

The following is excerpted from

“NOIR MAN”

A Three Character Comedy

By Ken Levine

A modern day Philip Marlowe tries to solve the biggest mystery of all -- the plot of "THE BIG SLEEP."

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# NOIR MAN

A Ten-Minute Comedy by  
Ken Levine

SYNOPSIS: A modern day Philip Marlowe tries to solve the biggest mystery of all -- the plot of  
"the Big Sleep."

## CHARACTERS

MARLOWE -- 20'-40's. Think: Humphrey Bogart

VIVIAN -- 20's-40's Think Lauren Bacall

TOUGH GUY -- Menacing

SET: Small apartment. Present day.

Noir Man

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INT. APARTMENT -- NIGHT

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KNOCK ON THE DOOR. LIGHTS UP as a sultry young woman in a evening dress, VIVIAN, answers the door. MARLOWE, a man in a trench coat with fedora stands there pointing a gun.

NOTE: The dialogue is delivered "noir style" a la "The Big Sleep." Think: Bogie & Bacall. Every line is an unspoken challenge. Although the play is set in the present all of the colors should be black, white, or shades of gray to give the illusion of a black and white movie.

(unfazed) Yes?

VIVIAN

Vivian Muldoon?

MARLOWE

That depends.

VIVIAN

On what?

MARLOWE

On who's asking.

VIVIAN

A guy with a gun.

MARLOWE

My friends call me... Viv.

VIVIAN

I'm not your friend.

MARLOWE

Then I guess I'll remain nameless.

VIVIAN

You're pretty mouthy for a skirt on the wrong side of a roscoe.

MARLOWE

VIVIAN

Spare me the balloon juice. If you wanted to shoot me you'd know who I was first.

He puts the gun in his trench coat pocket and ENTERS.

MARLOWE

Fair enough.

VIVIAN

(closing the door) Who are you?

MARLOWE

A guy who could use a drink and some answers.

VIVIAN

I've got Vodka, Gin, and "Algebra for Dummies."

MARLOWE

Gin. And not in a "Hello Kitty" glass. I know your type.

VIVIAN

And I know yours. Pretending to be a tough guy, a throw-back, a two-bit pistolero.

MARLOWE

No one calls Marlowe a two-bit pistolero.

VIVIAN

You call yourself Marlowe? Okay then, a cliché.

She pours him a drink.

MARLOWE

I'm losing patience, Miss... X.

VIVIAN

Oh for Crissakes, it's Vivian.

MARLOWE

There! Was that so hard?

She hands him the drink.

MARLOWE

To Lady Justice.

VIVIAN

To Lady Gaga.

They clink. He just sips and flinches a little. Clearly he's not a drinker.