

The Private Eye

Drena Heizer





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THE PRIVATE EYE

by Drena Heizer

CAST

NARRATOR

SAM

LUCRETIA

STAGE POSITIONS: Sam at stage left. Lucretia to his right. These positions can be reversed, depending on which side offers the best route offstage for Lucretia.

PROPS: For SAM: Suspenders, white socks, a gaudy necktie and a cigar. These are necessary to the plot. Script lines with reference to the colors in the tie can be changed to match the actual tie. For LUCRETIA: Suggested are a flouncy blonde wig, a feather boa which she flings over her shoulder, and maybe some flashy jewelry. These are optional but do enhance the character's appearance.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

It is important that the tie SAM is wearing is not actually tied, but is simply looped once, because it has to be easy for LUCRETIA to remove as she goes offstage. SAM's 'annoying habit' must be done the same way every time. SNIFFS, COUGHS TWICE, AND MAKES A LOUD GROANING SOUND. Lucretia always reacts to this in a way that makes it clear she is greatly annoyed by it. At the end, when SAM is saying "Here she comes now," LUCRETIA does not actually appear. She remains offstage, so her 'entrance' is left to the imagination.

NARRATOR: When Sam Spade and Mike Hammer weren't around any more, we thought we had seen the last of the old-fashioned private detective. But we were wrong. There was one left. And here is his story...

SAM: I'm Sam Shovel, private eye. (*He sniffs, coughs twice, and makes a loud groaning sound.*) I used to have a crummy office and no clients. But that all changed the day that SHE walked in.

LUCRETIA: Hello, Bob.

SAM: I'm Sam.

LUCRETIA: Oh. I thought you were Bob.

SAM: No, I'm Sam.

LUCRETIA: Are you sure about that?

SAM: Reasonably sure, yes.

LUCRETIA: Then where is Bob?

SAM: Bob who?

LUCRETIA: Never mind. Are you a lawyer?

SAM: No, I'm a private detective. That's what the sign says on the door.

LUCRETIA: No it doesn't. The sign on the door says BROOM CLOSET.

SAM: Oh. Yeah. I forgot. Business hasn't been too good lately, and yesterday I had to move into this smaller place.

LUCRETIA: Well, somehow it suits you.

SAM: Thanks. But enough about me. What brings you here? *(He sniffs, coughs twice and groans.)*

LUCRETIA: *(with exaggerated drama)* My husband has disappeared and I fear he has met with foul play.

SAM: What makes you think so?

LUCRETIA: This morning I found a note from him pinned to his pillow.

SAM: What did the note say?

LUCRETIA: *(dramatically)* It said, "I fear I have met with foul play."

SAM: I see. *(sniffs, coughs twice and groans)* How did you know the note was actually from your husband?

LUCRETIA: It was signed “my husband Harold.”

SAM: Was it in his own handwriting?

LUCRETIA: No, it typewritten.

SAM: On a typewriter?

LUCRETIA: (*sarcastic*) No, on a CAN-OPENER! Of COURSE on a typewriter!

SAM: No need to get testy.

LUCRETIA: Sorry. I guess I’m a little upset.

SAM: That’s understandable. You must love your husband very much.

LUCRETIA: No I don’t! I can’t STAND the man! He’s so ANNOYING! He cracks his knuckles, he wears ugly neckties, and he’s always snapping those darned suspenders he wears! Drives me crazy!

(*SAM snaps his suspenders. LUCRETIA reacts with annoyance.*)

SAM: I see. (*sniffs, coughs twice and groans*) But you married him, so you must have loved him once.

LUCRETIA: Don’t be ridiculous. I married him for his money.

SAM: Oh.

LUCRETIA: Why do you always do that?

SAM: Do what?

LUCRETIA: This. (*She sniffs, coughs twice and groans*)

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