A Discrepancy between the Screen and the Scenario:  
The Two Different Endings of Tennessee Williams' Baby Doll

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Abstract

The film Baby Doll (1956), directed by Elia Kazan, is based on Tennessee Williams' one-act plays, "27 Wagons Full of Cotton" (1953) and "The Unsatisfactory Supper" (1946). Through the process of the collaboration of Kazan and Williams, the film came to have an ending quite different from that of the published text. Though often dismissed as sentimental, the end of the published text accurately conveys the playwright's intention of presenting the heroine as a victim of the patriarchal system of the Deep South. Furthermore, Williams articulates the heroine's neurotic and victimized state in Tiger Tail (1979), the full-length play version of Baby Doll. Baby Doll never optimistically celebrates heterosexual love. Rather, Williams uses its heroine as a conventional sex symbol, but with sarcasm: her pubescent sexuality was originally derived from Flora Meagan in "27 Wagons Full of Cotton," in which she must endure rape by the vicious Vicarro (Silva Vacarro in Baby Doll). Vacarro (both in the film and the script) must scare Baby Doll to arouse her sexual feelings, and the awakening makes her subservient enough to sign a paper leading to her husband's arrest. I will attempt in this paper to examine Baby Doll basically as a victim by taking up the film's relation to the original one-act play, "27 Wagons Full of Cotton" and its subsequent stage version, Tiger Tail (1978). I will also show that the two different endings of Baby Doll at bottom share the same version of the heroine's victimized state, yet in its undisguised portrayal of the heroine's neurotic state, the ending of the published version is more faithful to the playwright's artistic vision.

Introduction

Baby Doll (1956) occupies an unusual place in the Tennessee Williams canon. In collaboration with Elia Kazan, he recreated two of his one-act plays, "27 Wagons Full of Cotton" (1953) and "The Unsatisfactory Supper"(1946) into one film-script, Baby Doll, "which challenged the Hollywood establishment as few other films had" with its bold yet artistic presenta-
tion of sexuality (Goff 249). The collaboration, in fact, underwent a complicated process, and the film ended quite differently from the published script. Arthur Knight points out that the film's "cinematic effectiveness" is largely "due to Kazan's direction" (22), and "the script itself gives no suggestion at all of its hysteria, its neuroticism, or its surging sexuality" (22). Yet, quite contrary to this view, the ending of Williams' text essentially presents the sexual victimization of the heroine just as candidly as in the one-act version, "27 Wagons Full of Cotton." In other words, the published version more faithfully exposes the playwright's artistic vision. This assumption would be clarified when the script is juxtaposed with its stage version, *Tiger Tail* (1978), which depicts the heroine's neurotic and masochistic state of mind even more equivocally than the film script.

Baby Doll, though comically depicted, embodies all the lonely figures of Williams' distressed women, including Blanche DuBois, Alma Winemiller, and Heavenly Finley in *Sweet Bird of Youth* (1959). In this paper, I will attempt to observe the heroine of *Baby Doll* basically as a victim by taking up the movie's relation to the original one-act play, "27 Wagons Full of Cotton," and its subsequent stage version, *Tiger Tail*. I will also show that the two different endings of *Baby Doll* at bottom share the same undertone of the heroine's victimized state while examining how Williams and Kazan hold different views toward the heroine's sexuality and how they are reflected in the making of the film.

1 From "27 Wagons Full of Cotton" to *Baby Doll*

First, I will review how the heroine's neurotic condition originally appears in "27 Wagons Full of Cotton": Williams added youth and an animated spirit to her character when he recreated the one-act play into the film script. Indeed, as Hilfer points out, "the forming of the new Baby Doll was another crucial decision for comedy" (79), and this transformation from Flora, the original heroine, into Baby Doll alleviates its sexually violent tone. First, Williams removes the shocking rape episode. Second, Archie Lee treats his wife less domineeringly than does Jake in "27 Wagons Full of Cotton." Finally, and most significantly, by recreating the heroine as a "virgin," Williams in a way justifies the husband's perverted desire for his baby-like wife.

The openings and closings of the one-act play and of the film script would seem unrelated; yet actually one can locate common imagery: Flora's first line, "Jake! I've lost m' white kid purse!" (3) implies her dislocation, given that the "white kid purse" is "something to hold on to"
(18) and the only "protection" she has. At the end, "cradling the big white purse in her arms" (38), Flora sings: "If a bough bends — a baby will fall! / Down will come Baby — cradle — an’ — all!" (38). Bruised and humiliated, Flora now recognizes that even the "white kid purse" can no longer "protect" her. On the other hand, in the opening scene of the film version, Baby Doll "is asleep" in a crib, lying voluptuously with her thumb in her mouth. Then, at the end, "Vacarro drops out of tree and stands with arms lifted for Baby Doll" (116). Here, the allusions to the cradle, bough and baby in "27 Wagons Full of Cotton" parallel with those of the crib, the tree, and "Baby" Doll. In addition, the film's ending does not make it clear whether Vacarro can successfully catch the "falling" Baby Doll from the "bough." Furthermore, even though soundlessly asleep, the "voluptuous girl under twenty" cannot stay in a comfortable position in the "crib" built for a baby. The opening thus embodies the heroine's total dislocation and imbalance.

Just as Flora turns into a "mother" by experiencing the misery of rape, Baby Doll acquires a feeling of loss through her encounter with Vacarro: Perhaps for the first time, she experiences sorrow when he informs her that the sole purpose of his visit is to obtain proof of Archie Lee's guilt. A spoiled "child," who has yearned only for "protection" all her life, is now transformed into a "mother," who dandles Vacarro like a baby in a crib. This "mother" image undeniably evokes menace: both Flora and Baby Doll, through their encounters with strangers, have learned that their husbands are "no protection." Flora's predicament would appear more destructive, yet Baby Doll cannot expect Vacarro to be a reliable protector, either. The end of the story suggests (in both the published and film versions) that Baby Doll will dedicate her life to "waiting," and that she will become another Aunt Rose Comfort, an aged "Front Porch Girl." Just like Flora, she must transform herself into a "mother," who must accept male authority with absolute perseverance and masochism.

2 From Baby Doll to Tiger Tail

Baby Doll was reborn in its stage version, Tiger Tail, in 1978. Its plot, setting, and characterization appear very similar to those of the film version. This work seems to be only a pale imitation of Baby Doll: D. J. R. Bruckner claims that the work was meant only to "bring in some extra cash for the playwright after the film became a success" (n. p.), and Palmer reports that the playwright's attempt to "recycle" the film "proved a stage failure" (226). Nonetheless, here
Williams depicts the victimized state of the heroine more minutely than in *Baby Doll*, and thus reveals more of her neurotic side. Additionally, *Tiger Tail* reinforces the highly masochistic tone of the heroine's victimization in "27 Wagons Full of Cotton." By examining *Tiger Tail* in its relation to the film script of *Baby Doll*, one can clarify how Kazan's lyrical ending of the film contradicts Williams' intention to portray the heroine's troubled psyche.

Even before the opening of *Tiger Tail*, Williams articulates the heroine's dislocation by making the men from "Ideal Pay As You Go Plan Furniture Company" remove "what furniture remains in the house" (119). Thus the audience is to face the inside of the house stripped of furniture except the "crib." At the opening, then, "litter surrounds the crib: a rocking horse, old movie magazines, candy wrappers, a pair of pink bedroom slippers, and a broken down old radio"(119). In this way, the "crib" for the child wife does not only imply her naiveté but also her dispossession and dislocation: the crib itself can no longer hold the grown woman, yet the "litter," which surrounds the crib, suggests the out-of-date, "broken" and dismal quality of her mental state.

Williams delineates more distinctly *Baby Doll*'s sexual obsession in the stage version, which emphasizes her disturbed mind. To illustrate, on the way to obtain her "Coca-Cola" at Ruby Lightfoot's, *Baby Doll* becomes terrified by her own sexual hallucination:

BABY DOLL. Jumped outa the bushes and stood right square in the road and he — he showed himself to me, third time this month! I would of shot him said if he'd moved at me! I scaired him silly with my pistol!

AUNT ROSE. Set down, now, honey, breathe quiet. You could a just imagined it, out of — excitement. (124)

Quite contrary to the healthy Hollywood-sex-symbol type of girl who appears in *Baby Doll*, the heroine of *Tiger Tail* suffers from the imaginary sexual assault, which evokes the image of Blanche, or more closely, Miss Edith Jelkes in the short story version of *The Night of the Iguana* (1948). In her impetuous urge to shoot the invented assaulter, she exposes her psychological instability. Furthermore, her conversation with Aunt Rose Comfort reveals that a similar neurotic impulse was once reported in a newspaper, and this time the aunt has to bring her "some paregoric to calm [her] nerves" (124). Moreover, just as Flora in "27 Wagons Full of Cotton" does, *Baby Doll* in *Tiger Tail* "holler(s) everything" to her husband, and thus discloses her panic.
We can hardly detect the healthy girl of the film version in this heroine on the verge of nervous breakdown.

Nonetheless, the heroines in both versions, in essence, share the same neurosis. In the film version, the child's frustration is presented more light-heartedly, but danger clearly awaits her: her father marries Baby Doll off to the middle-aged Archie Lee. She attributes her father's action to a desire to secure her living after his death. *Tiger Tail*, however, further elucidates the intricate father-daughter relationship:

BABY DOLL: No, not a bit. I feel real relax.... Once my daddy, when my daddy was livin', he took me to this doctor in town and tol' the doctor he thought I was sufferin' from — what was it? Oh, yais, pernicious anemia.... yeah.

SILVA: A vitality crisis?

BABY DOLL: Hmmm-Mmmm. But the doctor said, "Mr. McCorkle, your daughter is at a stage in her life when she's just waitin' for somethin' to stimulate her nature. (191)

The above was the conversation between Vacarro and Baby Doll just after their lovemaking in *Tiger Tail*. She now recognizes that the existence of her father has kept her "nature" from being "stimulated." Her father wanted to keep her as a passive "doll." In her marriage — a business transaction — she is again marked as a commodity exchanged between her father and Archie Lee. She has hence been trained to see herself as nothing but an object to be gazed at, admired, and used all through her life.

The "bliss" of heterosexual union, however, brings another disillusionment to the heroine. Actually, this anticlimax is more acutely presented in *Tiger Tail* than in *Baby Doll*. In the stage version, Vacarro's courtship contains more violence and cruelty, which evokes the rape scene in "27 Wagons Full of Cotton": Act Two of *Tiger Tail* begins with the sound of "the ominous whip" when "everything is frozen" (181). Baby Doll's subsequent words to Vacarro, then, foreshadow the approaching harassment: "What a disgustin' remark! I did not understand a word of it! I am going into the house and lock the door — after such a remark which I wouldn't even...." (181). What is more, Williams clarifies Vacarro's intention to molest her in the "hide-and-seek" scene: "She screams and runs into locked screen door and back into his arms. He grabs her viciously and rips off her skirt. She retreats as a terrified little animal from a remorse-
lessly advancing predator. He snaps the whip and laughs” (185). The cornered Baby Doll and the approaching "predator" invariably evoke the rape scene in A Streetcar Named Desire. Vacarro's attempt to arouse her through humiliation draws out the masochistic element in her nature. In Baby Doll, the heroine, even though scared, seems to enjoy the lingering "children's game" of "hide-and-seek" with the intruder. Yet in Tiger Tail, the molester's actions appear more unequivocal, which serves to accentuate the girl's total surrender in the subsequent scene.

Additionally, in Tiger Tail, Williams provides the audience with an undisguised staging of the young couple's lovemaking. In the scenario, Vacarro's seduction of the child-like wife, at least in appearance, develops into a harmless romance between "two shy children trying to strike up a friendship" (88). In the stage version, however, Williams presents their mutual physical attraction in a bolder manner: When she tries to keep the man from leaving the house after the "game," Vacarro responds to her plea in a physically eloquent way, which is much less apparent in the film script: "She isn't looking into his face. He gives a short quick laugh and kisses her roughly on the lips, holding her head with one hand and slapping her ample rump with the riding crop. She pulls away and gasps" (187). On the screen, Baby Doll's act of turning away from Vacarro "like a shy child" after offering him the "invitation" undoubtedly softens the highly sexualized tone of the stage version. On the stage, Vacarro treats the girl as a physically grown woman, and their love scene is indicative of physical lust rather than mere "friendship."

Indeed, Williams offers a far more flamboyant dramatization of sensuality in Tiger Tail than in Baby Doll: Their physical consummation is far from cloaked in the subsequent scene:

No longer capable of an outcry, nor almost of breathing, she backs into the side of the crib. Slow with confidence, Silva advances to her, removing his shirt. The light now concentrates on their faces and the sacramental crib. The girl is paralyzed, rigid. Silva rips open her blouse and grips her hands that clutch the crib, forcing them slowly up to an almost cruciform position, his body pressed to hers. No longer capable of an outcry, she draws quick, panting breaths. All is dimmed out, now, but the altar-place of the crib, a religiously rich light on it. His head sinks between her exposed breasts. (188)

In this "religious" setting, Williams seems to underline the sacredness of their union. Yet, from another viewpoint, the "cruciform position" of the girl's hands that clutch "the sacramental crib" symbolizes her total surrender to the man. Given the imbalance of the baby "crib" and the
sensuality Baby Doll and Vacarro create, their affinity suggests menace and violence. That is, the babyish girl in the crib cannot directly go forth to the adult sexual union; that is, she is not yet "ready" to accept the situation, but is forced to yield to the dominant force.

In Act II, scene ii, Baby Doll begins to detect the transitory quality of their relationship, and Williams hence casts a shadow on the future of their romance. Vacarro casually dismisses her remark, "I've lost your respect, haven't I?" (190), by replying, "Not a bit, you've gained it, in exchange for that slip of paper...." (190). This conversation obviously alters the meaning of the passionate lovemaking of the preceding scenes. Here, the heroine can no longer see herself with "respect" because she has been deprived of her only valuable commodity, namely, her virginity. She then begins to see herself as worthless and powerless, and this lack of self-esteem forces her closer to Vacarro, and this exchange exposes her masochistic side in their relationship.

The play's curtain, which offers an ending slightly different from the film version, presents the shakiness of their romance. "The lovers remain in the tree" (219) at the curtain while Aunt Rose "rocks on the front porch and sings" (219) the hymn which goes "Rock of ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in thee!" (218). The images of "rocking," "tree" and "cleft" — the images of escape — all contribute in shaping the uncertainty of the lovers' future and the imbalance of their relationship. By juxtaposing blissful lovers in the tree and a rocking old maid, the playwright implies the possibility that Baby Doll will turn into a forever-waiting woman, which again predicts her doomed future as a sexually victimized figure.

3 Kazan and Williams — The Difference in Their Concepts

In essence, Williams aimed at creating the film with a totally different concept from the director's, which resulted in producing the two different endings. Williams highly applauded "every film which Kazan made of [his] work," particularly "Baby Doll." Nonetheless, while Williams intended to create the work into "a grotesque folk comedy," Kazan aimed at creating "a powerful melodrama for which there is absolutely no premise, or preparation, in mood, style, not even story-content in the work which has so far been done" (Hayman 158). Since the film itself presents a sequence of spontaneous actions and feelings and also includes scenes that the script did not suggest, Kazan's touch dominates its creative process. Yet, overall, the film in its essence is more "a grotesque folk comedy" than "a powerful melodrama."
Kazan does not see any serious elements in *Baby Doll*, maintaining that it is "like a fairy tale" (qtd. in Young 226), and also "primitive and not to be taken seriously" (Kazan 561). Surely, its characters are caricatured, given the emphasis on Baby Doll's immaturity, the husband's perversity and Vacarro's prolonged seduction. Nonetheless, as mentioned earlier, *Baby Doll* does not present an entirely different concept of sexuality from "27 Wagons Full of Cotton": Baby Doll's surrender to Vacarro contains something ominous, which reminds us of the violence and masochism in the one-act play. Kazan refers to its seduction scene then: "The interesting thing about some young women is that if you scare them as Vacarro does in this scene, they get turned on. They want you to comfort them. They get aroused at the same time they get frightened" (qtd. in Young 228). Conversely, if men have to "scare" women to "turn [them] on," and if they can "comfort" women only after they "frighten" them, there indeed exists a basic concept of a "rape" mentality, an inclination toward sado-masochism, which has to be "taken seriously" in a psychological sense.

In short, Baby Doll is not "a healthy young animal" (90) as in Falk's description — rather, she is a psychologically and socially cornered being that is very close to a character like Blanche DuBois. Both heroines, as Seidel observes, play the "coquette" (xvi). They are, furthermore, what Seidel calls "masochists" who offer themselves as "beautiful objects" to men: They can be easily used and disposed of by their men (108). Yet they have not willingly chosen the masochistic tendency as their way of living; instead, their circumstance has induced them to act that way, that is, coquettishly and masochistically. Karen Horney defines "masochism" as being essentially an "inclination toward weakness" (270), which is to find "satisfaction by losing the self in something greater, by dissolving the individuality, by getting rid of the self with doubts, conflicts, pains, limitations and isolation" (270).

Baby Doll's surrender to Vacarro embodies this process of eliminating her own self, to which the definitions of "masochism" in both Seidel and Horney can be applied: Baby Doll senses that, as "a girl without education" (50), she has no choice but to utilize her virginity as a commodity for the marriage market, and thus she has unwillingly *sold* herself to the "ole fat thing" through a business transaction. She also uses her lack of education and physical weakness (suggested in her reference to herself as "not athletic") as her most appealing quality of femininity to Vacarro. When she loses her "furniture," the only dependable, solid property she can call her own, she no longer feels "protected." In consequence, she desperately seeks "protection" in Vacarro just as Blanche does in Mitch. Her reluctance to enter the empty house, then, signifies
her refusal to see herself as abandoned and dispossessed. She pleads desperately in the attic scene: "I don't want to fall through. It's crumbling under my feet. I had no idea —— I never been up here before! —— it was in such a weaken condition" (82). The plea in itself embodies her dislocation and mental instability. Her attraction to Vacarro hence originates from the realization of her weak, divided self.

Only after her panic does Baby Doll seek the companionship of, or "intimacy" with, Vacarro. She invites Vacarro into her nursery for a "nap," not only because she feels sexually excited by Vacarro's threat, but also because she profoundly realizes her frailty in that crumbling attic. Saddik views Baby Doll as "a doll" —— "a piece of plastic —— not a fully realized human being without her sexual identity" (70), yet the discovery of her "sexual identity" turns her all the more into a passively waiting "doll" girl. Though clothed in hilarious humor, Baby Doll thus exposes the doomed state of another neurotic, masochistic woman in the Williams canon, and that is where the playwright's intention lies.

4 The Screen and the Scenario
—— The Two Different Endings of Baby Doll

The published version of Baby Doll, feigning the less violent and more comical tone than the one-act play and full-length stage version, seemingly offers a more "sentimental" ending than the film itself: in the published text, as the sheriff takes the wretched Archie Lee into the jail, Baby Doll and Vacarro stay up in a tree in a passionate embrace. Then, as the husband leaves, Vacarro descends from the tree and stretches his arms up toward Baby Doll in the tree. This melodramatic closing turns into a more lyrical one in the film version: after the husband's departure, Vacarro leaves Baby Doll outside the mansion. He promises her to return; yet his words leave her wondering. Baby Doll then embellishes the ending with the poetic line: "We got nothing to do but wait for tomorrow and see if we're remembered or forgotten" (qtd. in Hilfer and Ramsey 81).

Hilfer and Ramsey dismiss the ending of the published version, undermining it as "unintentionally ludicrous" and "sentimental," and highly evaluate the ending of the film version as "frantically comic"(80). Indubitably, Baby Doll, like other Williamsian heroines, is bestowed with a touch of dignity through the poetic language. Nevertheless, dissimilar as they would seem, the two different endings in fact aim at presenting the heroine in the same predicament.
As Sinclair points out, "Down in the Deep South, it wasn't enough to be a man's baby: a baby doll was even more helpless, passive, dumb, and thus by definition cute" (96), and, more significantly, the heroine learns to accept subservience as she becomes awakened to her sexuality. The acceptance of her sexuality does not bestow her with vigor, love or beauty, but, as Dworkin explains, makes her aware of "a pitiful vulnerability that comes from having been used, or a pitiful vulnerability that comes from longing for something lost or unattainable — love or innocence or hope or possibility" (40). Hence, the sexual experience has given her a new sense of loss, and worse, of total abandonment of her own self.

In essence, Baby Doll never optimistically celebrates heterosexual love. Rather, it presents sexual victimization in a somewhat softened, comical way. In fact, the heroine's awakening transforms her into a masochist because now she derives pleasure from being totally dependent and powerless. She cannot even ask Vacarro to "remember" her, nor can she blame him even if he "forgets" her. That is, she has been dissolved into him by eliminating her identity and sense of self-esteem, and places herself in total isolation. Williams uses his heroine as a conventional sex symbol — one of the "sexy dolls of the fifties" (Sinclair 98) but with sarcasm: Baby Doll's pubescent sexuality, though much softened, was originally derived from Flora in "27 Wagons Full of Cotton," who must endure rape by the vicious Vacarro. Vacarro's vindictiveness also leads Flora to grow into "a mother" — a helpless, sacrificial figure of a woman. Likewise, Vacarro in the film must scare Baby Doll to arouse her, and the awakening makes her subservient enough to sign a paper leading to her husband's arrest.

Viewing the three works that deal essentially with the same subject matter, it is possible to prove that Williams effectively utilizes the three different vehicles — a one-act play, a film, and a full-length play. The one-act play condenses the subject of female victimization in the most shocking way; the screen moderates the subject of victimization; and the stage version underscores it again. The ending on the screen, Kazan's creation, would seem to most poignantly picture Baby Doll's insecure situation — she cannot be sure if she will be "remembered or forgotten." In the stage version, however, Williams more clearly depicts the heroine's instability by leaving the lovers in the tree and juxtaposing their image with that of the isolated, weakening figure of Aunt Rose, perhaps as a future picture of Baby Doll herself. The stage version thus completes the heroine's victimization while the film itself blurs her neurotic state to soften the sexually violent tone of the original one-act play. Considering these elements of the four different versions (the one-act play, Williams' film script, Kazan's interpretation, and the stage
version), one can say that the full-length play most faithfully presents Williams' artistic vision. Moreover, the film script reflects Williams' artistic intention more candidly, even though it contradicts the critical appreciation. The ending of the film script, therefore, more appropriately interprets the heroine's complex psyche and thus can be evaluated more favorably than Kazan's ending.

The American screen, due to its need for popularization, often requires a careful formulation of gender and sexuality. Williams, on the surface, follows Hollywood sexual norms in the script — a sexy girl, Baby Doll, and a stud, Vacarro, would make a conventional Hollywood romance. Foster Hirsch writes that "Baby Doll is a gutsy, playful heterosexual comedy," adding that "there are no masked homosexual relationships here, and nobody could accuse Baby Doll of being a man in drag" (102). Yet, as Dakin and Mead put it, Williams uses Baby Doll as "a satirical symbol of a type of immature American girl-woman" (204), and thus the film, beneath the mirthful portrait of heterosexuality, contains female subordination. Baby Doll is victimized firstly by her husband's perverted desire, and then by Vacarro's revenge. Archie Lee views his wife only as one of his properties and for Vacarro, she is merely as valuable as that "piece of paper" — the admission of her husband's guilt. Even her union with Vacarro marks her subordination because she has to diminish her sense of self-esteem and turn herself into a passive "doll." Though different in their expression, both Archie Lee and Vacarro treat her as a "beautiful object" and she is forced to see herself this way through her relationship with them.

Williams injects more irony into the endings of the published script and stage version than is revealed on the screen. On the screen, Baby Doll completes her scenes with the lyricism and tragic beauty so typical of Williams' heroines. Williams' aim is to present, however, a more grotesque, unsophisticated, and therefore comical side of humans. Just as the couple's love scene at the end of A Streetcar Named Desire does not necessarily confirm a blissful married life, the lovers in Baby Doll remain unstable in their relationship at the curtain. Moreover, the screen develops the heroine's tragic awareness a little too suddenly, resulting in a "melodramatic" quality. On the other hand, the published script and stage version, in their inclusion of ambiguity and ironical twists, can be seen as darker "grotesque" comedies. Thus while Williams seems to have accepted Kazan's intention to create this work as "a powerful melodrama" on the screen, in the published script, he is more faithful to his own artistic vision. The playwright, as an artist, thus expects his audience to see the "truth" behind his masquerade.

Notes
I have briefly discussed the two different endings of Baby Doll in a paper, "Tennessee Williams on Screen: An Artist Versus Hollywood in Baby Doll." The earlier Japanese draft was read at the fifty-third conference of the English Literary Society of Japan, Chugoku-Shikoku Branch, Tottori, on October 28, 2000.

Tiger Tail had its first performance at Alliance Theatre in Atlanta in January, 1978. Critics generally commented on the play favorably (Phillips 319). In addition, the revised version (as in the published text) was opened at the Hippodrome Theatre Workshop in Florida, but never reached Broadway. It was not until July, 1999 that the Off-Broadway Harold Clurman Theatre offered revival performances of the revised version.

Palmer attributes the film's artistic success mostly to Kazan's direction, and thus does not highly evaluate Williams' achievement either in this work or the stage version: "Though an undoubted artistic success, Baby Doll obviously did not give the filmgoing public the Williams they wanted to see" (226).

It should be noted here that in Baby Doll (both on screen and in the scenario), Vacarro does not use his "whip" except playfully in front of the girl. On the other hand, Vacarro in "Twenty-seven Wagons Full of Cotton" utilizes the "whip" as an effective tool for executing his revenge --- the rape of Jake's wife.

Williams' attitude toward the film seems to have been changed through his turbulent collaboration with Kazan. Murphy's anecdote illuminates the playwright's ambivalent feelings toward the work: "Despite Williams's seemingly reluctant involvement in Baby Doll, he did a substantial amount of work on the script. Nonetheless, Williams dissociated himself from the film early on, portraying it as largely Kazan's creation.... In later years, however, Williams changed in his attitude toward Baby Doll, expressing his pride in both his work and Kazan's" (132). In an interview in 1957, he said, "I hope people don't associate me with Baby Doll alone.... I am not ashamed of it, but a movie is the creation of the director" (Davis 44). Yet in a 1965 interview, Williams stated, "Baby Doll pleased me very much --- that was an original film script" (Gruen 119).

Hayman has this to say about Williams' feelings toward the Baby Doll project: "Finding Tennessee unenthusiastic about the project, Kazan wrote a first draft of the script, and it was his idea to interpolate material from one of Tennessee's one-act plays, The Unsatisfactory Supper." Hayman goes on to report that, because Williams was working on Sweet Bird of Youth at the time, he did not want "to invest a lot of time or energy in the screenplay" and thus "tried to resist what Kazan was doing"(158).

Knight thus exemplifies Kazan's skill at producing the unwritten on the script: "Their ensuing hide-and-seek through the empty house, from a grotesque shot of Vicarro bucking on a rocking horse to a frantic chase through the halls with light bulbs swinging wildly and sudden appearances as in a Sennett comedy --- this is the sort of scene that could never be reproduced on paper"(22).

In the same article, Falk differentiates Baby Doll completely from Flora, "the bruised and ravished victim of the earlier version," because Baby Doll can "distinguish a friend from an enemy"(90).
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9 Seidel points out that Southern society, which requires its women to be "flirtatious coquettes," often causes them unbearable tension (xvi): The women must exhibit themselves as sexually desirable to be accepted, yet they cannot express their own sexual feelings in any exposed way (xvi). They, consequently, have become "masochists" who submit themselves as objects to be used (108). Karen Horney goes further in articulating the view that a coquette even seeks out the men who use her out of a "masochistic" tendency (229).

10 Sinclair thus differentiates "a baby doll," which is "a child in a woman's body," from "a doll-baby," "a woman in a child's body" (96). She goes on to argue that "a baby doll" would give her mate "the greater satisfaction," being "pneumatic, inflatable, brainless" (98).

Works Cited


