

No Signs of Intelligent Life

*A Comedy
By Bryan Starchman*

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DEDICATION

*To my fellow geeks out there, may you live long and prosper
and may the force always be with you. So say we all.*

STORY OF THE PLAY

If you think you've suffered too many awkward moments or been in the dark in conversations, just think how poor, innocent aliens feel! Hungry to fit in, (a little too hungry at times!) they do and say things that we humans aren't allowed to. Join in the laughter as these extraterrestrials meet all kinds of humans -- teenagers, rednecks, survivalists and the most enigmatic, tech support nerds. Will these hapless aliens be able to figure out the daily rituals of dating, gossiping at the water cooler, camping, or even fixing our computers? The aliens have the knowledge to increase food production, create alternative energies, and achieve world peace. Are earthlings the intelligent life they seek to bestow these gifts? More important, could earthlings help the aliens get home again?!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Large, flexible cast of 29. Maximum: 2 m, 2 w, 25 flexible

Minimum with doubling: 2 m, 2 w, 1 flexible

Scene 1: Introductions

Almighty Voice

Alien 1

Scene 2: Water Cooler

Alien 2

Human 1

Human 2

Human 3 (Woman)

Human 4 (Woman)

Scene 3: Dating

Barry (Man)

Alien 3 Denise (Woman)

Scene 4: Tech Support

Alien 4

Human

Scene 5: Substitute Teaching

Alien 5

Student 1, 2, and 3

Optional Intermission

Alien 1

Scene 6: Take Me to Your Leader

Alien 6

Teen 1 and 2

Randy (Male)

Scene 7: They Do What on Halloween!?!

Alien 7

Presenter

Human 1 and 2

Scene 8: The Great Outdoors

Alien 8

Guide

Tourist 1 and 2

Scene 9: Human Resources

Alien 9

Rep

Scene 10: So Long, Farewell

Alien 1

A NOTE ON CASTING

This show offers incredibly flexible casting. For the most part, the roles can be portrayed by males or females unless otherwise noted. Feel free to change pronouns as necessary.

SCENES

The scenes work well in the order listed, but directors can rearrange the order, if desired. However, the first scene and last scene are bookends to the play and should remain as such.

COSTUMES

Every Alien in this play wears a green, long-sleeved turtleneck...and pants, of course. The pants don't have to be green.

Scene 1: Introductions

(AT RISE: The stage is dark as a powerful and dramatic almighty announcer VOICE booms out over the audience. For vocal and musical inspiration, see the opening of the 1986 film version of "Little Shop of Horrors.")

VOICE: Since the dawn of time, man has often wondered: Are we alone in the universe? Ancient civilizations have left behind relics featuring carvings of what appear to be alien objects. Architectural wonders built thousands of years ago without the benefit of modern tools continue to baffle archeologists. Recently, many believe the government has been hiding proof of alien life forms in secure locations like Area 51. And, in the United States, thousands of unidentified flying objects are reported to local authorities every year. But as far as we know, creatures from outer space have yet to make contact with humans...until now.

(SPOTLIGHT focuses on an ALIEN BOB or BARB. He looks just like us; the only way we know that the actor is playing an Alien is by his green, long-sleeved shirt.)

VOICE: *(Cont'd.)* This...is Bob. *(Or Barb.)*

(ALIEN looks around for the location of the almighty voice.)

ALIEN: *(To audience.)* Hi. How ya doing?

VOICE: Bob is not his real name...

ALIEN: *(Shocked by the booming narration.)* That's true...it's not. I picked it out of a human baby name book. My actual name is made up of sounds delivered at such high frequencies that your eardrums would burst. *(Beat.)* I wanted to make a good impression, so I decided to just introduce myself as Bob.

VOICE: Tell them where you're from, Bob!

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ALIEN: Um...okay. (*Dramatic pause and then.*) I come from outer space.

VOICE: (*A bit frustrated, losing the confident tone.*) We know that, Bob. Be more specific.

ALIEN: Oh! Right! Sorry, Almighty Voice. (*Dramatic.*) We traveled from a galaxy far, far away called "Bakersfield" (or other nearby town). (*Beat.*) Again, not really the name of our galaxy, but I didn't want to burst your eardrums.

VOICE: You said "we"? Are there more of you?

ALIEN: Oh yes, we're all around you. We've been on Earth since we first made the journey in search of intelligent life earlier this year.

VOICE: But, you look just like these humans!

ALIEN: To be perfectly honest, if we appeared in our original form your brain wouldn't be able to process our beauty, so we decided to morph ourselves to look like average humans. The only way you can tell us apart from the real humans in this story is by our signature bright green turtlenecks. (*Beat.*) And our lack of a bellybutton...but I just ate and I'd rather not show you my stomach.

VOICE: And we'd rather not see it.

ALIEN: (*A little offended.*) Why not?

VOICE: (*Ignoring ALIEN.*) How did you get here from the Galaxy of "Bakersfield"?

ALIEN: (*Laughing.*) Well, we didn't take a spacecraft. As you earthlings may know, it would take 90,000 Earth years to reach another planet capable of sustaining life. So we traveled through a wormhole and now we walk amongst you, trying to fit in...but many of your ways and customs confuse us.

VOICE: (*Leading.*) It feels like you're starting to develop a plot for this play!

ALIEN: (*Catching on.*) Yes. Yes, I am. Tonight you will see actual footage of various aliens from my home planet interacting with humans in everyday situations as we desperately search for any signs of true intelligence. Your culture both fascinates and baffles us. What follows are some of our more frustrating moments. Enjoy! (*Starts to walk offstage.*)

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VOICE: Break a leg, Bob!

ALIEN: If you insist.

(ALIEN extends a leg, raises both hands high above it, breathes in and out a couple of times in preparation and then... LIGHTS BLACKOUT. SFX: a horrible crunching sound. Alien screams out in pain.)

ALIEN: *(In agony, from the darkness.)* Why would you make me do that!?!

VOICE: *(More than a little unnerved.)* It was a figure of speech. What these earthlings call an "idiom." I didn't actually expect you to go through with it.

ALIEN: *(Still in darkness, sad, limping away.)* Sometimes I really hate you humans.

End of Scene

End of Freeview

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