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Raymond Chandler Farewell My Lovely (BBC Radio)



Synopsis

Fast-talking, trouble-seeking private eye Philip Marlowe is a different kind of detective: a moral man in an amoral world. California in the 1940s and 1950s is as beautiful as a ripe fruit and rotten to the core, and Marlowe must struggle to retain his integrity amidst the corruption he encounters daily. In *Farewell My Lovely*, Marlowe has a chance encounter with a not-so-gentle giant outside Florian's nightclub. Just released from prison, Moose Malloy is looking for his old flame, red-haired Velma Valento, who he last saw eight years ago. Before Marlowe can blink, Malloy has smashed up the club, broken the manager's neck, and headed out of the door. Marlowe knows this mess is none of his business, but he has a hunch that he can find Velma. He just has to hope that curiosity doesn't get him killed as well. . . Starring Toby Stephens, this fast-paced dramatization is full of wisecracks and colorful characters, and retains all the charm and humor of Chandler's stylish, suspenseful novel. 2 CDs. 1 hr 26 mins.

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Customer Reviews

Chandler is not only the best writer of hardboiled PI stories, he's one of the 20th century's top scribes, period. His full canon of novels and short stories is reprinted in trade paper featuring uniform covers in Black Lizard's signature style. A handsome set for a reasonable price. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Raymond Chandler is a master." --The New York Times "Chandler wrote as if pain hurt and life mattered." --The New Yorker "Chandler seems to have created the culminating American hero: wised up, hopeful, thoughtful, adventurous, sentimental, cynical and rebellious." --Robert B. Parker, The New York Times Book Review "Philip Marlowe remains the quintessential urban private eye." --Los Angeles Times "Nobody can write like Chandler on his home turf, not even Faulkner. . . . An original. . . . A great artist." --The Boston Book Review "Raymond Chandler was one of the finest prose writers of the twentieth century. . . . Age does not wither Chandler's prose. . . . He wrote like an angel." --Literary Review "[T]he prose rises to heights of unselfconscious eloquence, and we realize with a jolt of excitement that we are in the presence of not a mere action tale teller, but a stylist, a writer with a vision." --Joyce Carol Oates, The New York Review of Books "Chandler wrote like a slumming angel and invested the sun-blinded streets of Los Angeles with a romantic presence." --Ross Macdonald "Raymond Chandler is a star of the first magnitude." --Erle Stanley Gardner "Raymond Chandler invented a new way of talking about America, and America has never looked the same to us since." --Paul Auster "[Chandler] is the perfect novelist for our times. He takes us into a different world, a world that is like ours, but isn't. . . ."

--Carolyn See

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While finishing up on another case, Marlowe spots a big white guy go into a bar and gambling club for blacks. He's looking for a girl. As Marlowe tries to get away from the case, his next client hires him for a job that goes wrong. There's a connection between Moose, a stolen necklace, a nut house and a fortune teller. This one has it all. A maniac thug, drugs, guns, corruption and femme fatales including a wealthy blonde. Raymond Chandler brings L.A to life in this thriller about people looking for something, or trying to get rid of it. We're introduced to the character of Anne Riordan, a recurring character in Marlowe's mythos especially in the HBO tv series from the 80s. Marlowe is a white knight who is constantly getting his butt whooped through the streets of L.A by crooks, cons and cops and for what? Pocket change if he's lucky.

Although it is difficult to not hear Bogart's voice in Marlowe's, and that is not a bad thing, it is Raymond Chandler's voice that makes this book a treasure. Having read Chandler's and Hammett's books decades ago, I recently decided to revisit them in order. Much like Truman Capote's, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, the book, *Farewell My Lovely*, is at times, fairly unrecognizable from the any

of its celluloid counterparts. Also, not a bad thing, and this case a very good thing. The behind the scenes subplots and character studies are meaty and delicious. Rather than try and guess the outcome, I prefer to enjoy the ride, and like Hammett, Chandler never lets you down.

I wanted to read Chandler's *Farewell My Lovely* after I read that Chandler considered it his best book, even better than *The Big Sleep* and after reading both I agree with their author. It has everything fans of private detective novels look for: a tough, independent Philip Marlowe as its hero, two beautiful women (one benevolent, one highly dangerous) both hiding secrets, a baffling case (a client who hires Marlowe is murdered), a host of crooked people with possible connections to organized crime who collectively try to prevent Marlowe's discovering the truth even if it means killing him. Finally, Marlowe unravels the secrets, survives numerous scrapes with the bad people (on a lonely road, aboard an offshore gambling joint and in a shady hospital) and brings the action to a surprising conclusion..I don't know if Chandler introduced all of conventions of the genre, but they are in full display. Marlowe is the essential lower class detective cleaning up the messes of his socially superior, infinitely wealthier, but morally decadent clients. In the corrupt world of big city LA, he is a lone wolf who not only refuses to follow orders but also displays a quick, somewhat cynical wit. Handsome and strong he appeals to women, but will not be manipulated by them. No wonder Bogart played him in the movies. All in all it's a great read in a nostalgic, somewhat politically incorrect way.

Ah, the second in the Philip Marlowe adventures...This is a classic. Mr. Chandler proves his way not only as a mystery writer but as a writer in general. Chandler was the king of metaphors and similes (i.e. "a heart as big as a beer truck"), the story is told in a very relaxed almost stream of consciousness way that makes you feel very at ease with Marlowe the narrator and protagonist. Marlowe is hired by a very large, very mean tempered thug with a soft heart named Moose Malloy who just got out of jail to help find his sweetheart Velma. Meanwhile Marlowe is also hired to help pay a ransom, when things go wrong on the ransom case, Marlowe has investigates further and discovers a world of blackmail and murder which is also connected directly to Malloy's case. This is one of Chandler's more brilliant books. If you have seen either of the movie versions, do yourself a favor and forget them entirely...go read the book. It is much better and very different.

It's not hard to see why Chandler was so highly regarded. For me, it's not the plots of his novels that is so engrossing but the writing itself. He clearly paints an often dark picture in the mind's eye and

he does so with his own style. One page in and you know it's a Raymond Chandler novel. Marlowe is as gritty as in the first book of the series and as expected, he really can't trust a soul in this story. If you like gritty, hard-boiled stuff, this is for you. It lives up to the first and will have you hooked from the first line.

Love Raymond Chandler. Read and loved the Big Sleep, Maltese Falcon, the Long Goodbye, and some short stories. Just read what Chandler felt was his best, "Farewell, my lovely." Could barely get through it. Marlowe felt like a rudderless pawn, the (understandable for the period) racism was just too grotesque to overlook, plot was too convoluted, and (for the first time ever) I really struggled with the language. If I hadn't known it was Chandler, I would have thought it was a bad imitator. Still love Chandler and will read other of his works.

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