

George Segal's The Butcher Shop

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Take a plaster body cast of a dumpy
butcher, set her across from a plaster customer
(the meat cleaver poised above a chicken's
neck), and you'll understand what sickens
about Segal's sculpture. For all of their
homey homespun appearance, her Zen-
like stoicism as she holds the cleaver
above the bird, the neck stretched out to her
on the block—this is not about peace, or tension
from all directions bringing about stasis.
This is about guillotine blade and carcass,
and the cruelly anonymous exchanges
of ordinary life. There's nothing peaceful
about Humpty-Dumpty sitting on a wall.