

Baby Quantoo



Zelda Mae cradled little Quantoo with all of the tenderness that an adult human can reasonably be expected to show a hideous baby extraterrestrial, especially when its parental unit threatens to annihilate half the planet if her offspring is harmed while she's out on the town. Of course, Zelda Mae didn't actually *touch* Quantoo. No, the toddler's scaly skin exuded a mysterious rubbery goo that was toxic to grown-ups, so the alien was hermetically sealed in a little pink n' perky environmental suit that even accommodated the two antenna stalks which rose tendril-like from its bulbous head. Because the Earth's atmosphere of nitrogen, oxygen, argon, carbon dioxide and Tuna P. Wiggle irritated the little rascal's lungs, a sophisticated pumping mechanism kept its chamber filled with the much friendlier aroma of hydrogen sulfide. A small glass plate allowed Quantoo to see out, and, naturally, for any curious Earthling to look in. Few did, for, as noted, the alien was perfectly revolting to behold. Zelda Mae felt a sudden warm dampness spread over her knee. Looks like the environmental suit wasn't as leakproof as advertised! Well, she was *not* changing the kid, no matter what its mother threatened to do! And now little Quantoo began to squall, the way any infant does when it's wet and unhappy. However, Quantoo's screams ruptured the suit even more, and an infinitesimal dribble of rubbery goo fell upon Zelda Mae's dress, burned through to her leg, and then burned even further. Zelda Mae shrieked, simultaneously jumping to her feet and dropping the alien like a hot potato (which it did indeed resemble). Unfortunately, Quantoo fell hard on its head, and seemed to go into the extraterrestrial's version of cardiac arrest ... which could be seen as a metaphor for what lay in store for the unluckier half of Earth later that day.