

# Neon Nude

By  
Kay Rhoads

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## **SYNOPSIS**

A small Iowa town deals with the weighty issue of whether a stone statue violates the morals ordinance. Friendships are tried, prejudice revealed, and self-interest is (dare it be said) exposed, in this fast-moving comedy.

Chorlis Deets, longtime resident of Lamb's Corner, has a new lawn ornament in honor of his departed wife...a stone statue of Aphrodite...painted pink and "situated" on a swing in his front yard.

An emergency meeting of the city council is called to debate the issue and decide whether or not to forcibly remove the statue. As the meeting courses through the afternoon everyone has their say from the dentist to the grocer to the clergy to the neighbor on the corner. The problem must be resolved quickly because on the heels of Aphrodite, on back order from Belgium, Chorlis awaits the arrival of a stone naked Adonis. "I mean to have me a 'Garden of Eden' right here in Lamb's Corner 'cause I like the looks of it." But before the issue is settled word comes that Aphrodite has been stolen!

*(A larger cast version of this play is available entitled "The Stone Naked Woman.")*

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*4 m, 4 w*

**GLORY MURPHY:** City councilwoman, about 60.

**CHORLIS DEETS:** Owner of the statue, about 60.

**GOLDIE GLASCOCK:** Owner of a beauty salon, about 50.

**BLANCHE PANCAKE:** Citizen of Lamb's Corner, about 60.

**ALVIN CRUCKSHANK:** Mayor. Theda's husband, 50+.

**THEDA CRUCKSHANK:** Council secretary, Alvin's wife, 50+.

**DENZIL DENSWORTH:** Dentist. City councilman, 50+

**REV. ANGEL:** Minister, 40 or older.

**SET**

A city council setting with a long office table and chairs. Several large framed pictures of former mayors hang on the wall.

**Neon Nude**  
**Scene 1**

*(AT RISE GLORY enters the council room pushing an old bicycle, jeans rolled up on her right leg. She leans the bike against the wall under the last picture downstage. She looks at the picture and then straightens it.)*

**GLORY:** Straighten up, Daniel Murphy, and get ready 'cause you are going to love this one. Special meeting of the city council set for three o'clock and I'm going to need your help. Remember the root beer scandal? It's Chorlis again, my love, and this one shows every sign it'll surpass the brown bottle bill you worked out four years ago, oh, *and* the ditch weed debacle you left for me to handle three years ago. Anyway, I wanted to get here early, before the crowd beats its way in here, and talk to you. You always loved my poetry. How do you like this one? I call it, "The Jig Is Up." *(SHE points upward and clears her throat.)* I know you're laughing wherever you are. Dancing a jig on some faraway star. Looking down...uh...let's see...looking down...from yonder afar...no...looking down from...some heavenly bar.

*(CHORLIS enters singing "Danny Boy." HE'S carrying a BB gun and a bottle in a brown paper sack.)*

**CHORLIS:** Glory, I have me a drink ever livin' day whether it be a day to mourn or a day to celebrate, all in memory of dear old Dan Murphy. *(HE tips the sack.)* Top o' the mornin', Dan.

**GLORY:** Chorlis! You can't bring liquor into the chambers. By the way, it's well past noon.

**CHORLIS:** Oops! Let's try that again. Here's to you, Daniel Murphy, the merriest Irishman, and the onliest ever to be the mayor of Lamb's Corner. Top o' the afternoon. *(HE starts to lift the gun to his mouth.)* Whoops! *(HE laughs and turns to Glory.)* Want a slug?

**GLORY:** There's a Lamb's Corner city ordinance against that you know. To say nothing about the gun.

**CHORLIS:** Yup! Seen her, Glory?

**GLORY:** What kind of question is that? Everyone in town's seen her.

**CHORLIS:** Ain't she beautiful? She's a foreigner. All the way from Belgium.

*(HE sits and puts the gun on the table, takes off his hat and places it on the floor in front of him, takes out a deck of cards and begins to pitch them at the hat.)*

**GLORY:** Chorlis, the town's in an uproar.

**CHORLIS:** She's meant to be appreciated.

**GLORY:** I don't think folks are driving past your house to appreciate her.

**CHORLIS:** Worldwide reputation.

**GLORY:** How'd you get her here?

**CHORLIS:** Ship.... Ordered me another one.

**GLORY:** Another Aphrodite. Why would you...

**CHORLIS:** One comin's a man.

**GLORY:** Chorlis, he's not...

**CHORLIS:** Name's Adonis.

**GLORY:** Oh oh.

**CHORLIS:** Human form's a beautiful thing.

**GLORY:** You think that old tree will take the two of them?

**CHORLIS:** Nope. *(HE shows GLORY the Queen of Hearts.)* Queen! *(HE flips it toward the hat.)* He's what's called a standing nude. Think I'll have him stand back a her so's it'll be like he's pushin' her on the swing. King! *(HE waves the King of Hearts.)* Think I'll like that.

**GLORY:** Look, Chorlis, I know you miss your Ellie and...

**CHORLIS:** Did you get you a close look at her? She's a bit grainy...but...well she's Belgian granite, that's why. They had the marble...whoeeee...a marble woman is a precious thing...but she's still real curvaceous.

**GLORY:** She must weigh a ton.

**CHORLIS:** Close to. She's a solid fifteen hundred pounds...give or take. Not a chip on her or I guess off her.

**GLORY:** How'd you get her on the swing?

**CHORLIS:** Had me some help.

**GLORY:** Webb Pancake? You got Webb Pancake involved in this? Blanche'll have his hide. By the by, I thought you were sitting in your yard guarding your Aphrodite.

**CHORLIS:** Harrison's guardin' her. Good ol' Harrison. Ain't the dog he once was. *(HE begins to pitch the cards again.)* Don't mean he don't wanna be though.

*(GLORY moves to the table and sits. WOMEN arguing can be heard.)*

**CHORLIS:** *(HE stops pitching the cards.)* Oh Lord, it's her. She'll lay siege. Hold 'er off.

*(HE jumps up and heads toward the door marked Mayor, turns suddenly, comes back and scoops up the hat and cards and exits the room. BLANCHE and GOLDIE burst through the other door, BLANCHE in the lead with GOLDIE behind, waving a pair of sheers.)*

**GOLDIE:** Would you come back here? I'm not done with you yet. For heaven's sake, Blanche.

**BLANCHE:** *(SHE turns and faces Goldie with her hands out in front of her to fend her off.)* I'll not have some... some... supporter of a you know what, a blasphemmer, touch my hair.

**GLORY:** Ahhhh...hello.

**GOLDIE:** It's going to frizz. *(SHE continues to approach slowly.)*

**BLANCHE:** Then you can call it art. *(BLANCHE starts to back up slowly with her hands on her curlers.)*

**GOLDIE:** Alright. Alright. But a hair stylist is an artist. *(SHE stops and puts the shears on the table and holds her hands out.)*

**BLANCHE:** Goldie, you went to beauty school. You did not go to art school.

## **End of Freeview**

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