

"BABY FACTORY"

by Stephen Bittrich

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EXT. OUTSIDE DNA ALCHEMY OFFICES - DAY

The DNA ALCHEMY corporate office looms behind a large, uninteresting sign which reads: "DNA ALCHEMY. CREATING FAMILIES SINCE 2004."

INT. DR. SALAD'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. SALAD, early 40's and wearing a spotless white lab coat sits behind his desk. His bubbly energy infects MR. and MRS. WHITE, 30's, sitting primly on the opposite side of the desk.

DR. SALAD

So Mr. and Mrs. White, you're interested in a baby!

MR. WHITE

Yes, Doctor Salad.

MRS. WHITE

It's about all we can think about!

DR. SALAD

I completely understand, Mrs. White. So many of our clients love babies, want babies, can only think about babies, if you catch my meaning.

MRS. WHITE

I don't think I do...

DR. SALAD

We have so many glum, droopy, infertile couples come through these doors, yearning for a little bundle of joy to call their own. They've given up hope ever ever planting the seed of life, but we pick them up, dust them off, and through the miracle of science, a life is created.

MRS. WHITE

Oh, it's so exciting!

DR. SALAD

Yes, isn't it? So first order of business, a small questionnaire.

He slaps down a telephone book size questionnaire. Mrs. White notices his rubber gloves.

DR. SALAD (cont'd)

I find it best to work from general to specific, don't you?

MR. WHITE

I suppose...

DR. SALAD
You would like a healthy baby?

MRS. WHITE
Yes, of course. Doesn't everybody?

DR. SALAD
Usually, but I have to ask. Some parents find some minor genetic defect keeps the child dependent upon them.
(making quotation marks with his fingers on the word "healthy"--this is a character trait that HE employs throughout the play)
I'm not saying it's necessarily a "healthy" way to go...

MRS. WHITE
Oh my!

DR. SALAD
Male or female?

MR. WHITE
We'd like a...

MRS. WHITE
...a little girl!

MR. WHITE
Yes, a little girl...is that a general question?

DR. SALAD
Oh, it gets much more specific. Beautiful or ugly? Or somewhere in between?

MR. WHITE
You can guarantee her looks?

DR. SALAD
To an extent yes. We work with the what you give us. We filter elements of your DNA. We purify it to its essence. Have you ever noticed ugly people with a beautiful baby?

MR. WHITE
Uh...I think...

DR. SALAD

Of course you have! Even ugly people can get lucky! But we here at DNA Alchemy take out the element of luck. If you want a beautiful baby, we find the DNA in your own make up that will best make that happen. Of course, beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but for Caucasians, such as yourselves, we rely on the the Greek models to inform our "beauty gage."

MRS. WHITE

I...I want a beautiful baby...don't you, Honey?

MR. WHITE

Yes, well, I'd say so, yes, let's.

DR. SALAD

Excellent! A "babe" of a baby it is. As I'm sure you can imagine, that *is* the most common response. So female beauty in the Greek model. Now Mrs. White, I notice that you're rather flat chested.

MR. WHITE

I say...!

DR. SALAD

Do you want some genetic enhancement for your baby in that area?

MRS. WHITE

On a baby?

DR. SALAD

Well, every good baby grows up! And here at DNA Alchemy we don't just reflect on the infant life, but the whole life. But I digress. Your chest just struck me for a moment, but that is a more "specific" issue, and we are on the general... tall/short?

MRS. WHITE

Uh, tall?

MR. WHITE

Tall, yes, tall. That's nice.

MRS. WHITE

Five ten.

MR. WHITE

Five ten? Well, Honey, I'm sure they can't...

DR. SALAD

Actually, we can. Five ten it is. Endomorph, Ectomorph, or Morph-o-morph?

MRS. WHITE

Endo...what?

MR. WHITE

Oh that's the body type, right?

DR. SALAD

Yes. Many people go with the ectomorph, a more athletic type body type.

MR. WHITE

Oh yes, we want that!

MRS. WHITE

Really? Athletic, Honey? You don't want her to be more...feminine?

MR. WHITE

She can be a famous athlete and support us in our old age.

DR. SALAD

You know, and at this point in time, that's probably still true! Of course, if our technology ever became the norm, as is our hope, everybody could be an equally superior athlete. Ha ha! Fortunately for you, economics still rule who can and can't afford this technology.

There is a knock at the door.

DR. SALAD (cont'd)

Yes?

NURSE SLUTT (OS)

Dr. Salad, your tea.

DR. SALAD

Tea? Already? Oh, very well, but it's quite vexing.

NURSE SLUTT opens the door for DR. SALAD 2 who carries the tea tray. She leaves, closing the door behind her.

Dr. Salad 2 is an exact doppelganger for Dr. Salad, except Dr. Salad 2 is terribly deformed. His genital area is of particular notice with its swollen appearance.

And to make matters even more distressing, Dr. Salad 2 seems not quite right in the head. HE limps in with the tea tray threatening to let it crash at every step.

DR. SALAD (cont'd)
COME IN, DR. SALAD!

MRS. WHITE
But...I thought you were Dr. Salad...oh my!

DR. SALAD
(whispering)
Yes, yes, that's right. I am Dr. Salad, but he wants to be just like me, and it doesn't do any harm to humor him, eh? He's a good goose.
(shouting)
VERY GOOD, DR. SALAD! JUST SET THAT DOWN RIGHT HERE!
(normal voice, innocently)
Tea?

MR. WHITE
Oh, I don't think...

MRS. WHITE
Not for me...

DR. SALAD
(shouting)
THIS IS MY SON!
(aside, to the Whites)
Well, sort of. He's a miracle of modern science, don't you think?

MRS. WHITE
Yes, he...he's...

MR. WHITE

What?

DR. SALAD

Anybody can clone a sheep, eh? Doesn't he look just like me? OKAY, DR. SALAD. THAT'S QUITE ENOUGH!

DR. SALAD 2

(with a strong speech impediment)

Sthing...stthing a sthong.

DR. SALAD

NO! NOT TODAY! TIME'S UP, DR. SALAD! I'VE GOT TO PLAN A BABY!

DR. SALAD 2

Sthing a sthong! Sthing a sthong!

DR. SALAD

NOOOOO!

(then instantly changing his tune)

Oh, very well.

(aside to the Whites)

He'll never let it go otherwise.

(back to Dr. Salad 2)

WHAT SHALL WE SING? HMMMM? OH, I KNOW!

He begins a little song and dance which are quite obviously made up completely off the top of this head.

DR. SALAD (cont'd)

I got my top hat...

I got my cane...

And I'm all dressed up...

In a tuxedo...

Dancin', dancin', dancin'

Come on everybody...

He taps for a bit. It is obvious that this is completely made up as well, but further, that he hasn't the faintest idea how to tap dance.

Dr. Salad 2 follows along, choking up a giddy, bizarre chortle.

DR. SALAD (cont'd)

OKAY, OKAY, THAT'S QUITE ENOUGH! LOTS OF WORK TO DO!

The door swings open urgently.

NURSE SLUTT
Dr. Salad?

DR. SALAD
Nurse Slutt! I'm in a meeting!

NURSE SLUTT
Yes, I know Dr. Salad, but...

She crosses quickly to him and whispers in his ear.

DR. SALAD
The deuce you say! Where are his restraints?

She whispers again in his ear. Dr. Salad looks concerned, looks over to the Whites, then puts on a fake smile.

DR. SALAD (cont'd)
Excuse me for one moment, Mr. White, Mrs. White. Little family emergency. Dr. Salad, get them some tea, man!

DR. SALAD 2
Huh?

DR. SALAD
SOME TEA! SOME TEA!

Dr. Salad leaves with the nurse.

MRS. WHITE
(quietly, to the air)
But I don't want any tea.

Dr. Salad 2, proud as punch, gives them a toothy grin, then begins to sing softly with a rasp, almost like the whole song is happening somewhere in the back of his throat

DR. SALAD 2
I gok ma topf hot...
I gok ma cayne...
I awe dresthed uuuup...

There is a mournful HOWL in the outside corridor followed by a few blood curdling screams.

DR. SALAD 2 (cont'd)

Uh oh. Bad.

Dr. Salad enters, slightly flustered with a generous squirt of red liquid on his lab coat.

DR. SALAD

Yes, well, here I am, back again. Sorry about that.

(loudly)

GOODBYE, DR. SALAD. TOODLES.

DR. SALAD 2

(to the Whites)

Goo-bye. I wuv you.

Dr. Salad 2 leaves.

DR. SALAD

Oh, isn't he an absolute joy? Want to adopt him? Ha! So, where were we? Ah yes, a baby! A little bundle of joy. What have we got so far...healthy--check, female--check, human--check, beautiful, tall, ectomorph--check, check, check, and some outraaaageous knockers!!!

MR. WHITE

Now just a moment, what's all this about "human"?

DR. SALAD

Sorry?

MR. WHITE

You said "human--check." What does that mean, exactly?

DR. SALAD

Well, my dear Mr. White, you do want a "human" baby, don't you?

MRS. WHITE

Of course we do!

MR. WHITE

I'll handle this, dear. Now see here, Dr. Salad. I don't know what sort of place you're running here...

DR. SALAD

I mean I just assumed. We *can* mix in chimp DNA, or gorilla, for example. It's possible. Still working on cow for the Christmas rush...

MR. WHITE

A human! A human! A human!

MRS. WHITE

Dear?

MR. WHITE

There's never been any question about that! What sort of freaks of nature are you spawning in this Godforsaken factory?

DR. SALAD

Actually, nature has very little to do with it, Mr. White. SCIENCE!

(hit with an idea)

Ding! That reminds me, I am required by the sturgeon general to provide a "warning label," if you will, for our product.

Dr. Salad goes over to a pull down chart on a stand and reveals a large poster, the first of several startling renderings of terribly deformed babies. Mr. and Mrs. White gasp in horror.

MR. WHITE

Good God!

MRS. WHITE

Oh!

DR. SALAD

Our product comes with a ninety-nine percent rate of full one hundred percent pure satisfaction, but I am required by law to inform you that there is a one percent margin of error in every one hundred cases, if we actually were to test one hundred cases.

Dr. Salad pulls down another grotesque baby picture. Again the Whites gasp.

DR. SALAD (cont'd)

What this means to you, the layman and laywoman, pardon the double entendre, is that this science is not a perfect one, but pretty damn near close!

He pulls down the final picture of a deformed baby which looks to be a mixture of cow and baby.

DR. SALAD (cont'd)
Ah yes, still working on that cow.

MR. WHITE
You, Doctor, are a madman!

MRS. WHITE
Let's just go, John.

DR. SALAD
Mr. White, Mrs. White. Did I tell you about our Labor Day Specials?

MR. WHITE
This is blasphemy! Witchcraft! You--you--Dr. Frankenstein!

DR. SALAD
(on his soap box)
You think you can hurt me? You think I haven't heard those slings and arrows before? I am a "scientist," damn you! And I am not the first of my profession to be oppressed by the superstitious and the unenlightened. What do you think they told Galileo when...that coconut fell on his head? Or when Thomas Edison discovered cheese? When Einstein discovered his theory of relatives. Witch! Heretic! Blasphemer! But did they not persevere? Did they not endure? In this great nation of ours, at this the dawn of a new scientific era, we not only have the knowledge, but the freedom to create a better world...a world of perfection born in a test tube...a world of demigods. And in this great nation of ours, if we make a few òmiscalculations along the way, the sacrifice is worth it for the greater good of mankind! GOD BLESS AMERICA, LAND THAT I LOOOOOVE. STAND BESIDE HER,

AND GUIDE HER--

Nurse Slutt bursts in.

NURSE SLUTT
Dr. Salad!

DR. SALAD
Nurse Slutt?

NURSE SLUTT
The sedative has worn off!

DR. SALAD
Good God, man! Bring me the dart gun.
Increase the dosage by fifty cc's.

Dr. Salad 2 enters and runs to embrace his more comely twin.

DR. SALAD 2
Daddy!

MR. WHITE
My God! You circus freak show!

MRS. WHITE
John!

DR. SALAD
Don't you talk about my precious boy
that way...or I'll introduce you to his
brother!

Consoling Dr. Salad 2.

DR. SALAD (cont'd)
There, there. There, there, my good
boy.
(to the Whites)
Perhaps you'd better leave. I don't
think we can help you here.

MR. WHITE
With pleasure.

MRS. WHITE
Thank you anyway--

MR. WHITE

Beatrice!

DR. SALAD
Nurse Slutt, show these people...the door.

NURSE SLUTT
Doctor, no!

DR. SALAD
The door!

NURSE SLUTT
Not the door!

DR. SALAD
Show them...Nurse...show them...THE DOOR.

MRS. WHITE
We can see ourselves out...

NURSE SLUTT
Very well, Doctor.

Nurse Slutt and the Whites exit. Nurse Slutt seems anxious about the door to come.

Dr. Salad takes Dr. Salad 2 into his arms.

DR. SALAD
There, there, my precious boy. It's not your fault. You are not to blame. You are...beautiful. You are a child of questions and dreams and exploration. In our travels in this great journey of life, we will encounter the unenlightened, the ignorant. But we must be strong. We must educate. It is our sworn duty to show them that science must march on. Science...must...march on.

FADE OUT.