

ALIEN BABY

By Kelly Meadows

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CAST:

JILL, a clerk at the library on a college campus, who also plays her mother, the head librarian. JILL and her mother both make a few too many snap judgments about their customers, based on what books they check out.

LAURA, who is trying to check out a large stack of books, and who may or may not have an alien baby. SHE also plays "the guy" in line behind her. All the books can be pantomimed, if need be.

LAURA: **(SHE is holding a big stack of books)** I'd like to check out these books.

JILL: **(SHE and LAURA are acquainted, and drift in and out of cordiality)** Laura! It's great to see you. **(LAURA puts a stack of books down on the counter, or pantomimes it.)** Wow, look at all these!

LAURA: I know. I have to catch up on my summer reading.

JILL: It's October.

LAURA: I had a busy summer. I was catching up on *last* summer's reading. I haven't had a date in 6 months.

JILL: That's because you have no social skills. Here, let me see those. *Murder In The Processed Chicken Plant?* That sounds redundant.

LAURA: Apparently they're processing a lot more than chicken.

JILL: **(looks at another)** *Murder On The Amtrak Run From Seattle To Portland.* **(gets enthusiastic, telling the story)** I read it last week. The porter did it. Not the one in the first car, that you think did it, but the one in the dining car that was pouring the-

LAURA: **(outraged)** Jill! I can't believe you!

JILL: What?

LAURA: You gave away the ending!

JILL: Oh well. So I've saved you 307 pages plus a disjointed epilogue.

LAURA: Well I don't want it now. Put it back.

JILL: You put it back.

LAURA: I can't put it back. There's a big sign in there that says 'do not reshelve.'

JILL: Live a little.

LAURA: I can't until I've read 15 more books.

JILL: (**looking through the stack**) Murder here, murder there...oh, I've read this one, too. (**getting into it**) That's where they track this heiress down in the gold mine and found out that she offed her own father, along with her second cousin twice removed, to get the family inheritance. Fascinating! And then-

LAURA: (**appalled**) Stop it!

JILL: You wouldn't have liked it. You wouldn't catch the irony – or the dialectic.

LAURA: Do you do this to everyone? I'm going to report you.

JILL: (**snooty**) To whom?

LAURA: To the head librarian, that's whom!

JILL: No, that's *who*.

LAURA: (**angry**) I don't care who, just get her.

JILL: (**calls back**) Mom!

LAURA: (**in disbelief**) Mom?

JILL: How do you think I got this job? (**as mom**) Yes, ma'am, how can I help you?

LAURA: You tell this prissy sissy daughter of yours to stop giving away the endings of all my novels.

JILL: (**as mom looking at some of her books**) What, of *Murder in the Mine Shaft? Murder At The Frat House?*... We should be so lucky. (**looking at LAURA from a position of authority, very suspiciously, after a pause**) A young girl like you shouldn't have so much murder on her mind.

LAURA: I didn't, until I came here.

JILL: (**as mom, self-righteously**) And what's this? (**looking through more books, with rising horror**) *I Had An Alien Baby, How To Raise an Alien Baby, How To Find Your Alien Baby's Real Parents?* Young lady, I'm appalled. It sounds to me as if you are keeping an alien baby. (**as JILL**) Laura has an alien baby! (**as mom**) Quiet, Jill. (**as JILL, mocking**) Alien baby, alien baby! (**as mom**) Jill, stop it! (**as JILL**) Mom! (**mom**) Jill! (**JILL**) Alien baby! (**mom, cutting her off, threatening**) Jill! (**JILL, cutting her off right back, pouting**) All right.

LAURA: (**defensive, and exhausted from that last exchange**) I do not have an alien baby!

JILL: (**as mom**) Then why the interest in alien babies! Why the interest in murder?

LAURA: Aren't you supposed to just check books out, and not question my motivation?

JILL: (**as mom**) I'm sorry. I can't help but insinuate. From this stack of books, it appears very likely (**horrified, as if SHE actually believes this**) that you've killed an alien baby.

LAURA: (**shouting**) I have not killed an alien baby!

JILL: (**as mom, shouting as well**) Quiet! This is a library! Now if you didn't kill it, what did you do with it?

LAURA: (**confused**) Uh...nothing?

JILL: (**as JILL**) You just left it there? Mom, she just left it there! (**to LAURA, gossipy**) Where did you leave it?

LAURA: (**frustrated**) I don't have an alien baby.

JILL: (**as mom**) Because you've killed it! (**as JILL**) She killed it, mom, I know she did!

LAURA: I'll tell you what. I won't check out any books on alien babies. Just ring up the mysteries. Oh, and add that one over there: *Double Murder in the Library*. I understand it's very intriguing, and they never, ever, EVER, find the bodies. (**JILL gets scared as LAURA narrates spookily**) Because no one wants to look for them once they find out that it was the head librarian and her illiterate daughter who were brutally slain for replacing the romantic fiction with untranslated Russian novellas.

JILL: And do you know who did it? The janitor! At the urging of a college girl who was trying to keep the librarian from telling the truth about her (**in her face**) ALIEN BABY!

LAURA: I do not have an (**back in her face**) ALIEN BABY! (**more thoughtful**) Though my brother comes close.

JILL: (**conversational**) We've made some remarkable discoveries in here, actually. Mrs. Delgado, who checked out books on heavy farm equipment and repeatedly renewed *How To Construct and Facilitate Your Own Garbage Dump* was actually throwing away her plastic bottles instead of recycling them. Mr. Jorgenson? Three books on oral surgery, and a vacation guide to southeastern New Mexico!

LAURA: What did you come up with?

JILL: Dental procedures on extra terrestrials!

LAURA: You make it sounds like there's no humans left on earth. Do you believe in that stuff?

JILL: I do now – now that I know you're hiding an alien baby.

LAURA: (**changing her tune**) I got it in New Mexico.

JILL: You did not! (**to Mom**) Mom, she's nuts.

LAURA: (**confirming**) I got it in New Mexico. We were in the middle of the desert. Me, my mom, dad, brother, and our dog Sherlock.

JILL: Your dog's name is Sherlock?

LAURA: No joke. Sherlock.

JILL: So your dog's reading the mystery novels, and you're passing it off trying to get out of your literary obligations!

LAURA: Exactly. It was all a cover up for the alien baby research. It's a real pain in the neck. All it eats is watermelon, the diapers don't fit right, and the phone bills are astronomical. (**laughs a trifle, and perhaps turns to the audience**) Get it? Astronomical?

JILL: Then how come you lied about it before, Laura?

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