

## RICHARD DIAMOND, PRIVATE DETECTIVE

In 1945, Dick Powell portrayed Phillip Marlowe in the movie "Murder My Sweet" based on Raymond Chandler's novel "Farewell My Lovely." This was a radical departure in character for Mr. Powell from a Hollywood song and dance man to a hard-boiled detective. On June 11, 1945, the LUX RADIO THEATER brought "Murder My Sweet" to radio, again with Dick Powell in the lead. These two performances prompted his selection for the part of Richard Rogue, in ROGUE'S GALLERY after his role for LUX and Richard Diamond came four years later.

RICHARD DIAMOND, PRIVATE DETECTIVE came to NBC in 1949. Diamond was a slick, sophisticated detective, with a sharp tongue for folks who needed it. Diamond enjoyed the detective life, but not as much as entertaining his girl, Helen Asher. After each show, he would croon a number to his Park Avenue sweetheart. Mr. Powell, a former song and dance man, was perfect for the role. He added an extra dimension to the 40's hokey private eye drama.

Diamond was a rough gumshoe that would often get knocked on the head with a revolver butt or other items. His counterpart on the police force was Lt Levinson who often accepted Diamond's help reluctantly. Levinson would claim to get stomach trouble whenever Diamond would call him and would take bicarbonate to settle his aching stomach. Although they always seem at odds with each other, Diamond and Levinson were best friends.

The plot theme remained fairly constant throughout the entire run of the show, Diamond getting beat up and solving a tough murder case with the support of the police department. Remarkably, for all the gun fights, Diamond never got shot. And for all his bravado, he had a serious case of vertigo.

Helen Asher was portrayed by Virginia Gregg, who also played the part of Brooksie on "Let George Do It" and Betty Lewis on "Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar". Blake Edwards wrote the early shows and also directed a few. Music was composed by David Baskerville and later by Frank Wirth.

In January of 1951, the series moved to ABC under the full sponsorship of Camel cigarettes. Then in May of 1953, the series moved to CBS but all shows were repeats from the 1950-51 Rexall sponsored season on NBC.

Richard Diamond was one of the radio shows which successfully moved to television with David Janssen, later of the Fugitive fame, in the Title role of Richard Diamond. The Opening scene of the television show often featured the long lovely legs of Mary Tyler Moore, who went on to fame in the Dick Van Dyke Show and The Mary Tyler Moore Show. Mary was replaced on the Richard Diamond show when it became known that she owned the mystery legs.

Information for this audio clip came from Ed Sehlhorst and your Audio Series Descriptions Moderator ( Roger Hohenbrink).

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