The Maltese Falcoln Essay, Research Paper

The Maltese Falcon starts out with Sam Spade, a private detective in San Francisco in the late nineteen twenties, sitting at his desk in his office when a Miss Wonderly came in. She said she was from New York looking for her sister who possibly got kid napped and who is probably in the San Francisco area. Miss Wonderly said she met a man named Thursby at a parcel office who suppostedly had her sister. While Miss Wonderly was telling the story, Spade s partner Miles Archer came in. Miss Wonderly said she had a meeting the man that night and that she wanted one of them to tail him afterwards to fine her sister. Spade asked if she could describe the man, and she did, a little too well Spade thought. Miss Wonderly offered two hundred dollars for the job and Archer quickly grabbed a hundred and said he would do it. After Miss Wonderly left, Spade told Archer to watch his back.

That night, while Spade was sleeping, he received a phone call. It was the police telling him that Archer was murdered. Spade got up, made and lit a cigarette, and went to the scene.

Spade got there and got the facts. Archer was found in an alley, probably shot at close range, with a British-made Webley revolver. Spade observed how Archer s gun was in his holster and that his jacket was still buttoned. Spade phoned his secretary, Effie, and asked her to call Iva, his partner’s wife, to break the bad news. Then he returned to his apartment.

Spade sat awake drinking and smoking and thinking about his partners murder when the police knocked on his door. The cops informed Spade that Thursby had been shot. The cops wanted to milk Spade for information on this job Archer was doing and who it was for. Spade gave the police no information, and the police left irritated.

The next morning Iva was in the office waiting for Spade. When Spade came in, Iva jumped to him and started kissing him. Spade told her that it wasn t a good idea for them too to be seen together because it would make them suspects. Iva asked if he killed Archer and Spade replied, with a laugh, no.

When Iva left, Spade took a taxi to where Miss Wonderly was staying. She had left but left a forwarding address. Spade went to the new address and found Miss Wonderly. She confessed that her real name was Brigid O’Shaughnessy. Spade send he didn t believe anything she had told him. He asked for the facts. Brigid would only tell him that her and Thursby were partners in on something she couldn t reveal and that she feared he would portray her. She also said that Thursby was carrying a British-made Webley that night.

When Spade returned to his office, a gangster, Joel Cairo, was waiting to ask about the connection between the two murders. He confessed his interest was more than mere curiosity; it seemed that Cairo was searching for a missing black metallic falcon and that, in some way, Thursby had been connected with the falcon’s disappearance. Cairo was prepared to pav five thousand dollars for the statuette’s return. Spade told him that when lie could get his hands on the bird, Cairo would be contacted.

That evening, as Spade left his apartment to meet Brigid, he noticed a young punk following him. Spade quickly lost the tail and went to Brigid’s hotel. Brigid became visibly upset on hearing of Cairo and the money he had offered, she believed that Spade intended to double-cross her, and before she would tell him anything more than what lie already knew, she would have to speak with Cairo herself. They decided to meet with the two-bit thug later that night at Spade s apartment.

While they were meeting with Cairo, the police called again. Spade was about to get rid of them when they suddenly heard Cairo yell for help from Spade’s apartment. When the cops rushed in and found Cairo holding a gun on Brigid, they naturally demanded to know what was going on. Spade offered them a contrived story about this all being a put-on to make them look foolish. The cops reluctantly left, obviously not falling for Spade’s explanation.

Early the next morning, Spade received a visit from a Mr. Gutman. He explained that he had hired Thursby and Brigid to uptain the Falcon from Constantinople and bring it to him. They got greedy and decided to keep it for themselves. Spade demanded some information on whats so special about this Falcon. Gutman refused and Spade left. Later, the punk, Wilber, who was employed by Gutman came to get Spade and bring him back. Gutman agreed to let him in on the information. After the story, Spade passed out form a drug that Gutman had put in his drink and was left with a kick in the face.

Spade went to look for Brigid, but she was missing. He had found a clue of a boat docking that day and suspected she would be there. When he got there the crew said they, The captain, Brigid, Cairo, Gutman, and Wilber, had left together.

Later, as Detective Spade related these fact, to Effie, a huge man barged into his office, held a package out to Sam, and keeled over, dead. Sam opened the package. The Maltese Falcon was inside. He guessed that the dead man was the captain. He quickly hid the statue away.

That night as Spade went to his apartment, Brigid was there by the door to meet him. Inside waited Gutman, Cairo and the Wilber. They demanded the falcon. Spade claimed that they would have to wait until morning before he could get to the bird and that the ever more valuable item would now cost them ten thousand dollars.

As the night wore on, Spade suggested that Gutman turn over Wilber to the cops. Gutman hesitated at first, but Spade warned he would not turn over the falcon unless they could produce a “fall guy.” Gutman finally consented to make Wilber the fall guy , and before the Wilber could retaliate, Sam took his guns him and knocked him cold.

Morning came, and Spade, after a brief absence, finally brought out the prized falcon, collecting from Gutman ten one-thousand dollar bills. To make sure the falcon was genuine, Gutman scratched away some of the enamel; it proved to be a lead fake. Gutman hurriedly reclaimed the money he had brought and, followed by the other men, ran out of the apartment.

Spade called the cops to tell them to arrest the three men. Spade then turned to Brigid and told her he was going to turn her in for the murder of Archer. Brigid tried to deny, then confessed, but tried to plead with Spade to change his mind. Spade would not go against his morals and refused. He had finally nabbed his partners killer.

In Chapter seven, Spade took Brigid to his apartment to wait for Mr. Cairo. While waiting, Spade decided to tell Brigid a story of a case he did some time back. It was about a man who was almost killed by a falling beam form a building. He decided from that that he did not like the direction his life was going. He was a wealthy man with a family and he felt that he could leave everything right then, and his family would be well provided for with his current wealth, so he left. He traveled around for a while before he settled in a suburb and ended up marrying again and having a child.

His First wife was the one who hired Spade because someone told her that they saw her husband, after he was one for a couple of years. Spade found him and learned the story. Brigid wasn t even listening.

I feel this story is referring to the way the characters are. That they are what they are and they won t change. The man left to live his life in a different direction and ended up living a similar one.

I think that Spade is referring that Brigid is a liar and a sneek and she will never change and that she is not trust worthy. No matter what she says and what she wants.