

THE CONCEPTUALIST

A Short Play (30min.) By Dave Patchett.

Dark grey and comic, the play takes place, from start to finish, in an Artists Studio. It deals with the direction of Modern Art and a society that rewards headline-makers with fame and fortune.

Cast

David Enthusiastic, well meaning, a good clown, but a clown.

Jo Davids girlfriend, would like to be supportive of him, but she's far too sensible, with corrective tendencies.

Trevor Pragmatic and shrewd.

Id The Conceptualist. Clever, manipulative, a bit sinister and a bit insane.

Detective House Male bad cop. Blundering and old fashioned.

Detective Whitson Female good cop. Has read Jung.

ACT ONE

IT'S MONDAY MORNING AND THE THREE ARTISTS-FRIENDS ARE  
SETTLING DOWN TO WORK. CHAIRS CREAK AND SQUEAK INTO  
POSITION. MUSIC (ERIC SATIE 'GNOMPEDIE') IS PLAYING IN THE  
BACKGROUND.

Jo So, it's official then, we've lost Spencer?

David Yes. He told me that he'd felt imprisoned here. That the 40cm. Rule  
was killing him.

Jo He wanted to paint bigger?

Trevor Not quite Jo. He wanted to feel that he could paint bigger, if he  
wanted to. Perhaps the 40cm. Rule is too arbitrary.

Jo It's the only rule we've got, Trevor.

Trevor Maybe we could have gone up to 50cm.

David That would have been pussyfooting around. Think about it, Trevor.  
A 50cm. square picture, is not small, it's on the small side of  
medium, but it's not small. We discussed this at the Inaugural  
Meeting. The line has to be drawn somewhere. The decision to  
disapline ourselves within small was taken to force ourselves to  
be precious about our work. That's why we're called The Precious  
School Of Art. We are swimming against against the tide. We are  
the real revolutionaries. We are/ INTERUPPTION

Jo That's enough David. No need to quote the whole Precious Manifesto,  
we helped invent it. Remember.

David Sorry.

Trevor Sorry Jo. I didn't mean to set him off.

A FEW SECONDS SILENCE.

Jo Don't start sulking David. Of course you're right, we shouldn't bend our one rule. Spencer left because he wasn't one of us. If he was one of us he wouldn't have left. Full stop.

SHORT SILENCE

Jo There is room here for four though. And it makes the rent cheaper. We must advertise the vacancy.

David Already done and dusted. And, we already have a customer.

Jo How come?

David Spencer quit on Friday evening. I put the studio space out on the Internet on Saturday. And I think I've found a suitable applicant.

Jo Well done David dear. When do we all get the chance to meet and interview the new artist?

David I've already done it. In The Scull And Crossbones on Sunday.

Trevor We are supposed to be a Group. To do things together.

Jo Turn off the music Trevor. We need to discuss this properly.

THE MUSIC IS TURNED OFF.

You really are an idiot David. Every time we pull you up about some act of stupidity, we soon forgive you, because we know that you mean well. And then you go and do something stupid again. This is the endless pattern. 'The harmony of The Group is sacrasanct' That's a quote from you David. and we accepted it into our Precious Manifesto.

Trevor And now, behind our backs, you've put that 'Harmony' at risk.

David Don't you two think that you might be prejudging things somewhat. You elected me as the leader of the Precious School. Surely that entitles me to take certain initiatives?

Trevor There were four of us. Three of us didn't want the job. You weren't elected. You were the only option.

Jo I know you David. I'll bet your interview with--- What's the name of this other person anyway?

David Id.

Jo Id! That says it all. With a name like that, he's bound to be a self obsessed megalamaniac fruitcake. So, at the interview, what did you find out about him, if anything?

David He has money. He paid his three months rent in advance.

Jo Brilliant! I can see it all! You took his money, said 'Yes' and then bought him a pint and told him all about yourself. Great interviewing technique!

David Give me some credit Jo. Before I took his cash, I told him about our Manifesto and the 40cm. Rule.

Trevor What did he say about that? Did you find out what he believes in? Did you see his portfolio?

David He accepted the Rule.

Jo In other words no. In other words we are about to accept a disruptive stranger into our midst. In an interview situation, you did all of the talking and found out next to nothing about the interviewee. David, you're hopeless.

Trevor How do we get out of this Jo?

David We're not necessarily in anything.  
DAVIDS COMMENT IS IGNORED

Jo We do the interview again. When this Id turns up, you and me will talk to him, draw him out. And you, David, will stay out of it. If Id doesn't measure up, we say sorry, give him his money back, and perhaps, after a whipround, give him a bit extra as compensation.

Trevor Sounds sensible. I'll go along with that.

David OK. OK. I'll introduce him and then disappear into the background.

Trevor So, when are we going to meet this Id fellow?

David 10am. This morning. Let's see.

LOOKING AT HIS WATCH

About --- now.

THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR

David I'll go. That's probably him.

DOOR OPENS. FAINT TRAFFIC NOISES. DOOR CLOSES.

David Jo and Trevor, this is Id.

Jo Hi.

Trevor Hi.

David Welcome to the Precious Studio.

DAVID WALKS BACK TO HIS EASEL WHILE ID MOVES TO THE CENTRE OF THE STUDIO AND SITS DOWN ON AN AVAILABLE CHAIR.

Trevor Please. Tell us about yourself.

Id Where to start. College dropout. army dropout. Menial work since. Assistant Pharmacist. Mortuary Attendant. I've just done two years as a Deboner in Richmonds Pie Factory./ INTERUPTION

Jo Mortuary Attendant. Ugh!

Id

It's not so bad. In all of these jobs I've learnt some very useful skills. Now I am an Artist. I've always planned to be an Artist. A famous Artist, a known face, an illuminated name.

Jo

Talking of which, Id, that's unusual. How did you come by such a strange name?

Id

In the normal way. My Surname is Self. My parents named me Id. I suppose they thought that that was clever.

Trevor

As an Artist, what do you believe in?

Id

Is this another interview?

Trevor

Sort of. This studio is a group thing. For creative work we need an harmonious atmosphere, as important for you as it is for us.

Id

I'm a Conceptualist. I believe in The Big Idea. The Idea that dwarfs all the ideas that have passed before. The Idea that turns Duchamp into bleach, Monet into pond life and Pollock into a drip. An Idea so Big that it comes out of the other side of Bigness into the small.

Jo

I was about to ask, and your word-play makes no difference, if you are so besotted by bigness, why join a small group that insists on small scale work?

Id

I'm talking about a Big Idea. Do your small canvasses have to have small concepts?

Jo

Of course not.

Id

Well then. I want to represent my Big Idea in small two dimensional images. The smallness of the image, contrasts with, and therefore enlarges, the bigness of the idea.

Trevor

So you would intend to be painting here, with us, and within our rules?

Id I have every intention of fitting in with the two dimensional ideals of The Precious School Of Art.

Trevor Why haven't you brought any materials with you?

Id For now my materials are in my head. The Studio itself. Your paints and equipment. You yourselves, three fine Artists. Your Manifesto. All these things are in my head. All these things can be artists materials.

DAVID CAN'T RESIST ANY LONGER

David What about Sports and Leisure Activities? Trevor here, plays a decent game of tennis.

Id Shooting.

Jo Not guns I hope?

Id Mainly Archery.

SHORT SILENCE

Trevor What about your portfolio? We would all like to see your work.

Id I've filled countless sketchbooks with doodles and I've learnt how to use a camera. But I would never exhibit anything I've done so far, not even to you three. Everything I've done so far has been, mere practice. When I execute The Big Idea that's when I will begin to work towards The Grand Exhibitions. Even then, the small two dimensional images that I produce will be a pale reflection of The Big Idea Event. The Event that will both shock and captivate The Art World.

LONGER (EMBARRASSED-STUNNED) SILENCE.

Id I am going now.

Trevor Where? Why?

Id To get some materials.

Trevor But you just said that they are all here, and in your head.

Id For now. I said 'For now' These are changing times. My Idea is fully formed. I am ready. It is determined. I'll be back shortly.

WE CAN HEAR ID WALK TO THE EXIT DOOR. TURN THE HANDLE AND OPEN IT. FAINT TRAFFIC SOUNDS. HIS CLOSING REMARKS HAVE TO BE DELIVERED QUITE LOUDLY.

Id Don't worry about a thing. I am about to immortalise your precious little School Of Art.

THE DOOR IS SHUT FIRMLY.

David A very interesting character. Ambitious too. Let's admit it, we need some new blood. I think that we should give him a place.

Jo ~~David love, please get back to your painting, while I confer with someone from Planet Earth.~~

Trevor Every answer begged another question. I found that the second answer down the same line was heading somewhere strange, if not sinister. I never asked the third question. I was scared to.

Jo That part about shooting, implying different kinds of shooting. And all that about the big shocking event. Then, the list of unsavoury employments, deboning, digging graves ecetera. Those parting words 'Your precious little School Of Art' It was full of arrogant contempt. He gives me the creeps.

Trevor What seals it for me is his megalomaniacal Big Idea. His obsession with fame. That's the opposite of what we are about. Don't get me wrong, if fame and fortune came to visit, we'd let them in. But if we they don't, we'd be content to carry on being unpretentious Artists. Working small, is about humility too. All my instincts tell me to vote against Id. I say that we give him his money back.

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Jo

I agree. And all my instincts tell me that we should give him, say, 30 quid extra, as compensation. That it might be unhealthy to be Mr Self's enemy.

Trevor

That makes it a two to one majority.

David

No. It's unanimous. After listening to you two, I have my doubts as well. Mind you, I did find that some of Id's views on Art are very quotable.

DAVID, A NATURAL CLOWN, GOES OVER TO WHERE ID WAS, AND MIMICS HIM IN THE MOST EXAGGERATED MANNER.

David

I am a Conceptualist. I believe in The Big Idea. The Idea that dwarfs all the ideas that have gone before. The Idea So Big that it turns Duchamp into a Toilet Cleaner. Monet into a lily-livered frog. And Pollock into a drip watching other drips - drop.

THEY LAUGH. ENCOURAGED, DAVID CONTINUES.

David

An Idea So Big, that it passes through the other side of Bigness into the teeny weeny small.

THEY TITTER. THEY ARE ALL FRIENDS AGAIN.

Jo

Right. Let's have the music back on and get some work done.

THE SAME MUSIC AS AT THE BEGINING, COMES BACK ON. PLUS THE CHAIR SYMPHONY. AFTER ABOUT 10 SEC. IT STARTS TO FADE OUT TO SILENCE. ACT ONE HAS FINISHED.

ACT TWO

FIVE DAYS HAVE PASSED. DIFFERENT MUSIC IS PLAYING ( THE GARDEN OF UNEARTHLY DELIGHTS BY CATHEDRAL ) 20 SECONDS OF THIS IS FOLLOWED BY A LOUD KNOCKING OF THE DOOR. ID IS ALONE IN THE STUDIO. HE HAS BEEN WORKING AT TREVORS EASEL HE GETS UP, WALKS OVER AND CALMLY SWITCHES THE MUSIC OFF BEFORE ANSWERING THE DOOR. SOUNDS OF OPENING, TRAFFIC, CLOSING.

House I'm Detective House and this is my colleague Detective Whitson.

Id I've been expecting you. Come right in. Make yourselves at home.

Whitson Thanks.

Id So, Madam and Mr Detectives, what can I do for you.

House Why are you expecting us?

Id All will be revealed. In time.

Whitson About four days ago we started getting reports about missing people. Three of them. Fairly routine stuff until we figured out the link. They are all Artists, and they all share the same studio, this one.

DETECTIVE HOUSE LOOMS OVER AND SHOVES THREE MUGSHOTS INTO ID'S FACE.

House Mr David Angel. Mr Trevor Wright, and a Miss Jo Green.

ID IGNORES HOUSE.

Id I can add to that Miss Whitson. They were very fine Artists, and they had collaborated to form The Precious School Of Art.

House 'Were' You said 'Were' fine artists.

Id In English Language it's called ' The Past Tense ' I haven't seen them for some while.

House Don't get funny with me sunshine.

Id Ah! I get it. You're the bad cop, and she's the good cop. The bad cop is always, not exactly, Mensa material. If you can't get funny with the bad cop, who can you get funny with.

Whitson We are investigating the disappearance, and possible demise, of three people. There's nothing funny about that. For a start tell us who you are.

Id Certainly Ma'am. I'm Id Self. And I am the newest member of The Precious School Of Art.

WHITSON IS MAKING NOTES.

Whitson Id Self. And, Your address?

Id Here. Since last Monday.

Whitson Last address?

Id Do you mean my previous address?

Whitson Previous address?

Id 15.G. Pioneer House. Hillfields.

HOUSE IS LOSING PATIENCE.

House How well did you know the missing persons?

Id I think that you should give the missing persons their due respect and call them the missing, possibly demised, very fine Artists.

House I'm asking the questions in my own words. So stop prattling around and answer me.

Id What was the question again?

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House How well did you know the missing persons?

Id Do you mean the missing very fine Artists?

HOUSE IS STARTING TO CRACK.

House Yes!

Id Well.

House Well what!

Id Well, rephrase the question then.

House No. Fucking make me!

ID TO WHITSON

Id He's not much cop is he. You haven't trained him very well.

SLAP. HOUSE LOSES CONTROL AND GIVES ID A BACKHANDER  
ID SEEMS VERY PLEASED WITH HIMSELF

Id That's assault. Criminal behavior. How does a short tempered criminal get to be a Detective?

Whitson Hang on Mr Self. We'll be back in a moment.

WHITSON HAS GOT BETWEEN THE TWO OF THEM. SHE TAKES HOUSE  
OVER TO THE FAR CORNER OF THE STUDIO.

Whitson Cut it out. The rough stuff's getting us nowhere.

House I can't stand friggin Students. Especially friggin Art Students.

Whitson He's not a Student. Too old for a start.

House He may be one of those Mature friggin Students.

Whitson

His hands are rough and scarred with old and recent cuts. Like a Butcher's hands. He is not a Student. look, he wants to tell us all he knows. He's dying to. All we have to do is to humour him. Let him feel that he's in charge. He's an egotist, loves all the attention. Let me talk to him.

THEY COME BACK TO ID.

Whitson

Sorry about that Mr Self. Now, where were we. How well did you know the missing, possibly demised, very fine Artists?

Id

Of the three, I knew David best. He was the leader of The Precious School Of Art. I applied to join, and he interviewed me in a pub last Sunday. He told me a lot about himself and bought me a few pints.

Whitson

And the others?

Id

The other very fine Artists?

Whitson

The other very fine Artists.

Id

I met them at 10am. on Monday for a sort of introductory chat. David was there, but he didn't say much, which I thought was very strange. After half an hour or so, I left to get some materials from my previous address. I came back here in the afternoon, and I've been here ever since.

Whitson

I notice that your hands are not those of the genteel Artist?

Id

Observant. I'm impressed. Perhaps you should have become an Artist.

Whitson

Who's to say I haven't.

Id

Not me.

Whitson

In my spare time I paint minatures, mainly still-life.

Id You could join my Group. The trouble with Still-life though, is that it's usually, dead.

Whitson Why do you say 'My Group' I thought that David is the leader?

Id I seem to be the only active member now.

Whitson Mr. Self, can I call you Id? Id, you're very good at diverting my line of questioning into a myriad of forked paths.

Id Myriad. A lovely word. Are you a poet too?

Whitson Not this time Id. What was your most recent employment?

Id I was a Deboner at Richmonds pie factory.

Whitson You said that, on Monday morning, you left here to get some materials Did you mean artists materials?

Id Yes.

Whitson When did you last see the other very fine Artists?

Id At about 3pm. last Monday, they were still alive and kicking. Then they started to disappear bit by bit.

House 'Bit by bit' Do you mean one at a time or what?

SHORT SILENCE WHILE ID REFUSES TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE  
QUESTIONER.

Whitson What do you mean by 'Bit by bit' ?

Id I mean that they gradually left me.

Whitson I notice that all of the Groups paintings are on the small side?

Id Do you mean The Precious School Of Arts very fine paintings?

Whitson Yes. Their very fine paintings.

Id The longest dimension of any surface side must be within 40cm. It's my, The Precious School Of Arts, only Rule.

Whitson What are you yourself painting now?

Id Good question! As an artist yourself, you should know that all you have to do to find the essence of another Artist is to see their work. You should have asked this question at the outset. Let me take you over here to what used to be Trevors easel. As you can see I'm painting over what used to be Trevors work. For my subject matter, I'm using The Photograph that I've pinned above the canvass.

Whitson Can I unpin it. To take good look?

Id Surely. The Photo is my inspiration for today and for the foreseeable future.

WHITSON STARES IN STUNNED SHORT SILENCE.

Whitson Ronald, er Detective House, pass me the mugshots of the missing persons.

House Do you mean the mugshots of the missing very fine Artists.

Whitson The joke is over. SNAPPILY

Id Poor old Ronald, er Detective House. He just can't get anything right.

Whitson The photograph depicts the three of them, dead. Artistically arranged, surrounded by their paintings, looking blissfully happy, but dead.

House Let me see. This one/ INTERUPTION

Whitson That would be Trevor.

House He's holding a tennis racket!  
And the female/ INTERUPTION

Whitson Jo.

House She's sort of embracing, a shovel!

Whitson And David has his cupped right hand over his mouth.

House You little bastard Self. You must of done 'em in.

Id I resent your use of bad language. 'Little' My Idea of the demise of three very fine Artists, is big, very big. For a start it will be the biggest case that you two will ever have.

House Id Self, I am arresting you on suspicion of murder. you don't have to say anything that may harm your defence/ INTERUPTION

Id Wait. Miss Whitson. Once I am arrested everything I say will be written down and used in evidence against me. Right?

Whitson Right.

Id Then I suggest that we keep things informal for a bit longer. Then I'll tell you everything, or nearly everything. If you arrest me now I'll tell you nothing.

Whitson OK.

House No Clare. He could be dangerous.

Whitson Can we handcuff you?

Id Be my guest.

Whitson Pass me your handcuffs.

House Use yours.

Whitson I haven't brought mine.

House Neither have I.

Id Do I have to do everything for you two! In the cupboard, under the sink. You'll find a big roll of silver tape. You can tape me to the chair.

HOUSE WALKS OVER TO THE CUPBOARD. WE HEAR IT OPENED.

House Ah! Here it is.

HE DOES A DOUBLE-TAKE

Bloody Hell! What's this! A flamin' crossbow and a gun.

THE WEAPONS ARE LAID DOWN ON THE FLOORBOARDS. AS HOUSE RETURNS TO ID, WE HEAR THE RASPING OF THE TAPE AS HE UNREELS AN ARMS LENGTH OF IT.

Id Those are some of the artists materials that I went back for on Monday.

HOUSE STARTS MANOEUVRING THE TAPE AROUND THE CHAIR AND ID.  
LITTLE BURSTS OF RASPING SOUNDS.

House Artists materials, my arse! More like deadly weapons.

Id Not mutually exclusive. Anything can be artists materials. Clare can you keep Detective House, or Ronald, as he's come to be known, out of the frame. He just doesn't understand Art. He's a philistine. I only want to talk to you.

Whitson. Please.

House Alright. Alright. I'll have a look around. See if I can find some arrows or something.

Whitson Let's start from when you came back with the artists materials.

Id I came back with a big bag of artists materials. There was an awkward silence. As if the three of them had something bad to say to me, but didn't have the nerve. I asked them to spit it out. Trevor told me that my membership of The Precious School Of Art would be inappropriate. Can you believe that Clare, that I was inappropriate. I took out my gun and told them that my membership was an integral part of my Big Idea. I asked if I could appeal against the decision. Whereupon, mysteriously, they said that they had already changed their minds. I was voted back into The Precious School Of Art. Unanimously. I made a brief 'I'm honoured' acceptance speech. Then I told them that I was ready to begin my Big Idea. With my gun pointing at each in turn, I had no difficulty in taping each to a chair. Just like I am now.

POIGNANT PAUSE HERE. EMPATHY WITH HIS VICTIMS? PERHAPS.

Whitson Carry on.

Id Sorry. I injected them with an anesthetic. Then I arranged them and their very fine work as in The Photograph.

Whitson In the photograph there is some blood?

Id No. It's paint. I painted red on their clothing near their hearts. When your lab analyse The Print they will find that the blow-up proves that the clothing is not penetrated, and that the colour of the apparent blood is not quite right.

Whitson Why do they look so happy?

Id They did look quite happy, the effect of the drug. I did touch up their happiness though, just a bit.

Whitson Then you didn't kill them. They are still alive?

Id Patience. I took The Photograph. Then, from close range, I shot arrows into their hearts.

SHORT SILENCE

Id I've had five days since to dispose of the bodies and clean the place up. Yesterday I began my new career as the only living member of The Precious School Of Art.

Whitson Supposing all you say is true. Why have you done this? What's your motive?/ INTERUPTION

House This is all bullshit. I've been listening to most of this so-called confession and I don't believe it. Not for one minute.

HOUSE HAS BEEN ON HIS MOBILE TO THE STATION.

House The computer says that he's got no criminal record. He's not murdered anyone. He wouldn't have the nerve. The four of 'em are in it together. It's a publicity stunt for their Precious friggin whats-it.

Whitson Possibly.

Id Possibly.

House What d'yer mean, possibly, you asshole. Did you do it or didn't you friggin do it?

Id Who am I talking to?

Whitson Me.

Id Then tell your housemate to go and look for arrows or something.

Whitson Please, I've nearly finished.

House Alright. I'm on my way. But you, you sick basket-case, I'll 'ave you. If its only for wasting police time.

Whitson Supposing that you did murder them, why?

Id To make it. As an Artist. Most Modern Art moves in the direction of bigger and more shocking. It went from nonsense of Dada to the canning of the Artists waste products, through to dead animals suspended in formaldehyde. But it's all moving so slowly. It's as if the Artists are conspiring to try and make this Movement last forever. It's taken 80 years to get from A to C. In one week I have gone from C to Z. No one can emulate what I have done. Mass murder as Conceptual-Performance Art. I have slaughtered the gimmick, the pretentious pretending to be revolutionary, the bland posing as outrageous, and the superficial feigning depth. I have killed all of them. There will be mass revulsion at my Art-Murders. From now on Artists will travel in the opposite direction. Into the Small. Into the Precious.

Whitson Is that it?

Id Not quite. There's a spin-off, not unappealing for me. The Photo has gone out to every National Newspaper. Tomorrow I start to become very famous, and, as night follows day, very rich.

Whitson Those dead Artists and their loved ones, don't you feel anything for them?

Id They weren't close to me. At this moment in time, all around the world, thousands of kids are being beaten or abused, or worse. Most often by their uncaring parents. Do you feel anything for them?

Whitson The difference is that for that, I, am not responsible. But for these dead Artists, you are. You, are responsible.

Id They were going nowhere. They are insignificant in the vast scheme of things. Still, I agree, they didn't deserve to die. But look on the bright side. They have founded The fabulous Precious School Of Art. I will make sure that, posthumously, they will share my fame. This is the, compensation, that I can offer.

Whitson I've heard enough. You really did kill them didn't you?

Id Yes. MURMURED

HOUSE MARCHES INTO THE CENTRE OF THINGS. HE'S BEEN ON HIS MOBILE AGAIN.

House I've been talking to the Super. He says he's been talking to some of the missing artists family and friends and that it's highly unlikely that the artists would be involved in any kind of a scam. So it looks like we've got our man. You'll swing for this.

Id Have they brought back Capital Punishment.

House In English Language it's called a Figure Of Speech. You, are going to rot in jail.

Id In English Language it's called a Cliche, and the correction was also a cliche. As for jail, it's unlikely. What have you got? A faked photograph, an unused gun, a bow with no arrows, and lastly, but most importantly, no bodies. I promise you, you will never find any trace of the bodies. You've got just enough to prosecute, but not enough to convict.

House We've got plenty, and we'll get more. What have you got yer sick bastard?

Id I am not sick. But the world is. I am just learning to live in a sick world. I have got something though, something that will come to be known as the Ronald Defence.

House What are you on about now. You're friggin nuts.

Id No. It's nothing to do with pleading insanity. It goes like this. -- After hitting me in the face, and then hearing my informal confession, Detective House, or Ronald, came to his conclusions. He said that, not for one minute, did he believe that I am the murderer. That I wouldn't have the nerve. That it was all a publicity stunt on behalf of The Precious School Of Art. Detective Whitson agreed that this is possible, and so did I. The Ronald Defence, which will be refered to a great deal after I'm charged, is convinced that David, Trevor and Jo, are in hiding, waiting to share in my material gains.

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HOUSE IS ENRAGED.

House Clare, so help me. I'll swing for this twisted psycho.

CLARE IS SO TIRED AND STRESSED WITH HOUSE AND HIS CLUELESS INTERVENTIONS, THAT SHE SAYS SOMETHING WITHOUT THINKING.

Whitson Have they brought back Capital Punishment. Sorry. I'm losing it. I can't focus.

Id Nonsense Clare. You're just getting into the swing of things.

Whitson Look, let's get him up from the chair, read him his rights and get him back to the Station. Then, we'll take it from there.

HOUSE CIRCLES ROUND ID

House Where the blazes did I put the end of the tape. Ah! here it is.

Whitson What have you done Id? What have you done?

ID REALISES THAT THIS IS HIS LAST CHANCE TO SPEAK FREELY. HE IS ABOUT TO GIVE HIS WINDING UP SPEECH. MEANWHILE WE CAN HEAR HOUSE UNWINDING THE TAPE. WALKING ROUND AND ROUND ID AND THE CHAIR.

Id I'll tell you what I've done. I have taken the most anonymous Artists Group that could ever be imagined, and turned it into a World-wide Sensation. I have transformed myself, from menial worker to Conceptual Genius. From a man with no name (Not literally) Ronald) into the famous leader of The Precious School Of Art. What's more, I am about to become a millionaire. But, most brilliant of all, I have changed Detective House from philistine plodder, into a supporting actor in my Big Idea. A Performance Artist of the highest calibre, I'm sure he'll bring the house down. Hallelujah! It's a Miracle.

HOUSE HAS GIVEN UP TRYING TO COMPETE VERBALLY WITH ID.

House Shall I tape his hands behind his back?

Whitson Don't bother. He wants to be arrested. He wants to go with us to the Station. He wants to go on trial. We are just acting out his Big Idea with him. Like he says, we, have become his Performance Artists.

WHITSONS LAST WORDS ARE DELIVERED IN THE MANNER OF AN OVERWORKED ACTRESS, PISSED OFF WITH THE PREDICTABILITY OF HER LINES.

AS THEY ALL DRIFT OFF STAGE.

Whitson Id Self I am arresting you on suspicion of murder. You do not have to say anything that may harm your defense, but anything you do say/

INTERUPTION BY A CLOSED DOOR. THE STUDIO IS EMPTY.

THE PLAY IS OVER