

## To Shoot a Table Puppet

---

A short scene transition in the middle of a Chekov play

By Jarred Corona

AT RISE: A stage. For a production of something. There might be a set. There might not be. It doesn't really matter. It's a stage.

In the near darkness of a scene transition, two STAGEHANDS bring on a table. It shouldn't be heavy. It doesn't really look heavy.

STAGEHAND 1

Oh, fuck.

STAGEHAND 2

Shh!

Despite it not being all that heavy, SH1 stumbles. Perhaps they regain their balance. Perhaps the sudden shifting of the weight makes SH2 move a bit weird.

STAGEHAND 1

Hey, hey, hey, the spike is over here!

STAGEHAND 2

Stop talking! They can hear us!

BOOM.

They accidentally drop the table. It falls. It's imperative that the top of the table faces as much of the audience as possible.

STAGEHAND 1

Oh, fuck.

STAGEHAND 2

Fuuuuck.

STAGEHAND 1

Right? Fuck.

Total fuck. STAGEHAND 2

Fuck me. STAGEHAND 1

Shh! Shit. The audience. Hide. STAGEHAND 2

The duck behind the table.

Do you think they can see us? STAGEHAND 1

I don't see how they could. STAGEHAND 2

Because we're in stage blacks. STAGEHAND 1

Because we're behind the table. STAGEHAND 2

Oh no. Do they think we're shady? What if no one ever hires us again because they think we're corrupt? STAGEHAND 1

That's *under* the table, dumbass. STAGEHAND 2

Really? STAGEHAND 1

Really. STAGEHAND 2

Aren't we kind of under the table? STAGEHAND 1

What? STAGEHAND 2

STAGEHAND 1

The table. The way it's sitting. We're at what's normally the under.

STAGEHAND 2

That's not how propositions work.

STAGEHAND 1

We're currently under the table.

STAGEHAND 2

No we aren't.

STAGEHAND 1

Oh, my god. I never signed a contract.

STAGEHAND 2

What?

STAGEHAND 1

I didn't sign a contract. I'm getting paid under the table.

STAGEHAND 2

Oh. There's something taped to the bottom of the table.

STAGEHAND 1

There is.

STAGEHAND 2

What is it?

STAGEHAND 1

I don't know. It's dark.

STAGEHAND 2

The think is dark?

STAGEHAND 1

No, it's dark.

STAGEHAND 2

What is?

STAGEHAND 1

The generality.

STAGEHAND 2

What?

STAGEHAND 1

You know, life. Dark. Ooh. It's hard to see. It's something small.

STAGEHAND 2

Could be your paycheck. We are just tech.

STAGEHAND 1

Hey now. Tech is vital.

STAGEHAND 2

Yeah, but. Still.

STAGEHAND 1

It's cold. Hard.

STAGEHAND 2

Makes sense they'd pay you in cold hard cash since you're getting paid under the table.

STAGEHAND 1

Oh.

STAGEHAND 2

Yeah.

STAGEHAND 1

No. Look.

STAGEHAND 2

Oh.

SH1 lifts the object that's been taped under the table above the table so the audience can see... A GUN!

It's a gun! STAGEHAND 1

Oh fuck. STAGEHAND 2

Yeah. STAGEHAND 1

Fuck. I didn't know we were doing a Chekov. STAGEHAND 2

You didn't look at the season? STAGEHAND 1

No. STAGEHAND 2

You've got to get with the program. STAGEHAND 1

I would never date a program. STAGEHAND 2

Never knock it 'til you try it. I have a friend who dated... Wait, we're forgetting something. STAGEHAND 1

The gun. If we're doing a Chekov, give it here. STAGEHAND 2

Don't they need it? STAGEHAND 1

I need it. STAGEHAND 2

Why do you need it? STAGEHAND 1

So I don't have to sit through a Chekov. STAGEHAND 2