

The Role I Liked Best . . .



by **DICK POWELL**

THE role of Philip Marlowe in *Murder, My Sweet* is my most pleasant memory because it ended my ten-year effort to escape musicals. Eventually I turned down so many musicals that I became known as the bad boy of the Warner lot. When the Warner contract ended, Paramount offered to give me the kind of parts I sought, but after several pictures with them, I negotiated my release when I asked for the part of the murderer in *Double Indemnity* and the executives seemed to think I'd lost my senses. The struggle ended when I asked the late Charles Koerner at RKO to give me a solid, dramatic, preferably tough-guy characterization, and he sympathetically introduced me to the fascinating world of Raymond Chandler's detective stories.

My pleasure was enhanced by the fact that Producer Adrian

Scott and Director Edward Dmytryk treated me as though I were as important to the business setup as they were, consulting me in the casting, in polishing the script and, later, cutting the picture. I was lucky that we were able to get supporting people of the caliber of Claire Trevor, Anne Shirley and, for the hard-to-cast role of Moose Malloy, Mike Mazurki.

The high point of my enjoyment was the scene where Marlowe comes to the doctor's office after being slugged, with Ralf Harold competently portraying Doctor Sonderborg. That was the first chance I had had to play anything so dramatic.

I shall always be grateful to Raymond Chandler for writing that original story. Offers for hard-boiled roles poured in after the picture was released, and a new career was opened for me.

Dick Powell, "The Role I Liked Best," Saturday Evening Post, October 21, 1946.
Courtesy Saturday Evening Post.