

La Mouche

A 10-Minute Comedy

By

Stephen Bittrich

La Mouche was first produced at The Drilling Company, Hamilton Clancy Artistic Director, with the following cast:

Customer Bill Green
Pierre Scott Baker
Jacques James Davies

The evening of one-acts was called *Security*, and the director of this piece was Carol Halstead.

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James Davies (*Jacques*), Bill Green (*Customer*), and Scott Baker (*Pierre*) in the original production of *La Mouche* at The Drilling Company in NYC.

"LA MOUCHE"
BY STEPHEN BITTRICH

SETTING:

A French restaurant in New York.

AT RISE:

The CUSTOMER sits alone at a table and makes a startling discovery.

CUSTOMER

Excuse me...garçon!

(A waiter, PIERRE, is there in a flash.)

PIERRE

Oui, monsieur? Oui? How is your soup?

CUSTOMER

My soup has a fly in it.

PIERRE

No!

CUSTOMER

Yes.

PIERRE

Mon Dieu...a fly. Oooo, la, la, la, la! Yes, there he is. I see him. He is looking at me.

CUSTOMER

It's most distressing.

PIERRE

Indeed, monsieur. Indeed. I am at a loss. Who is your waiter?

CUSTOMER

I'm not certain.

PIERRE

Jacques! Jacques!

(Head waiter, JACQUES, arrives in a flash.)

JACQUES

Yes? Yes? Monsieur, how is your soup?

CUSTOMER

Well...

PIERRE

His soup contains a fly.

JACQUES

No!

PIERRE

Mais oui!

JACQUES

Outrageous!

(Beat, earnestly)

Monsieur, did you ask for a fly in your soup?

PIERRE

(As if this logical
possibility had never
occurred to him)

Ahhh.

CUSTOMER

No. I did not!

PIERRE

(Ever agreeable)

No!

JACQUES

It is not "fly soup"?

CUSTOMER

No, it is not. Most definitely not.

JACQUES

Who is your waiter?

CUSTOMER

Well...

JACQUES

I will KILL him!

PIERRE

Oui! His waiter must die!

JACQUES

Point him to me.

CUSTOMER

I don't remember.

JACQUES

I will tear him limb from limb!

CUSTOMER

I'd rather you didn't.

JACQUES

He will pay for this fly with his life...hmmmm? No?

CUSTOMER

Well, no. It is just a fly.

PIERRE

Certainly. Of course. Seulement une mouche.

JACQUES

Mais oui...just a fly. Today just a fly. Tomorrow a ball of...hair...a wad of chewing gum. The next day a human head!

PIERRE

The line must be drawn.

CUSTOMER

I don't want to make trouble.

PIERRE

Nonsense.

JACQUES

Absurd.

PIERRE

Monsieur, the customer is always...the customer is always...

CUSTOMER

Eh?

JACQUES

Ripe.

PIERRE

Ripe! Oui! Seulement.

JACQUES

We will simply kill your waiter. Problem solved.

CUSTOMER

Might I just have another soup?

PIERRE

Of course.

JACQUES

The soup is not the issue!

PIERRE

Obviously.

JACQUES

The issue is the fly.

PIERRE

Exactement. The fly. The fly must die as well.

JACQUES

Pierre! Are you insane? A poor defenseless creature... merely trying to keep warm...and you suggest we end his existence?

PIERRE

Pardon. I have missed the point.

JACQUES

Obviously.

PIERRE

(To the Customer)

Can you forgive me, monsieur?

CUSTOMER

(Starting to become confused)

Of course.

PIERRE

(Hitting himself in the head)

Stupid! Stupid!

JACQUES

The fly is an innocent.

PIERRE

Obviously. A babe in the...in the...

JACQUES

The fly has been duped.

CUSTOMER

Duped?

JACQUES

He is a pawn in this devilish plot!

PIERRE

...in the woods. Oui.

CUSTOMER

Yes, yes, poor fly, poor fly...but might I just--

PIERRE

Ah, poor fly.

JACQUES

You have now a bond!

PIERRE

A kinship.

CUSTOMER

Eh?

JACQUES

With the fly...whose life you have saved.

PIERRE

Exactly. May I offer you a, a jar, monsieur? I can poke petite holes in the lid...for your fly.

CUSTOMER

I don't want this fly!

PIERRE

Of course not! Silly.

CUSTOMER

What would I do with a fly?

JACQUES

Well, you have saved his life, monsieur...in some cultures...but I overstep my bounds.

PIERRE

Always ripe...always ripe. Is that right?

JACQUES

Pardon, monsieur. We can certainly make arrangements for this fly. He needn't be your concern. Do not think again of this fly.

CUSTOMER

Thank you.

JACQUES

De rien. Be assured, this fly will live out his days in comfort.

PIERRE

The comfort of soup.

JACQUES
(To Pierre)

You idiot!

PIERRE

Sorry?

CUSTOMER
All I really want is another...

JACQUES
Monsieur, what have you ordered for you next course?

CUSTOMER
The soufflé.

PIERRE
Oooo, la, la, la, la! The soufflé.

JACQUES
Magnifique!

PIERRE
Absolument. Like you have died and gone to...to...

JACQUES
May I assume, monsieur, that you did not order any flies in your soufflé?

CUSTOMER
You may assume that, yes.

PIERRE
That is a "no"?

CUSTOMER
Most definitely no.

JACQUES
Pierre, s'il vous plaît, inspect monsieur's soufflé, tout de suite!

PIERRE
D'accord.

(Pierre dashes to the kitchen.)

JACQUES
This soufflé will have NO flies, monsieur!

CUSTOMER

Yes...thank you. Really, what I most desire...

JACQUES

You have a desire, monsieur?

CUSTOMER

Yes.

JACQUES

You need only ask.

CUSTOMER

A soup. A soup, please. One without the fly.

JACQUES

Of course. You would like your soup returned to it's original fly free condition. If you will permit me, I can remove the fly...unharmd, of course...

CUSTOMER

Why would I...eh? Are you saying...?

(Pierre returns in a flash.)

PIERRE

This soufflé will have NO FLIES!

JACQUES

Excellent, Pierre.

PIERRE

I have seen to it!

(Beat, then...)

The chef was quite upset.

CUSTOMER

Upset? I didn't want to upset the chef.

JACQUES

Nonsense! It is your right to upset the chef. You have a grievance. Don't concern yourself with this chef, monsieur. He is insignificant.

PIERRE

As insignificant as a...

JACQUES

Perhaps I should KILL him!

PIERRE

Insignificant as a...

CUSTOMER

I don't wish for you to kill anybody...not the waiter, not the chef, not the fly.

PIERRE

Ahh, monsieur, you have the heart of a saint.

CUSTOMER

Thank you.

JACQUES

Why on earth would I kill the fly?

PIERRE

You forgive them all.

JACQUES

Incroyable.

PIERRE

To forgive is...is...

CUSTOMER

Yes, very well, thank you.

PIERRE

To forgive is...

JACQUES

"...is bovine."

CUSTOMER

"...is sublime."

JACQUES

Ahh oui, sublime. Merci, monsieur. How silly of me. A cow is not sublime.

PIERRE

No, I don't think that's it.

JACQUES

Pierre! You contradict the customer?

PIERRE

Not at all. It does not sound correct: "to forgive is sublime."

JACQUES
Absurd. Is it not sublime to forgive?

PIERRE
Yes, of course, but...

JACQUES
I will...KILL *you!*

(Jacques starts to throttle
Pierre.)

CUSTOMER
Please! Please! Please! Garçons!

JACQUES
(Taking a pause)
Oui?

PIERRE
Oui, monsieur?

CUSTOMER
This is outrageous! Unbelievable!

JACQUES
(Taking his hands off Pierre's
neck)
But of course.

CUSTOMER
And the fly has flown away!

PIERRE
What?

JACQUES
You...stupid! You have scared away monsieur's fly!

PIERRE
I am ashamed, monsieur.

CUSTOMER
Unless he's sunk to the bottom.

PIERRE
Allow me, monsieur.

(Pierre fishes around in the
soup with his finger.)

PIERRE (cont'd)

This fly is gone.

JACQUES

Of course this fly is gone...because you are too loud. You
are a loud, sweaty man, and this fly is gone. Of course.
He has flown the coup...his petite wings heavy with soup!

PIERRE

It's cold. My soup is cold.

JACQUES

Cold! Incroyable! This is not a cold soup.

PIERRE

It's shameful!

JACQUES

Monsieur, would you agree that this soup should not be
cold?

CUSTOMER

Yes. No! I don't want cold soup.

THE PLAY CONTINUES FOR ONE MORE PAGE.

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