me.

SPADE. It's all right, Miles, come in. Miss Wonderly, this is my partner, Miles Archer. *(Archer takes off his hat and nods to her. While Spade talks, Archer appraises her wolfishly.)* Miss Wonderly's kid sister ran away from New York with a fellow named Floyd Thursby. They're here in San Francisco.

Miss Wonderly has seen Thursby and has a date with him tonight. Maybe he'll bring her sister with him. Chances are he won't. Miss Wonderly wants us to help her find the sister and get her away from Thursby and back home. Right?

BRIGID. Yes. Oh, but you must be careful. He's a dangerous man.

SPADE. We'll know how to handle him. It's simply a matter of having a man at the hotel this evening shadow him until he leads us to your sister.

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ARCHER. Yeah. What does this bird look like?

BRIGID. He's thirty-five perhaps, and as tall as you, with dark hair, thick eyebrows, blue-grey eyes, a marked cleft in his chin and an athletic build. He gives an impression...of violence.

SPADE. When's he coming to see you?

BRIGID. Eight o'clock.

SPADE. All right, Miss, we'll have a man there--

BRIGID. Mr. Spade, could it either be you or Mr. Archer? Could one of you look after it *personally*? I'm just so afraid of what he might do. I'd expect to be charged more, of course. *(She removes two one-hundred-dollar bills from her purse.)* Will that be enough now? *(Archer grins and snatches the bills from her.)*

ARCHER. Yeah. And I'll handle it *myself*.

BRIGID. Oh, thank you! *Thank you!*

ARCHER. Glad to. And don't look for me. I'll see *you* all right.

BRIGID. Thank you so much. I can't tell you how much I appreciate this. Both of you! Goodbye. *(Brigid exits. Archer watches her go rakishly.)*

SPADE. Two hundred dollars.

ARCHER. *(Archer holds the bills up to the light to examine them.)*

They're right enough. And they had brothers in her bag.

SPADE. *(Spade snatches one of the hundreds from Archer.)* What do you think of her?

ARCHER. She's a sweet job. A real dream. Maybe you saw her first Sam, but *I* spoke first.

SPADE. You'll play hell with her you will. *(Archer winks. Blackout.)*

SCENE 4

SPADE. *(V.O.)* And that was the last I saw of Miles until I saw his body in the alley back of Burritt Street. My thoughts got interrupted by a pair of visitors at four-thirty in the morning.

Lights up on Spade's apartment. Spade sits in a chair with his back to the audience. A bottle of BACARDI and a GLASS are on a small side table next to him. The room features a small couch, two more chairs and a table with a telephone on it.

SPADE. Come in. It's unlocked. *(Polhaus and another cop, LT. DUNDY, step towards him so they face the audience. They wear hats and overcoats.)*

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Hello, Tom. Hello, Lieutenant. Success to crime. (*Spade toasts them and drinks.*)

POLHAUS. Did you break the news to Miles' wife, Sam?

SPADE. Uh-huh. (*Polhaus and Dundy exchange a glance.*)

POLHAUS. How'd she take it?

SPADE. I don't know anything about women.

POLHAUS. The hell you don't.

LT. DUNDY. What kind of gun do you carry?

SPADE. None. I don't like them much. There are some in the office, of course.

LT. DUNDY. I'd like to see one of them. You don't happen to have one here?

SPADE. No.

LT. DUNDY. You *sure* of that?

SPADE. Look around. Turn the dump upside down if you want. I won't squawk--*if* you've got a search warrant.

POLHAUS. Oh hell, Sam. We're not trying to make any trouble.

SPADE. (*Spade stands and faces Polhaus.*) Well then, what do you want? Talk turkey. Who do you think you are coming in here at this hour trying to rope me?

LT. DUNDY. All right, now sit down and listen.

SPADE. I'll sit or stand as I damned please.

POLHAUS. For God's sake be reasonable. If you want to know why we didn't talk turkey, it's because when I asked you who this Thursby was, you as good as told me it was none of my business.

LT. DUNDY. (*Dundy leans in from Spade's blind side.*) Why were you tailing him?

SPADE. I *wasn't*. Miles was, for the swell reason we had a client who was paying good United States money to have him tailed.

LT. DUNDY. Who's the client?

SPADE. (*Matter of fact.*) I can't tell you that until I've talked it over with the client.

LT. DUNDY. *You'll tell it to me or you'll tell it in court!* This is murder, and don't you forget it!

SPADE. I'll tell it or not as I please. It's a long while since I burst out *crying* because policemen didn't like me.

POLHAUS. Give us a chance, Sam. How can we turn up anything on Miles's killing if you won't give us what you've got?

SPADE. You needn't get a headache over that. I'll bury my dead.

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LT. DUNDY. That's *exactly* why we came to see you. I said to Tom, "Tom, I've got a hunch that Sam Spade's a man to keep the family troubles in the family". That's just what I said to him.

SPADE. (*Turns to Polhaus.*) What's itching your boyfriend now?

LT. DUNDY. (*Dundy begins tapping Spade in the chest accusingly.*) Just this. Thursby was shot in front of his hotel just thirty-five minutes after you left Burritt Street.

SPADE. Keep your damned dirty paws off me.

LT. DUNDY. (*Dundy stops the finger poking.*) Tom says you were in too much of a hurry to even *look* at your partner.

POLHAUS. Well Sam, you did run off like that.

LT. DUNDY. (*Dundy sits and consults his notes.*) You didn't go to Archer's house to tell his wife. That girl from your office said you sent *her*. I give you ten minutes to get to the phone and do your talking to the girl. I give you ten minutes to get to Thursby's joint. And that gives you ten or fifteen minutes of waiting before he showed up.

SPADE. I knew where he lived? And I knew he hadn't gone straight home after killing Miles?

LT. DUNDY. You knew what you knew. What time did you get home?

SPADE. Twenty minutes to four. I walked around thinking things over.

POLHAUS. Did you see anybody that—

SPADE. No. No witnesses. Can I get you boys a drink?

POLHAUS. No, thanks, Sam. (*Dundy shakes his head.*)

SPADE. I'm sorry I got up on my hind legs, but having Miles knocked off bothered me, and then you birds cracking foxy. I know where I stand now. Thursby dead?

LT. DUNDY. Yes. And you might as well know it, if you don't--he died before he could tell anybody anything.

SPADE. How'd I kill this Thursby? I've forgotten.

LT. DUNDY. He was shot four times in the back, with a .44 or .45 from across the street, when he started to go into his hotel. That's the way it figures, though nobody saw it.

SPADE. What do the hotel people know about him?

POLHAUS. Nothing except he'd been there a week.

SPADE. *Alone?*

POLHAUS. Alone.

SPADE. What did you find on him? Or in his room?

LT. DUNDY. What did you *think* we'd find?

SPADE. Something to tell you who he was, what his game was. Did you?

LT. DUNDY. We thought *you* could tell us that.

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SPADE. I've never seen Thursby dead or alive. (*Dundy stares at him for a beat. Spade stares right back.*)

POLHAUS. ...We've asked what we came to ask. Let's go.

LT. DUNDY. You know me, Spade. If you did or you didn't do it, you'll get a square deal out of me and most of the breaks. I don't know that I'd blame you for dropping Thursby, but that wouldn't keep me from nailing you. Good night. (*Dundy exits. Polhaus shrugs to Spade, then exits. Spade takes a drink.*)

SPADE. *Cops. (Blackout.)*

SCENE 5

SPADE. (*V.O.*) In the morning I went to the St. Marks Hotel, but they told me that our client, Miss Wonderly, had already checked out. She left a message at my office to meet her at the Coronet on California street and to ask for Miss LeBlanc.

The lights come up on Brigid's small, rented apartment. She is anxious and uneasy as Spade enters. She no longer wears gloves.

SPADE. Good morning.

BRIGID. Come in, Mr. Spade. I have a terrible, terrible confession to make. That-that story I told you and your partner yesterday was all just a story.

SPADE. Oh, that. We didn't exactly *believe* your story...We believed your two hundred dollars.

BRIGID. You mean--

SPADE. I mean that you paid us more than if you'd been telling the truth... and *enough* more to make it all right.

BRIGID. And even now you'd be willing to--?

SPADE. That depends. The hell of it is--what is your name, Wonderly or LeBlanc?

BRIGID. It's O'Shaughnessy. *Brigid* O'Shaughnessy. Mr. Spade, tell me the truth: am I to blame for--what happened last night?

SPADE. Not unless there are things I don't know about. You warned us Thursby was dangerous. Of course, you did lie to us about your sister and all, but that doesn't count. We didn't believe you. So, I wouldn't say it looked like your fault.

BRIGID. Thank you. But I'll always blame myself. Was-was he married?

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SPADE. Yes, with ten thousand insurance, no children and a wife who didn't like him.

BRIGID. Oh, please don't.

SPADE. That's the way it was. There's no time for worrying about that now. Out there a flock of policemen and reporters and assistant district attorneys are running around with their noses to the ground. What do you want me to do?

BRIGID. Mr. Spade, do they know about me?

SPADE. Not yet. I wanted to see you first.

BRIGID. Mr. Spade, you don't think I had anything to do with the murders--do you?

SPADE. I forgot to ask you that. Did you?

BRIGID. No.

SPADE. That's good. Now what are we going to tell the police?

BRIGID. Must they know about me at all? I can't explain now, but can't you somehow manage to shield me from them altogether, so I won't have to answer their questions?

SPADE. Maybe. But *I'll* have to know what it's all about.

BRIGID. (*She drops down to her knees and looks up at him.*) I haven't lived a good life. I'm bad--worse than you could know--but I'm not *all* bad. You can see that, can't you? Then can't you trust me a little? I'm so alone and afraid, and I've got nobody to help me if you won't help me. You're strong, you're resourceful, you're brave. Help me, Mr. Spade. Because I need help so badly. I've no right to ask you to help me blindly, but I do ask you. Be generous, Mr. Spade. You can save me. You can. Won't you?

SPADE. (*He hesitates, then gives her a slow clap.*) You won't need much of anybody's help. You're good. You're *very* good. It's chiefly your eyes I think, and that throaty sob you get in your voice when you say things like, "Be generous, Mr. Spade."

BRIGID. (*Brigid gets to her feet.*) I deserve that, but the lie was in the *way* I said it, and not in what I said.

SPADE. Now you *are* dangerous. What happened last night?

BRIGID. Floyd came to the hotel at nine o'clock, and we went out for a walk. I suggested that, so Mr. Archer could see him. We stopped at a restaurant for supper and got back to the hotel at half past twelve. Floyd left me at the door, and I stood inside and watched Mr. Archer follow him down the street, on the other side.

SPADE. What did you do after they'd left?

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BRIGID. I went to bed. And this morning when I saw the headlines in the paper about them both being killed, I knew I had to hide. I found this place, then phoned your office.

SPADE. Tell me about Thursby.

BRIGID. I met him in the Orient. We came here together from Hong Kong last week. He had promised to help me.

He took advantage of my helplessness and dependence on him to betray me.

SPADE. Betray you how? *(Brigid turns away and shakes her head.)* Why did you want him shadowed?

BRIGID. I wanted to know how far he had gone. He wouldn't even let me know where he was staying. I wanted to find out what he was doing, whom he was meeting, things like that.

SPADE. Did he kill Archer?

BRIGID. Yes, certainly.

SPADE. You picked a nice sort of a playmate. How bad a hole are you in?

BRIGID. As bad as could be.

SPADE. Physical danger?

BRIGID. I'm not heroic. I don't think there's anything worse than death. And it's that as surely as we're sitting here, unless you help me.

SPADE. Who killed Thursby?

BRIGID. I don't know.

SPADE. How was he supposed to be helping you? Why did you bring him here from Hong Kong? *(Brigid shakes her head. She'll say no more.)* This is hopeless. I'm not Christ. I can't work miracles out of thin air. You've given me nothing to work with. I can't do anything for you. I don't even know what you want done. I don't know if even *you* know what you want. *(She hangs her head and weeps.)*

BRIGID. You won't... go to the police?

SPADE. *Go to them?* All I got to do is stand still and they'll be swarming all over me. Well, now I'll tell them what I know, and you'll have to take your chances.

BRIGID. *(She sits down, a helpless, pathetic creature.)* It is hopeless I suppose. I thank you for what you tried to do. I-I'll have to "take my chances".

SPADE. *(Spade growls out of frustration, then gives in and sits next to her. He can't walk out on her like this.)* How much money have you got?

BRIGID. I've about five hundred dollars left.

SPADE. Give it to me.

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BRIGID. *(She takes the money from her blouse and hands it to him.)* Here. It's all I've got.

SPADE. *(Spade counts the bills. He discovers she's come up short.)* There's only four hundred here.

BRIGID. *(She pats her breast.)* I had to keep some to live on.

SPADE. You have to get more. You must have something you can raise a little money on.

BRIGID. A few rings, some jewelry--

SPADE. You'll have to hock them. The Remedial's the best place. Mission and Fifth. *(He hands her a card as he stands up to leave. They stare at each other for a moment. Then, never breaking eye contact, she reaches into her blouse and gets him the rest of the money. He counts it quickly, then hands her back three bills.)* You keep that. I'm going to go out and see what I can do for you. I'll be back as soon as I can. I'll ring four times--long, short, long short, so you know it's me. You needn't walk me to the door. I'll see myself out. *(Spade exits. She stares after him, her hand almost unconsciously going to her breast where the money was. Blackout.)*

SCENE 6

SPADE. *(V.O.)* From there I went to my office where my secretary Effie, was waiting for me.

Lights up on outer office. Like the alley scene, this takes place in the Bit area. The Bit area is where all the short scenes like this are staged. Scenes that require no set dressing. Plain wall. EFFIE Perine, Spade's young but efficient secretary is drinking coffee when Spade steps into the light.

SPADE. Hello, precious. Anything stirring?

EFFIE. Your friend Lieutenant Dundy was in. He wanted to look at your guns.

SPADE. And?

EFFIE. I told him to come back when you were here.

SPADE. Good girl. If he comes back again, let him see them.

EFFIE. Before you go into your office, I should tell you *she's* in there. *(Effie nods towards the inner office.)*

SPADE. I asked you to keep her away.

EFFIE. Yes, but you didn't tell me *how*. *(Blackout.)*

SCENE 7

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Lights up on Spade's Office. Spade enters to find an anxious IVA, Archer's attractive widow, dressed in black waiting to see him. He is not pleased to see her.

SPADE. Hello, Iva.

IVA. *Oh Sam! (Iva rushes over and desperately throws her arms around him. He is uncomfortable at best.)*

SPADE. Poor darling.

IVA. *(Iva kisses him firmly.)* Oh, Sam! Did you kill him?

SPADE. *(Spade breaks away and glares at her.)* Who put *that* bright idea in your head?

IVA. *(Iva is shaken by his reaction.)* I thought--be kind to me, Sam.

SPADE. *(Mocking.)* You killed my husband, be kind to me, Sam. *Great God! (Iva cries, holding a white HANDKERCHIEF to her face. Sam hesitates, then takes her in his arms and kisses her gently on the neck.)*

Now Iva, don't... You shouldn't have come here today, precious. It wasn't wise. You can't stay. You ought to be home.

IVA. You'll come tonight?

SPADE. Not tonight.

IVA. Soon?

SPADE. *(Spade kisses her on the cheek then leads her to the door.)* As soon as I can. Now you must go. Goodbye, Iva. *(Iva exits. Spade breathes a deep sigh and returns to his desk. A moment later, Effie enters.)*

EFFIE. Well? How did you and the widow make out?

SPADE. She thinks I shot Miles.

EFFIE. So you could marry her?

SPADE. *(He nods.)* The police think I shot Thursby.

EFFIE. Who's he?

SPADE. Thursby's the guy Miles was supposed to be shadowing for the Wonderly girl. Who do *you* think I've shot?

EFFIE. *Are you going to marry Iva?*

SPADE. Don't be silly. I wish to God, I've never seen her.

EFFIE. Maybe you do *now*, but there was a time. You know I think she's a louse, but I'd be a louse too if I could have a body like that. Do you suppose *she* could have killed him?

SPADE. *(Laughs.)* You're an angel. A nice rattle-brained angel.

EFFIE. Oh *am* I? Suppose I told you that your Iva hadn't been home very many minutes when I arrived to break the news at three o'clock this morning? She kept me waiting at the door while she undressed. I saw her

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clothes where she dumped them on a chair. Her singlette, on top was still warm. She had wrinkled up the bed, but the sheets weren't mashed down. **SPADE.** You're a detective darling, but she didn't kill him. What did you think of Wonderly?

EFFIE. I'm for her.

SPADE. She's got too many names. Wonderly, LeBlanc, and she says the right one's O'Shaughnessy.

EFFIE. I don't care if she's got all the names in the phone book. The girl is all right, and you know it.

SPADE. I wonder. Anyway, she's given up seven hundred bucks in two days and that's all right.

EFFIE. Sam, if that girl's in trouble and you let her down, or take advantage of it to bleed her, I'll never forgive you, never have any respect for you as long as I live. *(There is a sound in the corridor. Effie exits to see what it is. A moment later she returns and hands Spade a business card.)* You have a visitor. A Mr. Joel Cairo. He's an odd one.

SPADE. In with him then, darling. *(Effie exits. We hear her speak to Cairo offstage.)* Go right in, Mr. Cairo. Mr. Spade will see you now. *(CAIRO enters. He is a small, delicate man. He wears a green cravat and a black coat. He carries a black derby hat in his chamois-gloved hands. He speaks softly and precisely.)* Sit down, Mr. Cairo.

CAIRO. Thank you. *(Cairo bows curtly and sits. He removes his gloves and puts them in his hat.)* May a stranger offer condolences for your partner's unfortunate death?

SPADE. Thanks.

CAIRO. May I ask, Mr. Spade, if there was, as the newspapers inferred, a certain relationship between the unfortunate happening and the death a little later of the man Thursby? *(Spade stares at him silently.)* I beg your pardon. More than idle curiosity made me ask that, Mr. Spade. I am trying to recover an-ah *ornament* that has been--mislaid. I hoped you could assist me. The ornament is a statuette. The black figure of a bird. I am prepared to pay, on behalf of the figure's rightful owner, the sum of five thousand dollars for its recovery. I am prepared to promise that--what is the phrase?--no questions will be asked.

SPADE. Five thousand is a lot of money. It- *(There is a rap on the door.)* Come in.

EFFIE. *(Effie enters, now wearing a hat and coat.)* Is there anything else?

SPADE. No. Good night. Lock the door when you go, will you?

EFFIE. Good night. *(Effie exits. Cairo watches her leave.)*

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SPADE. Five thousand interests me. (*We HEAR an outer DOOR close. As if on cue, Cairo pulls a small HANDGUN from his coat.*)

CAIRO. You will please clasp your hands together at the back of your neck. (*Spade slowly does as he is told. He looks at Cairo with curiosity, rather than fear.*) I intend to search your office, Mr. Spade. I warn that if you attempt to prevent me, I shall certainly shoot you.

SPADE. Go ahead--with the search I mean.

CAIRO. You will please stand. I must make sure you are not armed. (*Spade stands. Cairo steps behind him. He runs one hand along Spade's side and his gun hand along the other. Spade grabs the gun, pulling it forward and out of Cairo's hand. Spade then spins around and hits him twice. Cairo goes down, lying motionless on the floor. Spade searches him. He finds a WALLET, some BUSINESS CARDS, a silk HANDKERCHIEF and a HOTEL KEY. He looks through the wallet and other items, then begins kicking Cairo gently.*)

SPADE. Okay, get up. Get up.

CAIRO. (*Embarrassed and a little groggy, Cairo gets to his feet.*) I could have *shot* you, Mr. Spade.

SPADE. You could have tried.

CAIRO. Why did you strike me after I was disarmed?

SPADE. Sorry. But imagine my embarrassment when I found out the five-thousand-dollar offer was a lot of hooey. (*Spade waves Cairo's wallet at him.*)

CAIRO. You are mistaken, Mr. Spade. It was and is a genuine offer. I am prepared to pay five thousand dollars for the figure's return. You have it?

SPADE. No.

CAIRO. (*Skeptical.*) If it is not here, why should you have risked serious injury to prevent my searching for it?

SPADE. (*Spade takes a slip of paper from the wallet.*) You've got my apartment address. Been up there yet?

CAIRO. Yes, Mr. Spade. I am ready to pay five thousand dollars for the figure's return, but surely it is natural enough that I should first try to spare the owner that expense if possible.

SPADE. You're betting your eyes. There's nothing like five thousand dollars here.

CAIRO. I see. You wish some assurance of my sincerity. A retainer. Would that serve?

SPADE. It might.

CAIRO. You will take say, a hundred dollars?

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SPADE. Better make it *two* hundred. (*Spade takes two hundred dollar bills out of the wallet, then tosses it back to Cairo.*) Your first guess was that I had the bird. What's your second?

CAIRO. That you know where it is, or you know where you can get it.

SPADE. (*Spade indicates the things he took out of Cairo's pockets.*) There's your stuff. Now it's understood that you're to pay my expenses while I'm getting this bird for you, and five thousand dollars when it's done?

CAIRO. (*Cairo takes back his things.*) Yes, Mr. Spade, that is, five thousand dollars less whatever moneys have been advanced to you--five thousand in all.

SPADE. Right. And you're not hiring me to do any murders or burglaries, but to simply get it back if possible, in an honest and lawful way.

CAIRO. (*Hesitates.*) ...*If possible.* And in any event, with *discretion.* I am at the Hotel Belvedere when you wish to communicate with me. Room six-thirty-five. I confidently expect the greatest mutual benefit from our association, Mr. Spade. (*Cairo stands and turns as if to go, then remembers something.*) Oh! May I have my pistol?

SPADE. Sure. I'd forgotten it. (*Spade reaches into his pocket and returns Cairo's handgun. The instant he has the gun, Cairo's attitude changes completely. He points the small gun menacingly.*)

CAIRO. You will please keep your hands on the top of the desk. I intend to search your offices!

SPADE. (*Amused.*) Well, I'll be--All right, go ahead. I won't stop you. (*Blackout.*)

SCENE 8

SPADE. (*V.O.*) After Cairo left, I went to go see Wonderly or O'Shaughnessy or whatever her name was today.

Lights up on Bit area to reveal WILMER alone, trying not to be noticed. He looks young and wears a trench coat and hat like he's seen tough guys wear in the movies. He chews on a toothpick. Spade crosses and exits in front of him.

SPADE. (*V.O.*) On the way I spotted an undersized youth of twenty or so standing idly on the corner. I stopped for dinner on Powell Street, and

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when I came out, the same guy was looking into a nearby store window. I let him follow me for a while but then decided to lose him. (*Spade enters and crosses in front of Wilmer from the other side and exits. A moment later, Wilmer exits after him. Blackout.*)

SCENE 9

SPADE. (*V.O.*) Once I was sure I had lost the tail, I went to Wonderly's place at the Coronet.

Lights up on Brigid's apartment. Brigid is sitting alone when the door buzzer buzzes. Startled at first, she listens intently as it rings 4 times-long, short, long, short. She relaxes and goes to the door to let Spade in

BRIGID. Do you bring me good news?

SPADE. We won't have to make anything public that hasn't already been made public.

BRIGID. The police won't have to know about me?

SPADE. No.

BRIGID. However did you manage it?

SPADE. Your money managed it. I just made sure that it went to the right people.

BRIGID. And you won't get into trouble?

SPADE. I don't mind a reasonable amount of trouble. You aren't exactly the sort of person you pretend to be, are you?

BRIGID. I'm not sure that I know what you mean. I told you this afternoon that I've been bad, worse than you know.

SPADE. That's what I mean. You told me this afternoon in the same words, same tone. It's a speech you've practiced.

BRIGID. Very well then, Mr. Spade. I'm not at all the sort of person I pretend to be. I'm eighty years old, incredibly wicked and an iron-molder by trade. But if it's a pose, it's a pose I've grown into, so you won't expect me to drop it entirely, will you?

SPADE. Oh, it's all right. Only it wouldn't be all right if you were actually that innocent. We'd never get anywhere.

BRIGID. (*Pointedly.*) I won't be that innocent.

SPADE. I saw Joel Cairo tonight.

BRIGID. (*She suddenly tenses.*) You... you *know* him?

SPADE. Yeah, he came by my office.

THE MALTESE FALCON

BRIGID. What... did he say? *(She turns away from him, trying to act natural and nonchalant.)*

SPADE. About what?

BRIGID. About me.

SPADE. Nothing, But he offered me five thousand dollars for the black bird. *(Brigid tidies up, acting unconcerned.)* You're good. You're very good.

BRIGID. And what did you say to him?

SPADE. Five thousand dollars is a lot of money.

BRIGID. *(She turns sharply to him.)* Surely, you're not really considering it?

SPADE. Why not? Five thousand dollars *is* a lot of money.

BRIGID. But Mr. Spade, you promised to help me! I trusted you! You can't--

SPADE. I promised to help you, but five thousand dollars is a *lot* of money.

BRIGID. *(Disdain.)* It's far more than I could ever offer you if I have to *bid* for your loyalty.

SPADE. *(Bitter laugh.)* That's good, coming from you. What have you given me besides money? Have you given me any of your confidence? Any of the truth? Haven't you tried to buy my loyalty with money and nothing else?

BRIGID. I've given you all the money I have. Without your help I'm utterly lost. What else is there? *(She moves toward him angrily.)* Can I buy you with my *body*? *(With their faces just inches apart, Spade takes her face in his hands and kisses her, roughly and contemptuously.)*

SPADE. I'll think it over. *(Spade walks away from her.)*

BRIGID. *(Desperately.)* Can't you trust me a *little* longer?

SPADE. How much is a little? And what are you waiting for?

BRIGID. *(Thoughtful.)* I *must* talk to Joe Cairo.

SPADE. You can see him tonight.

BRIGID. *(Alarmed)* But he can't come here. I can't let him know where I am! *I'm afraid!*

SPADE. My place.

BRIGID. Do you think he'll come there?

SPADE. *(Nods.)* By the way, you don't know why any punk in a hat and overcoat would be trying to follow me, would you?

BRIGID. No. But Sam, he didn't follow you *here*, did he?

SPADE. Not a chance. Don't worry about him.

THE MALTESE FALCON

BRIGID. You're a God-send.

SPADE. Don't *overdo* it. Let's go. (*Spade and Brigid exit as the lights go out.*)

SCENE 10

SPADE. (*V.O.*) We took a cab to my apartment. There was no sign of the punk, but there *was* someone waiting for me outside. Iva.

Lights up on Bit area, now lit for a night scene. Iva stands there alone anxiously waiting outside Sam's apartment building. Her face lights up when he steps into the light.

IVA. I've got to talk to you, Sam. Can I come in?

SPADE. I've only a minute, Iva. What's the matter? Has anything happened? You oughtn't be here at this time of night.

IVA. You told me I oughtn't come to the office, and now I oughtn't come here. Do you mean I oughtn't chase after you? If that's what you mean, why don't you say it right now?

SPADE. Now Iva, you've got no right to take that attitude.

IVA. I haven't any rights at all, it seems, where you're concerned. I thought I did. I thought your pretending to love me gave me *some* right, but--

SPADE. This is no time to be arguing about that, precious.

IVA. I can't talk to you here, Sam. Can't I come in?

SPADE. (*He shakes his head.*) Not now.

IVA. Why can't I?

SPADE. (*Brigid steps into the light from the shadows and takes Spade's arm.*) Good night, Iva. (*Iva silently glares at the couple as they exit. Blackout.*)

SCENE 11

SPADE. (*V.O.*) We went inside to my apartment, then called Cairo at the Belvedere and asked him to meet us there. He arrived minutes later.

The lights come on in Spade's apartment as Joel Cairo enters and removes his hat. Brigid eyes him warily.

THE MALTESE FALCON

CAIRO. I am delighted to see you again, Miss O'Shaughnessy.

BRIGID. I was sure you would be, Joe. *(She extends him her hand. He takes it and does a sharp bow over it, then releases her.)* Sam told me about your offer for the falcon. How soon can you have the money ready?

CAIRO. *(He removes his gloves.)* It is ready. I am prepared to get it on a very few minutes notice at any time during banking hours. I can give you the money at say half-past ten in the morning, eh?

BRIGID. But I haven't got the falcon. *(Cairo darkens and growls quietly.)* I'll have it in a week at most though.

CAIRO. *A week?* Where is it?

BRIGID. Where Floyd hid it.

CAIRO. Floyd? Floyd Thursby? *(Brigid nods.)* If you know where it is, why must we wait a week?

BRIGID. Perhaps not a whole week. Who are you buying it for, Joe?

CAIRO. I told Mr. Spade. For its owner.

BRIGID. So you went back to *him*?

CAIRO. Naturally.

BRIGID. *(Laughs.)* I should liked to have seen *that*.

CAIRO. Why, if I in turn may ask a question, are you willing to sell it to me, Brigid?

BRIGID. I'm afraid after what happened to Floyd. That's why I haven't it now. I'm afraid to touch it except to turn it over to someone else right away.

CAIRO. Exactly what... happened to Floyd?

BRIGID. *He* happened to Floyd. *(Brigid draws a "G" in the air with her finger.)*

CAIRO. I see. Is he here?

BRIGID. I don't know. What difference does it make?

CAIRO. It might make a big difference.

BRIGID. Sam says there was a boy shadowing him around town today.

CAIRO. Could the boy belong to *him*?

BRIGID. *(Laughs.)* Yes, unless he's the one you had in Constantinople. *(She's touched a nerve. Cairo springs to his feet.)*

CAIRO. *(Angry.)* Why you filthy, verdammte Strolch—*(Brigid jumps up and slaps him in the face. Cairo is outraged and tries to slap her, but Spade grabs him by the throat. Cairo tries to pull his gun, but Spade disarms him and hands the gun to Brigid. Seemingly squeamish about guns, she puts it on the couch as Spade pushes Cairo by the throat into a chair.)* This is the *second* time you've put your hands on me!

THE MALTESE FALCON

SPADE. Yes. And when you're slapped, you'll take it and like it. (*Spade slaps him. Just then the door buzzer buzzes. Brigid gasps.*)

BRIGID. (*Whispers.*) Who could it be?

SPADE. I don't know. Keep quiet and stay here. (*Spade exits, leaving Brigid nervously eyeing Cairo. Blackout.*)

SCENE 12

Bit area. Polhaus and Lt. Dundy wait outside Spade's front door. Spade opens the door and joins them.

SPADE. Hello. You guys pick swell hours to go calling. What is it this time?

LT. DUNDY. We want to talk to you, Spade.

SPADE. Well? Go ahead and talk.

POLHAUS. We don't have to do it standing out here, do we?

SPADE. You can't come in.

LT. DUNDY. It'd pay for you to play along with us a little, Spade. There's talk going around that you and Archer's wife were cheating on him.

SPADE. That sounds like something you thought up yourself.

LT. DUNDY. Talk is that she tried to get a divorce out of him so she could put in with you, but he wouldn't give it to her. Anything to that?

SPADE. Nothing.

LT. DUNDY. There's even talk that that's why he was put on the spot.

SPADE. Don't be a hog. You oughtn't try to tie one more than one murder at a time on me. Your first notion that I knocked Thursby off because he killed Miles falls apart if you blame me for killing Miles too.

LT. DUNDY. If you say there was nothing between you and Archer's wife, you're a liar.

SPADE. Is that the hot tip that brought you here at this time of the night?

LT. DUNDY. That's one of them.

SPADE. And the others?

LT. DUNDY. Let us in. (*Spade shakes his head.*) All right Spade, we're going. We'll be in--

CAIRO. (*O.S.*) Help! Help! Police! *Help!*

LT. DUNDY. I guess we're going in.

SPADE. I guess you are. (*The two cops brush past Spade and exit. He exits after them.*)

THE MALTESE FALCON

SCENE 13

Lights up on Spade's apartment. Lt. Dundy and Polhaus come rushing in to find Brigid crouched in a chair. Cairo holds a handkerchief to his forehead to stop the bleeding. In his other hand he holds his gun.

LT. DUNDY. What's going on here? Gimme that. *(Dundy takes Cairo's gun. Cairo points to his head with the bloody handkerchief. Spade re-enters the apartment.)*

CAIRO. *This is what she did. Look at it.*

LT. DUNDY. Did you do that?

BRIGID. I had to. I was alone in here with him when he attacked me. I tried to keep him off. I couldn't make myself shoot him.

CAIRO. Oh, you liar! *You dirty, filthy liar!* I came here in good faith and was attacked by both of them. *She* struck me first, then *he* choked me and took the pistol out of my pocket. And when you came, he went out to talk to you, leaving her here with the gun. She said they were going to kill me after you left, so I called for help so you wouldn't leave me here to be murdered, and then she struck me with the pistol.

BRIGID. *Why don't you tell the truth!* *(Brigid leaps up and slaps Cairo on the cheek. Cairo cries out in pain. Dundy pushes her back.)*

LT. DUNDY. None of that, now.

SPADE. *(To Polhaus.)* She's impulsive.

POLHAUS. Yeah.

LT. DUNDY. What do *you* want us to think the truth is?

BRIGID. Not what he said. Not *anything* he said. Is it?

SPADE. *(Mock innocence.)* How should I know? I was out in the kitchen mixing an omelet when it all happened, wasn't I?

LT. DUNDY. If he's not telling the truth, how come *he* did all the squawking for help and not *you*?

BRIGID. Oh, he was scared to death when I struck him.

CAIRO. Phooey! *Another lie!* *(Brigid kicks Cairo in the shin. Cairo cries out. Polhaus pulls her away.)*

POLHAUS. Behave, sister. That's no way to act.

BRIGID. *Then make him tell the truth!*

LT. DUNDY. Well Tom, I guess we'll take them all in.

SPADE. Don't be in a hurry. Everything can be explained.

LT. DUNDY. I bet.

THE MALTESE FALCON

SPADE. Miss O'Shaughnessy, may I present Lieutenant Dundy and Detective-Sergeant Polhaus. Miss O'Shaughnessy is an operative in my employ.

CAIRO. That isn't so! She—

SPADE. I hired her just yesterday. This is Mr. Joel Cairo, an acquaintance of Thursby's. He came to me this afternoon and tried to hire me to find something Thursby was supposed to have on him when he was bumped off. It sounded queer to me so I wouldn't touch it. But after talking it over with Miss O'Shaughnessy, I thought maybe I could get something out of him about Miles's and Thursby's killings, so I asked him to come up here. Maybe we put the questions to him a little rough, but not enough to have to cry for help.

LT. DUNDY. Well, what've you got to say to that?

CAIRO. I do not know what I should say

LT. DUNDY. All you've got to do is swear out a complaint that they took a poke at you and that'll be enough for us to throw them in the can.

SPADE. Go ahead, Cairo. Make him happy. Tell him you'll swear out a complaint, then we'll swear to one against you and he'll have the lot of us. *(There is a brief silence as everyone considers what to do.)*

LT. DUNDY. Get your hats.

SPADE. Well, boys and girls, we put it over nicely.

LT. DUNDY. I said get your hats.

SPADE. Wake up, Dundy. Don't you know when you're being kidded? When the bell rang, I said to Miss O'Shaughnessy and Cairo, "It's those damned bulls again. Let's play a joke on them. When you hear them going, one of you scream and we'll see how long we can string them along before they tumble". *(Brigid laughs hysterically. Cairo breaks into a wry smile.)*

LT. DUNDY. *Horse feathers!*

SPADE. You haven't got anything on anybody here. Everything we told you was part of the joke. What are you going to do about it?

LT. DUNDY. You can't get away with that. *(To Cairo.)* You squawked for help and you've got to take it.

CAIRO. No sir. It was a *joke*. He said that you were friends of his and would understand. *(Spade laughs. Angry and frustrated, Dundy grabs Cairo.)*

LT. DUNDY. I'll take *you* along for packing the gun, anyway, and I'll take the rest of you along to see who laughs at the joke.

SPADE. Don't be a fool, Dundy. The gun was part of the plant. It's one of mine. I've got all the licenses you want. *(Spade chuckles as does Brigid and Cairo. Frustrated and tired of being ribbed, Dundy spins around and*

THE MALTESE FALCON

socks Spade in the jaw. Spade flashes anger and tries to retaliate, but Polhaus holds him back.)

POLHAUS. No! No! Don't do it, Sam.

SPADE. Then get him out of here quick.

LT. DUNDY. I need everyone's names and addresses.

CAIRO: Joel Cairo, Hotel Belvedere.

LT SPADE. You can get in touch with Miss O'Shaughnessy through me.

LT. DUNDY. What's her address?

SPADE. Her address is in care of my office.

LT. DUNDY. *(To Brigid.)* Where do you live?

SPADE. Get him out of here. I've had enough of this.

POLHAUS. Take it easy, Sam. *(To Dundy.)* Well, is that all *Lieutenant?* *(Dundy nods and Polhaus gently releases Spade.)*

CAIRO. I go with you!

SPADE. What's the hurry?

LT. DUNDY. *(Sarcastic.)* It was all in fun, but just the same you're afraid to be left here with them.

CAIRO. No, not at all. But it is quite late, and I'll go out with you if you don't mind.

SPADE. *(To Polhaus.)* Tell him to leave the gun of mine he took from Cairo. *(Dundy takes the gun out of his overcoat pocket, hands it to Polhaus, then exits with Cairo close behind. Polhaus hands Spade the gun.)*

POLHAUS. I hope to God you know what you're doing. *(He looks at Spade for a moment. When he gets no reply, he sighs and exits. Spade sits next to Brigid.)*

SPADE. By God, I hate being hit without hitting back. Not that it was much of a sock. What did you do to Cairo?

BRIGID. Nothing. I tried to frighten him into keeping quiet until they had gone and either he got *too* frightened or stubborn and yelled.

SPADE. And then you beaned him with the gun?

BRIGID. I had to. He attacked me.

SPADE. *(Chuckles.)* You don't know what you're doing. You're fumbling along by guess and by God.

BRIGID. I'm sorry, Sam.

SPADE. Sure you are. Now you've had your talk with Cairo. Now you can talk to *me*.

BRIGID. But I didn't. We were interrupted almost before we had begun.

THE MALTESE FALCON

SPADE. Want me to call him and ask him to come back? *(She shakes her head.)* Well? I'm listening.

BRIGID. Look at the time! I *must* go. *(She tries to stand, but he pulls her back by the arm.)*

SPADE. You must not! Not until you've told me about it.

BRIGID. But look at the time! And it would take me *hours* to tell you. *(She tries to stand again, with the same result.)*

SPADE. I've got the time. Besides, look out the window.

(Brigid goes to the window on the 4th wall and looks out. Spade turns out the LIGHTS. She is now framed by the outside light coming in through an imaginary Venetian blind.)

BRIGID. I see him. How long has he been there?

SPADE. *(Spade steps next to her and looks out the window.)* I spotted him just before Cairo got here. You don't want him to follow you home.

BRIGID. No. No, I don't.

SPADE. Now tell me. What's this bird, this falcon that everybody's steamed up about?

BRIGID. Suppose I would not tell you? Suppose I wouldn't tell you *anything* at all about it? What would you do? *(Spade turns the lights back on and then gets out a BOTTLE and pours them both drinks. He says nothing, and hands her a GLASS.)*

SPADE. I don't see what you've got to gain by not telling me. It's coming out bit by bit anyhow. There's a lot of it I don't know, but give me another day like this, and I'll be knowing things about it that *you* don't know.

BRIGID. Oh! But I'm so tired of it, and I do so hate having to talk about it --wouldn't it be just as well to wait and let you learn about it as you say you will?

SPADE. I don't know. My way of learning is to heave a monkey wrench into the machinery. It's all right with me, if you're sure none of the flying pieces will hurt you. *(They drink for a moment, eyeballing each other.)*

BRIGID. It's a black figure, smooth and shiny, of a bird, a hawk or a falcon, about that high. *(She holds her hands about a foot apart.)*

SPADE. What makes it important?

BRIGID. I don't know. They'd never tell me. They just hired me to help them.

SPADE. Help them *how*?

BRIGID. To help them get it from the man who had it. A Russian named Kemidov.

SPADE. How?

THE MALTESE FALCON

BRIGID. (*Defensively.*) That's not important. It couldn't help you and is certainly none of your business.

SPADE. This was in Constantinople?

BRIGID. Yes. They promised me 500 pounds to help them and I did, and then we found out Joe Cairo meant to desert us, taking the falcon with him and leaving us nothing. So we did exactly that to him, first.

SPADE. What makes it worth all that money?

BRIGID. I haven't the slightest idea.

SPADE. You *are* a liar. Was there any truth at all in that yarn?

BRIGID. Some--not very much.

SPADE. (*Spade laughs. He puts a hand on her chin and lifts her head.*) We've got all night before us. I'll pour us another drink and we'll try again.

BRIGID. Oh, I'm so tired. So tired of it all, of myself, of lying and thinking up lies and not knowing what is a lie and what is the truth. I wish-- (*She pulls him in for a kiss, A kiss that grows more desperate as the lights fade to black.*)

SCENE 14

Lights up on Brigid's apartment. Spade enters and rummages around briefly looking for clues. He examines a receipt before he exits.

SPADE. (*V.O.*) The next morning while she was asleep, I left to search her apartment. I didn't find the black bird, but I did find a handful of fine jewelry and a receipt that showed she had rented the place 5 days earlier. I went to see Cairo at the Belvedere. He wasn't there, but in the lobby, I spotted the kid who had been following me. I decided it was time we got acquainted.

SCENE 15

Lights come up on the Bit area. Reveal Wilmer leaning on wall, chewing on his toothpick, pretending to read a NEWSPAPER. Spade enters and comes up next to him.

SPADE. Where is he?

THE MALTESE FALCON

WILMER. Who?

SPADE. Cairo.

WILMER. What do you think you're doing, Jack, kidding me?

SPADE. I'll tell you when I am. New York, aren't you?

WILMER. Shove off.

SPADE. You'll have to talk to me before you're through, sonny. Some of you will, and you can tell "G" I said so.

WILMER. Keep asking for it and you're gonna get it. Plenty. I told you to shove off. Shove off, you son of a--

SPADE. Easy, sonny. People have lost teeth talking like that. If you want to hang around, you'll be polite. *(Spade exits. Wilmer glares after him, then follows. Blackout.)*

SCENE 16

Lights up on Spade's office. Effie is on the phone when Spade enters.

EFFIE. No, not yet. *(She mouths "Iva" to him. He draws back and shakes his head.)* Yes, I'll have him call you the moment he comes in. Goodbye. *(Effie hangs up the phone.)*

EFFIE. That's the *third* time she's called up this morning.

SPADE. What else?

EFFIE. Sergeant Polhaus called. He didn't leave any message.

SPADE. Get him for me.

EFFIE. And "G" called up.

SPADE. "G"?

EFFIE. G. That's what he said. When I told him you weren't in, he said, "When he comes in, would you tell him G, who got his message, phoned and will call again?"

SPADE. Thanks, darling. See if you can get Polhaus.

EFFIE. Will do. *(Before Effie can leave the room, Brigid enters.)*

BRIGID. There you are! Somebody has been in my apartment. They searched everywhere. *(Effie exits. As soon as she leaves, Brigid embraces Spade.)* I didn't know where you went. I was so afraid.

SPADE. Anything taken?

BRIGID. I don't think so. I don't know. I was afraid to stay long. *(Spade kisses her on the nose, then sits her down.)*

SPADE. I wonder if it could have been Cairo. He searched here earlier when he thought I had the bird.

THE MALTESE FALCON

BRIGID. I won't go back there.

SPADE. Then we'll have to find a new home for you, won't we? Wait just a minute. *(Spade exits his office. Lights out on office.)*

SCENE 17

Lights up on Bit area where Effie stands with a cup of coffee. Spade enters.

EFFIE. Polhaus isn't in. I left a message.

SPADE. Good. Does your woman's intuition still tell you she's a Madonna or something?

EFFIE. I still believe that no matter what kind of trouble she's gotten into, she's all right, if that's what you mean.

SPADE. That's what I mean. Are you strong enough for her to give her a lift?

EFFIE. How?

SPADE. Could you put her up for a few days? Her joint's been broken into. It'd be better if she wasn't by herself.

EFFIE. Is she really in danger, Sam?

SPADE. I think she is.

EFFIE. That would scare ma into a green hemorrhage. I'll have to tell her she's a surprise witness or something that you're keeping undercover until the last minute.

SPADE. You're a darling. You oughtn't be seen leaving here with her, so you go home now. Take a taxi but make sure you're not tailed. I'll send her to your place in a little while.

EFFIE. I'll be waiting for her. *(Blackout.)*

SCENE 18

When the lights come up, Spade is back in his office, seated at his desk. The phone rings and he answers it.

SPADE. Hello? Yes, this is Spade...*Who?* Mr. Gutman? I've been waiting to hear from you... Sure. The sooner the better. Twelve C. Right. *(No sooner does he hang up the phone than Iva bursts in rather melodramatically.)*

IVA. Oh Sam! Forgive me! *Forgive me!* *(She throws herself into his arms.)*

THE MALTESE FALCON

SPADE. (*Sourly.*) Hello, honey.

IVA. I sent those policemen to you. I was mad, crazy with jealousy. I phoned them if they went to your apartment right away, they might learn something about Miles' murder.

SPADE. What made you think that?

IVA. *I didn't!* But I was mad, and I wanted to hurt you!

SPADE. It made things damn awkward. But it's all right now. Only don't get any more crazy ideas like that.

IVA. I won't. I'm sorry, sorry, sorry.

SPADE. You ought to be. Where were you the night Miles was shot?

IVA. At home. (*Seeing the look on his face she insists.*) I was.

SPADE. No, but if that's your story, it's all right with me.

IVA. What makes you think I wasn't home?

SPADE. Nothing, except I know you weren't.

IVA. But I was, I was. (*Realizing what happened.*) Effie told you that. I saw her looking at my clothes and snooping around like she's Nancy Drew! Why do you believe things she tells you when you know she'd do anything to make trouble for me?

SPADE. You women. You'll have to trot along now, precious. I'm late for an appointment.

IVA. I'm not lying to you, Sam. (*She comes close to him so they are eye to eye. Spade looks hard at her.*)

SPADE. Like hell you're not.

IVA. You don't believe me? (*She comes closer.*)

SPADE. I don't believe you.

IVA. (*Coquettishly.*) And you won't forgive me for what I did?

SPADE. Sure I do. (*He kisses her.*) Now run along.

IVA. But--

SPADE. (*He turns her around and points her to the door.*) Beat it. (*Iva exits. Blackout.*)

SCENE 19

SPADE. (*V.O.*) A few minutes later, the mahogany door on suite 12-C at the Alexandria Hotel opened, and I found myself looking into a familiar face.

Lights up on Gutman's well-furnished apartment. It features a couch, a large chair and a drink cart. Wilmer stands by the door, eyeing Spade, saying nothing, while chewing on his toothpick. GUTMAN sits on a large

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chair by the drink cart. Gutman is a large man, well dressed and cultured. He projects power and menace.

SPADE. Hello. I'm here to see "G".

GUTMAN. Ah, Mr. Spade. Thank you for coming. I am Casper Gutman. *(Gutman nods to Wilmer who exits.)* Please have a seat, sir. May I pour you a drink?

SPADE. *(Sits on the couch.)* You may. *(Spade watches as Gutman pours drinks for them both.)*

GUTMAN. We begin well, sir. I distrust a man that says "when". If he's got to be careful not to drink too much, he's not to be trusted when he does. *(He hands over the GLASS to Spade, who nods in thanks.)* Well sir, here's to plain speaking and to clear understanding. *(Spade nods, and they both drink.)* You're a close-mouthed man?

SPADE. I like to talk.

GUTMAN. *Better and better!* I distrust a close-mouthed man. He generally picks the wrong time to talk and says the wrong things. I'm a man who likes talking to a man that likes to talk.

SPADE. Swell. Will we talk about the black bird?

GUTMAN. *(Laughs.)* Will we? We will! Let us talk about the black bird by all means, but first sir, answer me a question please: are you here as Miss O'Shaughnessy's representative?

SPADE. It depends.

GUTMAN. It depends on--?

SPADE. If I knew what it depends on, I could say yes or no.

GUTMAN. Maybe it depends on Joel Cairo?

SPADE. Maybe.

GUTMAN. You could say then that the question is which of them you'll represent? It will be one or the other?

SPADE. I didn't say that.

GUTMAN. Who else is there?

SPADE. *Me.*

GUTMAN. That's wonderful, sir. I do like a man that tells you right out he's looking out for himself. Don't we all?

SPADE. Uh-huh. Now let's talk about the black bird.

GUTMAN. Let's. Mr. Spade, have you any conception of how much money can be made out of that black bird?

SPADE. No.

GUTMAN. You mean you don't know what it is?

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SPADE. I know what it's supposed to look like. I know the value in life you people put on it. I don't know what it is.

GUTMAN. She didn't tell you?

SPADE. Miss O'Shaughnessy? No.

GUTMAN. And Cairo didn't either?

SPADE. Cairo offered me ten thousand dollars for it.

GUTMAN. *(Laughs scornfully)* Ten thousand dollars! *Not even pounds!* That's Cairo for you. What did you say to that?

SPADE. I said if I turned it over to him, I'd expect the ten thousand.

GUTMAN. Ah, yes, *if!* Nicely put sir. Do *they* know what the bird is? What is your impression, sir?

SPADE. Cairo didn't say he did and he didn't say he didn't. She said she didn't, but I took it for granted she was lying.

GUTMAN. *(To himself.)* Maybe they don't... and if they don't... *then I'm the only one in the whole sweet world who does!*

SPADE. Swell. When you've told me, there'll only be *two* of us who know.

GUTMAN. Mathematically correct sir, *but* I don't know for certain I'm going to tell you.

SPADE. Don't be a damned fool. *You know what it is. I know where it is.* That's why we're here.

GUTMAN. Well sir, *then where is it?* *(Spade does not reply.)* You see? I must tell you what *I* know, but you will not tell me what *you* know. That is hardly equitable, sir. I do not think that we can do business like that.

SPADE. *(Stands up angrily.)* *Think again and think fast!* You'll do your talking today or you're *through!* What are you wasting my time for? You and your lousy secret! If you want in you'll come in, and you'll do it *today.* *(Wilmer returns.)* And another thing. Keep that gunsel away from me while you're making up your mind. I'll kill him the first time he gets in my way. I won't even give him a chance. I'll kill him.

GUTMAN. Well sir, I must say you have a most violent temper.

SPADE. Think it over and think like hell. You've got until five-thirty. Then you're either in or out. *For keeps!* *(Spade flips his empty glass at Wilmer who catches it awkwardly. Spade rushes out. Gutman takes a sip of his drink calmly and thoughtfully. Blackout.)*

SCENE 20

SPADE. *(V.O.)* I got out of there before the fat man could see my hand trembling. I went back to the office where I found Effie waiting for me.

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Lights up on Spade's office. Effie rises from his desk when Spade comes in. She looks worried.

EFFIE. What happened?

SPADE. What happened *where*?

EFFIE. Why didn't O'Shaughnessy come?

SPADE. *She didn't get to your house?*

EFFIE. I waited and waited, but she didn't come. I couldn't get you on the phone, so I came here. Did you send her out in a taxi? (*Spade grunts and nods.*) Somebody must have seen her and followed her!

SPADE. Nobody followed her. Made sure of it before I put her in the cab. Then I rode a dozen blocks with her to be more sure.

EFFIE. So where is she?

SPADE. I don't know, but I'm going out and find her if I have to dig up sewers. Stay here until I'm back or you hear from me. (*Spade exits. Effie sighs and sits back in the chair. Blackout.*)

SCENE 21

SPADE. (*V.O.*) I tracked down her cab driver. He told me she had him drop her at the Ferry Building. I went there and noted three ships had come in that morning: the Silverado from San Pedro, La Paloma from Hong Kong and Daisy Gray from Seattle. There was no sign of O'Shaughnessy and nobody remembered seeing her. I was almost back to my office when *he* stepped out of the shadows.

Lights up on the Bit area. Spade comes in on one side, Wilmer enters from the other, his hands on guns in his overcoat pockets.

WILMER. Come on. He wants to see you.

SPADE. I didn't expect to see you until five-twenty-five. Hope I haven't kept you waiting, *sweetheart.* (*Spade yanks the toothpick out of Wilmer's mouth and tosses it away.*)

WILMER. You louse! Keep on riding me and you're gonna be picking iron out of your navel.

SPADE. (*Chuckles.*) The cheaper the crook, the gaudier the patter.

WILMER. Listen you-- (*Spade grabs him and they struggle in the darkness. They crash around for a moment. When Spade pushes Wilmer back into the light, Spade is holding both of Wilmer's guns.*)

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SPADE. Come on. This will put you in solid with your boss. *(Spade shoves him out of the light and they both exit.)*

SCENE 22

Lights up on Gutman's apartment. Gutman sits at the chair next to the liquor cart. Spade pushes Wilmer inside and then follows.

GUTMAN. Ah, come in sir! Thank you for coming.

SPADE. Here. *(Spade hands Wilmer's guns to Gutman, who frowns.)* You shouldn't let the lad run around with these. He'll get himself hurt.

GUTMAN. What's this?

SPADE. A crippled newsboy took them away from him, but I made him give them up.

GUTMAN. *(Laughs.)* By Gad, sir! You're a chap worth knowing! An amazing character! Please sit down. Wilmer, take these away. *(Gutman hands Wilmer the guns. Wilmer stares icily at Spade, then exits out the back door.)* Now sir, I hope you'll let me apologize.

SPADE. *(Sits.)* Never mind that. Let's talk about the black bird.

GUTMAN. All right, sir. Let's. What do you know about the order of the Knights of Rhodes? *(Gutman pours them both drinks, hands Spade his glass and sits.)*

SPADE. Not much--only what I can remember from history in school--Crusaders or something.

GUTMAN. Very good. Now you don't remember Suleiman the Magnificent chased them out of Rhodes in 1523?

SPADE. No.

GUTMAN. Well sir, he did and they settled in Crete. In 1530 they persuaded Emperor Charles the Fifth to give them Malta. The emperor had two conditions: that every year they pay him a tribute of one falcon in the acknowledgement that Malta was still under Spain and that if they ever left the island it would revert to Spain, understand? He was giving it to them, but not unless they occupied it, and they couldn't give or sell it to anybody else.

SPADE. I see.

GUTMAN. Have you any conception of the extreme, immeasurable wealth of the order at the time?

SPADE. As I remember, they were pretty well fixed.

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GUTMAN. They were rolling in wealth, sir. You have no idea. The holy wars to them were largely a matter of loot and plunder. Now to show their gratitude, the Knights hit upon the happy thought of sending Charles, for the first year's tribute, not an insignificant live bird, but a glorious golden falcon, incrustated from head to foot with the finest jewels.

SPADE. The emperor must have been pleased.

GUTMAN. The bird never reached Spain. They sent it in a galley commanded by a member of the order named Cormier. You know the pirate Barbarossa? He captured the Knight's galley and seized the bird. It was in Algiers for more than a hundred years before it was carried away by an English adventurer named Sir Frances Varney. It ended up in Sicily, in the possession of Victor Amadeus the second until he abdicated. Years later, it showed up in Paris. No one knew the value because the bird had been painted or enameled over. In that disguise, it kicked around Paris for 70 years, by private owners and dealers too stupid to see what it was under its black skin. Then in 1911, a Greek dealer named Charilaos Konstantinides found it in a curio shop. He discovered what it was and quickly acquired it. But he was in no hurry to convert it into money at once. Charilaos knew that a far higher price could be obtained for it once its authenticity was established beyond doubt. You begin to believe me a little?

SPADE. I haven't said I didn't.

GUTMAN. One year to the very day he acquired it--that was perhaps three months after he admitted his find to me--I picked up the Times in London and read that Charilaos' establishment had been burglarized and him murdered. I was in Paris the next day, but the bird was gone. That was 17 years ago. Well sir, it took me 17 years to locate the bird, but I did it. I traced it to Constantinople in the home of a Russian general-- Kemidov-- who didn't know a thing about it. It was nothing but a black enameled bird to him, but he refused to sell it to me. So, I sent some ah--*agents* to get it. Well sir, *they* got it and *I* haven't got it. But I'm *going* to get it. Your glass, sir?

SPADE. (*Spade hands over his glass which Gutman refills.*) Then the bird doesn't belong to any of you? But to a Russian named Kemidov?

GUTMAN. *Belong?* Well sir, you might say it belongs to the King of Spain, but I don't see how you can honestly grant anybody else clear title to it--except by right of possession.

SPADE. Then it is Miss O'Shaughnessy's now?

GUTMAN. No sir, except as my agent. There's no doubt she's got it?

SPADE. Not much.

THE MALTESE FALCON

GUTMAN. Where?

SPADE. Leave that to me.

GUTMAN. When?

SPADE. When I'm ready.

GUTMAN. Well, now sir, before we talk prices, answer me this: how soon can you--or how soon are you willing to produce the falcon?

SPADE. A couple of days.

GUTMAN. That is satisfactory. *(His back to Spade, Gutman puts a couple of knockout drops in Spade's glass before he gives it back to him. Gutman then raises his glass in a toast.)* Well sir, here's to a fair bargain and a profit large enough for both of us. *(They drink.)*

SPADE. What's your idea of a fair bargain?

GUTMAN. I have two proposals to make sir, and either is fair. I will give you twenty-five thousand dollars when you deliver me the falcon and another twenty-five thousand when I get to New York; or I will give you one quarter--twenty-five percent of what I realize on the falcon. Your choice. Either almost an immediate fifty thousand dollars or a vastly far greater sum within say, a few months.

SPADE. How much greater?

GUTMAN. What would you say sir, to half a million?

SPADE. So you think the dingus is worth two million?

GUTMAN. At a minimum.

SPADE. That's a lot of dough. And the maximum?

GUTMAN. The maximum? I refuse to guess. You'd think me crazy. There's no telling how high it could go, sir, and that's the one and the only truth about it. *(Spade begins feeling the mickey that was put in his drink. He stands but is wobbly.)*

SPADE. Damn you. *(Spade takes shaky, uncertain steps towards the door, every step a struggle.)*

GUTMAN. *Wilmer! (Wilmer reappears, his hand in his pocket on the gun. He stands between Spade and the door. Spade tries to throw a punch but Wilmer dodges it easily and trips the drugged detective. Spade struggles to get up. Wilmer kicks him. He does it again. Spade lets out a groan and collapses. Cairo enters from the back door and smirks. Blackout.)*

END OF ACT 1

***THE PLAY IS NOT OVER!! TO FIND OUT HOW IT ENDS--
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