




SHANNON
SCOTT
CLUTE · RICHARD L.
EDWARDS

THE MALTESE

Film Noir and Potential Criticism

TOUCH OF EVIL



If You are
mean enough
To Steal from the BLIND
Help Yourself

The Maltese Touch of Evil



Shannon Scott Clute
and Richard L. Edwards

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THE
MALTESE
TOUCH

OF *Film Noir and
Potential Criticism*

EVIL

The word "EVIL" is rendered in a large, bold, black serif font. Below the letters, there are several long, soft, grey shadows that cast diagonally downwards and to the right, creating a sense of depth and dramatic lighting.

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For our wives, Cathie and Sybil;
without you neither this nor any
other project would come to fruition.

And for our daughters, Tallulah, Vivienne, and Eve;
may you be more than a little hard-boiled.

Doit-on s'en tenir aux recettes connues et refuser obstinément d'imaginer de nouvelles formules? (Must one adhere to known quantities and obstinately refuse to imagine new formulas?)—François Le Lionnais, “LA LIPO (Le premier Manifeste)”

La lecture potentielle a le charme de faire ressortir la duplicité des textes, qu'ils soient oulipiens ou non. (*Potential reading* has the charm of making manifest the duplicity of texts, be they oulipian or not.)—Harry Mathews, “L'algorithme de Mathews” (emphasis ours)

On constraint: having to work within limits produces *formal* solutions with their own elegance and beauty. Wouldn't it be a bit philistine to point to the constraints of the sonnet as making it unlikely that the poet could produce satisfying work, having to keep to fourteen lines and a rhyme scheme? In media studies the outstanding example of formalist rehabilitation of elaborately constrained work has been our discovery of how very, very beautiful, whatever else they may be, the products of classic Hollywood studio system were.—John O. Thompson, “Dialogues of the Living Dead”

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