

Der gemietete Mann (The Leased Man)

Rebecca Steiner is the hostess of a serious, established talk show, and a just-turned mother of four. The hippest teenage broadcasters in the USA offer her the dating game “Wirt Flirt”, where she plays matchmaker for young, pierced, totally hip guys and girls with the help of bogus questions and even more bogus answers. Most likely clouded by the high-paying offer, or maybe even by her abnormal hormone production, Rebecca signs the contract.

Since she is still nursing and has to drag her newborn to the broadcast station, they hire a “boy” from Japan for her – she calls him her “au pair guy”. The 19 year old Makoto, at first completely intimidated and speechless, observes Rebecca’s attempts at being young, dynamic, funny, stylish and trendy (after all, she wears a double D nursing bra!). Basically, she is trying to be irresistible and gorgeous. He feels dismay and sympathy by what he sees while changing the baby’s diapers, preparing bottles and pushing the baby carriage through the studio.

The producer of the series, Delisha-Lee Shoomaker, was also a hostess of this flirt show 30 years ago and had to leave because she had become old, fat and unattractive. Behind the scenes, Rebecca discovers through botched rehearsals, boring shows and high, unending stress that Delisha-Lee wants to satisfy her personal desire for revenge against the broadcasters by sending Rebecca in front of the cameras – or better said to the slaughter house.

While Rebecca is failing miserably, a deep fondness slowly starts to develop between her and Makoto. When they find out about Delisha-Lee’s evil motives, together they kill her in a perfidious way...

Hera Lind’s sixth novel “The Leased Man” deals critically with the youth craze in television and with the unfair fact that women in TV have to be young, pretty and slim, yet men do not.

This best seller (1.3 million copies sold) is not only hilarious and acrimonious, it also depicts an extremely exceptional love story.