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*Baby Boom*  
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## Also Available from OWP

### Killed A Man In Reno

by Robin Hack

3 Males, 1 Female

**Synopsis:** Kurt and Julie Lawry travel to Reno, Nevada for a wild weekend. The biggest little city in the world doesn't have all the glitz and glamour of Las Vegas, but it is able to offer its own "unique" activities. As soon as Kurt and Julie arrive in their room, the trusty hotel concierge is at their service, offering to get show tickets, reserve gaming tables, make dinner reservations, or let them kill a man just to watch him die. *"It is what Reno, Nevada is famous for Mr. Lawry."*

### Knuckleball

by William Whitehurst

1 Male, 1 Female

**Synopsis:** In a moment of passion and intimacy, Ross proposes to his promiscuous lover Trish. She desperately wants to say yes, but cannot. But Ross won't take no for answer—she must either marry him or explain why she won't. She tells an extraordinary tale about who—and what—she really is. But is she telling the truth? And if she is, will the truth destroy these lovers, or save them? *Knuckleball* challenges us to rethink the nature and meaning of love in our contemporary world.

### Suburban Peepshow

by James Comtois

6-8 Males, 2 Females

**Synopsis:** Bill is a husband, father, and professional. But this week, a cross dressing social deviant gets fired at the office and Bill is poised to step into his position. The promotion all but guarantees new dishtowels for the wife, and the in-ground pool for son Jeremy. But a New Girl in the office has designs for Bill, and he ain't gonna pass it up... if you know what I mean. Who can blame him with his wife contemplating jumping the Pool Guy, a strange Carnie Barker interrupting dinner, and the occasion Gladiator battle waiting at home. It all depends on how the Playwright is feeling tonight.

**BABY BOOM**  
**A ONE ACT PLAY**  
**BY**  
**LIA ROMEO**

**Characters:**

CHARLES SMITH  
CHARLOTTE SMITH  
SALLY MARTIN

**Setting:**

A small American town

**Time:**

The present, or something like it

**Synopsis:**

Mr. and Mrs. Smith are the perfect couple ... except for the baby they desperately want but are unable to have. When a machine gun dressed in baby clothes shows up on their doorstep, they decide to love it and raise it as their own. But it proves to be more difficult than they expected ...

## **BABY BOOM**

### **SCENE 1**

*(MR. and MRS. SMITH in their bedroom. He is dressed for work, but is barefoot. She is in a silk robe. She sits in front of her vanity, listlessly brushing her hair. A feeling of sadness.)*

*MR. SMITH looks at himself in the mirror. He is dissatisfied. He takes his glasses off and fusses with his hair. He looks at MRS. SMITH to see if she notices. She does not. He shrugs sadly and puts his glasses back on.)*

MR. SMITH: Charlotte?

MRS. SMITH: Yes, dear?

MR. SMITH: Have you seen my shoes?

MRS. SMITH: No, dear.

*(Silence. She lies down the brush, then, after a moment, picks it up and begins listlessly brushing her hair again.)*

MR. SMITH: Charlotte?

MRS. SMITH: Yes, dear?

MR. SMITH: What will you do today?

MRS. SMITH: I don't know.  
*(beat.)*  
Maybe I'll clean the kitchen.

MR. SMITH: Didn't you clean the kitchen yesterday?

MRS. SMITH *(vaguely)*: Oh, yes, you're right. I forgot that I did.

*(Silence.)*

MR. SMITH: Charlotte?

MRS. SMITH: Yes, dear?

MR. SMITH: Do you think it will rain?

MRS. SMITH: It usually does.

*(Silence. MRS. SMITH brushes her hair. MR. SMITH searches for his shoes. The doorbell rings. MRS. SMITH gives MR. SMITH a startled look.)*

MRS. SMITH: Were you expecting someone?

MR. SMITH: No, dear. Were you?

MRS. SMITH *(shaking her head)*: Do you think we should answer?

MR. SMITH: We'd better not.

MRS. SMITH: Why?

MR. SMITH: It's probably just someone selling vacuums.

MRS. SMITH: But I need a new vacuum.

MR. SMITH: Well, it's probably not *really* someone selling vacuums. I thought maybe I'd make you laugh if I said it was someone selling vacuums.

MRS. SMITH: Oh.

MR. SMITH: But you didn't laugh, you never do laugh –

*(The doorbell rings again.)*

MR. SMITH: Maybe we'd better just answer and see who it is.

*(MRS. SMITH goes to the door and opens it. On the doorstep is a wicker basket, and in the basket, wrapped in a yellow blanket, wearing a frilly bonnet, is a machine gun.)*

MR. SMITH: Well, dear?

*(beat.)*

Who is it?

MRS. SMITH: I'm . . . not sure.

*(MR. SMITH comes to the door.)*

MR. SMITH: It's a machine gun.

MRS. SMITH: Well . . . yes. It certainly looks like a machine gun.

MR. SMITH: What do you mean, looks like. What else would it be?

MRS. SMITH: Well –

MR. SMITH: Well, what?

MRS. SMITH *(tentatively)*: Well, a baby.

MR. SMITH: But it's a machine gun.

MRS. SMITH: Yes, it certainly looks like a machine gun. But it's certainly dressed like a baby. It even has a bonnet to keep its little ears warm.

MR. SMITH: Machine guns don't *have* little ears.

MRS. SMITH: Exactly.

MR. SMITH: You didn't see who left it?

MRS. SMITH: No. I just opened the door and here it was.

MR. SMITH: I can't imagine who would leave us a machine gun.

MRS. SMITH: Well, no, because we don't want a machine gun. But we do want a baby. For someone to leave us a baby would make a lot of sense.

MR. SMITH: But it isn't a baby.

MRS. SMITH: It isn't a typical baby. But there are all kinds of babies. All shapes and colors and sizes. There's no way to know how your own particular baby's going to be.

*(She strokes its barrel gently.)*

MR. SMITH: Careful! It looks loaded.

*(He reaches out and engages the safety on the machine gun.)*

MRS. SMITH: There. Now it's perfectly safe.

*(beat.)*

I think it likes me.

*(She coos at it.)*

It would be a very good baby. It hasn't cried once.

MR. SMITH: I suppose it would be just fine. If it were a baby. But it's not.

MRS. SMITH: Could we bring it inside at least?

MR. SMITH: No. It's not safe. We can't have a gun in the house.

MRS. SMITH: But what if it's hungry? Or thirsty? Or cold?

MR. SMITH: Charlotte – dear - all of those things are impossible.

MRS. SMITH: How do you know? It's not as though it can tell us. It's too young to be able to talk.

MR. SMITH: Well, I suppose I don't *know*, but -

MRS. SMITH: Charles, if you can leave even the possibility of a baby out here – on a cold morning that looks like rain – then you are a heartless man!

*(beat.)*

Couldn't we bring it inside and give it a warm place to sleep? We have the crib after all.

MR. SMITH: I put it in the basement. I'd have to haul it upstairs again.

*(MRS. SMITH picks up the basket and carries it through the door into the living room. She sets the basket on a table and picks up the machine gun – then finds a can of gun oil in the basket beside it.)*

MRS. SMITH: Oh, how nice. Why don't you get the crib and I'll heat up a bottle.

MR. SMITH: We still have a bottle?

MRS. SMITH: I kept it. I kept all the things.

MR. SMITH: Why?

MRS. SMITH: . . . In case.

MR. SMITH: But the doctors said we'd never be able –

MRS. SMITH: Well, yes, but you never know, do you. Sometimes surprises come along.

MR. SMITH: This is certainly a surprise.

*(beat.)*

But . . . Charlotte . . . it isn't a baby.

MRS. SMITH: Just get the crib. We'll make it comfortable, and then we can figure it out.

*(He exits. MRS. SMITH sings a lullaby to the machine gun. She takes a baby bottle and some baby wipes out of the cupboard, fills the baby bottle with gun oil, and begins oiling the machine gun. MR. SMITH returns with the crib.)*

MRS. SMITH: What do you think we ought to call it?

MR. SMITH: I think we ought to call the police.

MRS. SMITH: Oh, Charles, couldn't we keep it?

MR. SMITH: Charlotte, I know you wanted a baby –

MRS. SMITH: I did. I do. And I know you're going to say this isn't a baby, but then why is it in a baby basket?

*(beat.)*

MR. SMITH: I don't know.

MRS. SMITH: Somebody wrapped it up in a warm, soft blanket. Somebody put down some pillows so it would have a soft place to sleep. Somebody didn't want to walk away . . . but had to. Somebody loved it. Couldn't we love it too?

MR. SMITH: It's a machine gun! It isn't safe!

MRS. SMITH: Love isn't ever safe, Charles.

*(MR. SMITH approaches the machine gun and reaches out a finger to stroke its barrel.)*

MRS. SMITH: I think it likes you, too.

MR. SMITH: Hmm.

*(MR. SMITH picks up the machine gun and holds it like a machine gun.)*

MRS. SMITH: Not like that! Haven't you ever held a baby?

*(MRS. SMITH adjusts his arms so that he holds it like a baby.)*

MRS. SMITH: There. Much better. Do you think it's a boy or a girl?

MR. SMITH: . . . I really don't know.  
*(beat.)*

What color blanket did it come in?

MRS. SMITH: Yellow.  
*(beat.)*

Which would you rather have?

MR. SMITH: A boy, I suppose. I've always wanted a son.

MRS. SMITH: Yes, if it were a boy then it could carry on the family name when it got married.

MR. SMITH: I don't think you could count on its getting married –

MRS. SMITH: No – but you never know.

MR. SMITH: Do you think it might be a boy?

MRS. SMITH: I think it's very likely.

*(MR. SMITH looks down at the machine gun in his arms.)*

MRS. SMITH: Charles, please? You could have a son. We could be a family. I want us to be a family so much.

MR. SMITH: All right.

MRS. SMITH: We can keep him?

MR. SMITH: We can keep . . . him.

MRS. SMITH: Oh, Charles, thank you!  
(*beat.*)

I think we should call him Charles Jr.

MR. SMITH: Really?

MRS. SMITH: Of course.

MR. SMITH: Charlotte?

MRS. SMITH: Yes, Charles?

MR. SMITH: I love you.

MRS. SMITH: I love you too, Charles.  
(*beat.*)

I'll bet the baby's cold. Are you cold, sweetheart? Mommy's going to get you a nice warm blanket, yes she is . . .

## SCENE 2

(*That night. The machine gun is in its crib, with a mobile hanging above it. MRS. SMITH, in a nightgown, tiptoes in and stands over the crib.*)

MRS. SMITH: I love watching you sleep.

I wonder what you're dreaming. I wonder if babies dream the same way grown-up people do. Maybe you're dreaming that someday you'll be an astronaut. Or a movie star! Or president! But that's silly. You don't even know what any of those things are yet.

MRS. SMITH (cont'd): Maybe you're dreaming of monsters, things with teeth hiding behind the dresser or under the crib. But there aren't any monsters here. Mommy loves you, and Daddy loves you, and you've filled the whole house up with love, and there's no room left for anything bad to get in here.

I love watching you sleep, safe, and so beautiful. I'll tell you what I'll be dreaming, baby. When I go to sleep tonight I'll be dreaming of you.

*(MR. SMITH, in pajamas or a robe, enters. He sees his wife standing over the crib, crosses to her, and puts his arm around her. He watches her, and she watches the machine gun sleep.)*

### SCENE 3

*(The next morning. The SMITHS' bedroom. MRS. SMITH is in the shower offstage. MR. SMITH is getting ready for work. The machine gun, wrapped in a blanket, lies on the bed. MR. SMITH looks at himself in the mirror. He is dissatisfied. He takes his glasses off and fusses with his hair.*

*Then, with a quick glance towards the bathroom, he picks up the machine gun, and strikes a Rambo pose, pretending to gun down invisible enemies. He likes the way he looks.*

*The shower shuts off offstage and quickly MR. SMITH switches to holding the machine gun like a baby. MRS. SMITH enters in a robe, with a towel over her hair.)*

MRS. SMITH: How are my favorite boys?

MR. SMITH: Just fine, dear. Have you seen my shoes?

MRS. SMITH: Yes, they're behind the chair.

MR. SMITH: What would I do without you. Do you think I need my raincoat?

MRS. SMITH: No, it's sunny today.

MR. SMITH: What will you do today, dear?

MRS. SMITH: This morning I want to disassemble Charlie and give him a good cleaning, and change his diaper and his magazine clip. And then I'll put in some cookies, and then it'll be time for lunch. After lunch I'll read him a story.

*(suddenly embarrassed)*

You don't think it's silly to read him stories? I know he's too young to understand – but I heard that if you read your baby stories it might learn to read sooner.

MR. SMITH: I don't think there's anything wrong with it.

MRS. SMITH: Neither do I.

*(a tender look)*

Then after storytime it's naptime, and while he's napping I want to call some friends and tell them the good news.

MR. SMITH: Charlotte – dear - I'm not sure that's a good idea.

MRS. SMITH: Why not?

MR. SMITH: Charlie is . . . very different, and I think some people might not understand.

MRS. SMITH: You mean because he's black?

MR. SMITH: Well . . . yes, that's part of it.

MRS. SMITH: Anyone who doesn't is just plain narrow minded!

MR. SMITH: Maybe so, but there are a lot of narrow minded people in the world. And they might be afraid of Charlie at first.

MRS. SMITH: Why would anyone be afraid of Charlie?

MR. SMITH: Well, because he's a lethal weapon.

MRS. SMITH: But that isn't his fault. And inside he's the dearest, sweetest little thing.

MR. SMITH: Yes, but nobody knows that but you. Us.

MRS. SMITH: I'll have to tell Sally. She's my best friend, she'll understand.

MR. SMITH: All right. Tell the Martins. But let's not tell anyone else, for now.

MRS. SMITH: All right.

*(She exits into the bathroom. While she is offstage MR. SMITH strikes another Rambo pose with the machine gun in the mirror. She comes back without the towel, combing out her hair, and he quickly returns to holding it like a baby.)*

MR. SMITH: You're beautiful, Charlotte.

MRS. SMITH: What?

MR. SMITH: Ever since Charlie's come you've got this glow.

MRS. SMITH: Oh, go on. I'm running around all the time is all.

MR. SMITH: No, really. You've got candles in your eyes. Like you did when we first were married. Only after we lost the baby – the other baby – the candles went out. But now they're all lit up again.

MRS. SMITH: Oh, Charles.

MR. SMITH: Come here.

*(He grabs her and they kiss.)*

MRS. SMITH: Why, Charles!

MR. SMITH: I could be late for work . . .

*(They kiss passionately as the lights go down.)*

#### **SCENE 4**

*(That night. The machine gun lies in its crib. MR. SMITH enters, in pajamas. He looks at the machine gun for a long time.)*

MR. SMITH: I always wanted to be a soldier.

MR. SMITH (cont'd): Me, a soldier, can you imagine that? But I did. I was the kid that everybody picked on in grade school. They'd rub my face in the dirt and I'd think about being big and being able to protect myself. I wanted to get a gun and go hunting, birds and squirrels and deer, but my parents wouldn't let me.

*(He picks it up, unwraps it, and holds it like a machine gun.)*

I tried to enlist when I was eighteen, but my eyes weren't good enough. And then I met Charlotte – your Mommy - and we got married. I forgot all about wanting a gun, wanting to be a soldier, wanting anything but to live with her and raise a family. Only . . . we couldn't.

*(Softly, pretending to shoot)*

Bam! Bam, Bam! B-b-b-b-b-b-b-b-bam!

You want to go hunting? I bet there's birds and squirrels and deer out in those woods. Mommy wouldn't like it, but Mommy doesn't have to know. What do you think? You want to spend some time with Dad?

*(He puts on his coat and takes the machine gun outside.)*

## SCENE 5

*(The next morning. MRS. SMITH is preparing for company, setting the table with cups and a plate of cookies. The machine gun lies in its crib. The doorbell rings.)*

MRS. MARTIN *(offstage)*: Charlotte? It's Sally. And Lizzie. Are you in?

MRS. SMITH *(crossing to the door to open it)*: Hi, Sally! Thanks for coming over.

*(MRS. MARTIN stands on the porch, holding a baby wrapped in a pink blanket.)*

MRS. MARTIN: Hi, Charlotte. You said you had good news?

*(She catches sight of the crib. MRS. SMITH beams.)*