

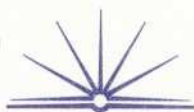
television script

2) text used: The Real Inspector Hound.
The death of Higgs, Moon & Birdboot.

The scene is a dimly lit interrogation room with a single naked light bulb overhead. The scant light casts shadows across the faces of those present. The atmosphere is dark. The investigator smokes a cigarette & stares intently at the accused.

~~Investigator: For the purpose of the tape, this~~
~~reference is between investigator and~~
~~the suspect, who goes by the name of~~
~~Mr. Birdboot. It is in relation to the murder at~~
~~Maldon manner of a mister Simon Gascoigne,~~
~~at Maldon, as yet, unnamed~~
~~and Mr. Birdboot & Mr. Higgs.~~

~~Mr. Birdboot: It wasn't me. I'm innocent, I tell~~
~~you.~~



Investigator: ~~This~~ For the purpose of the tape, this interview is between inspector Monroe and Mr Puckeridge regarding the murders of three critics, Mr Higgs, Mr Moon and Mr Birdboot.

Mr Puckeridge, do you admit to the charges of ~~murder~~ three counts of murder?

Puckeridge: No. I do not. It was a play. I was merely acting. No one was actually murdered.

Inspector: I beg to differ Mr Puckeridge. And so do the three corpses ~~at~~ in the morgue! We have a theatre full of witnesses; including the actors of the play you claim to have been participating in. They will testify to the fact that three men were in fact murdered, ~~at~~ at least two of them by you.

There is a few beats of silence in which Puckeridge stares blankly at the Inspector. His expression gives away nothing.

Inspector: All right, Mr Puckeridge. Let's try this a different way. What is your occupation?

Puckeridge: I am a critic.

Inspector: Get a lot of work?

Puckeridge: Not nearly as much as I should.

Inspector: And why is that?

Puckeridge: (bitter look crosses his face)
Unfortunately I am ~~not~~ merely a third string critic, called in to take the place of others who are unable to



perform their duties for various reasons.

Inspector: I see. ~~And which critics are above you?~~ And which critics are above you? Which critics do you fill in for?

Puckeridge: (even more bitter) ~~And~~ Miggs and Brudboot were the premier critics, and Moon was a second string.

Inspector: I noticed your use of past tense in answering that question. Yes, Miggs, Brudboot and Moon were above you in the hierarchy of critics. But they are not anymore, are they? (his voice increases in volume as he continues) Are they?

Puckeridge: (face and voice return to neutral) No. I suppose they are not.



Inspector: Because you killed them, isn't that right Mr Puckeridge? (shouting)

Puckeridge remains silent & without expression

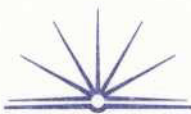
Inspector: Come now Mr Puckeridge. Didn't it make you angry that a man of your obvious ~~literary~~ brilliance was considered third string? (coaxing.) ~~That a man such as~~

~~That~~ That a man such as Birdboot, more concerned with the "talents" of the female actors than with the literary qualities of the plays, was premier critic?

Puckeridge: (quietly) Yes.

Inspector: what was that?

Puckeridge: (louder & more forceful) ~~Yes~~ Yes!



It made me angry. I worked my entire life to be on top. And I was good. Damn good. But there was always someone standing in the way. Men who call themselves critics but would rather moan about their own affairs than review ~~and~~ criticise literary works. (a look of contempt.)

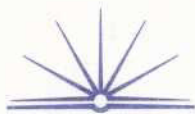
Inspector: So you had to get rid of them

Puckeridge: Yes. $\frac{1}{2}$

Inspector: To satisfy your own ambition?

Puckeridge: Not only that, but to rid the world of second rate critics who allow emotion & lust to influence their reviews. It made me sick.

Inspector: What prompted you to attempt



Such an elaborate act of subterfuge.

Puckeridge: It almost seemed poetic. Killing the critics with the very thing they ~~thought~~ considered their livelihood. What would be more appropriate than a critic killed in a play?

Inspector: How did you lure them into your ~~act of subterfuge~~ well laid trap?

Puckeridge: Simple. I used their hearts desire. It was an ~~simple~~ elementary deduction that Birdboot would chase the very lovely actor portraying Cynthia onto the stage. ~~And Moon's own~~ ~~desire for greatness~~ After that, his demise was simple to accomplish.

Inspector: What made you think you'd get away with it?



Puckeridge: (Thoughtful pause.) I assumed that Moon's own, very vocal, aspirations for greatness, would ~~serve as~~ paint him as the most likely suspect, thereby clearing me of all blame. I hadn't counted on him recognising me & muttering my name before his death. It was his implications that caused suspicion to be placed on me. Had it not been for his untimely declaration, I am certain I would have gotten away with it.
(self satisfied smirk)

Inspector: You cunning bastard
(expression of awe)

lights fade out to darkness with the confession & subsequent revelation.