

# “**Don’t** (!!)

throw the **Doll** *Baby* out with  
the **Blood**bath *Water*”

by Allison Fradkin ... (!!)

**WHY I LIKE IT:** *Drama editor JANET EHRLICH COLSON writes...*

*Well, this is a strange little piece. It elicits fond memories of playing with dolls with faces so ugly only a doll mother could love along with the nightmares that ensued from watching one of those Chuckie movies on a VCR at Chrissy’s slumber party – don’t you remember– when your mother told you it was your fault you pulled an all-nighter but you couldn’t get that scene out of your head where the girl vomits pea soup and her head spins around? Different movie, but you get the idea. Now, it’s 2013 and the spirit of Cabbage Patch doll’s original creator, Miss Martha Nelson, has possessed one of her doll’s molded plastic souls. She’s out for blood and vengeance on the guy who ripped off her idea from a craft fair and profited like a bandit while she got no credit, not even on the adoption papers. This doll is tired of the patriarchy. Watch out - she’s armed with a spoon. Keep your eyes open and mind your derriere.*

“Don’t Throw the Doll Baby Out with the Bloodbath Water”

by Allison Fradkin  
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Author’s Note: Inspired by [this article and mini documentary](#), this piece imagines a scintillating scenario in which the soul of the late female who created the Cabbage Patch Kids possesses one of the dolls and proceeds to demonize, terrorize, and pulverize the male who pilfered and profited from her creation.

*At rise, CATE CHARLEEN is skipping rope, chanting a jump rope rhyme. Its tune is that of “Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear.” Beside her is a sand pail whose contents will be revealed as the monologue unfolds.*

Cabbage Patch, Cabbage Patch

Hi, I’m Cate!  
Cabbage Patch, Cabbage Patch  
*Suffocate*  
Cabbage Patch, Cabbage Patch  
Diabol—  
Cabbage Patch, Cabbage Patch  
—ical doll!

*She finishes triumphantly, giggles giddily, and proceeds to flex flamboyantly.*

Hey, I’m a Cabbage. I’m supposed to be shredded. But I would never *muscle* in on someone else’s brainchild. That’s because I’m not possessed by an evil spirit. Revenge is sweet and so am I.

*What* possessed me, you ask? That’s a pretty dehumanizing question, don’t you think? And a chauvinistic one to boot. Are you familiar with the children’s book *Miss Nelson Is Missing?* My maiden name is also Miss Nelson, Miss Martha Nelson, and I too am missing: from the birth certificates, the adoption papers, your payroll. Now, would you characterize my absence as conspicuous or inconspicuous, Mister—

No. No, I dare not speak your name. It should be seen and not heard, just like your customary customers: little girls. They see your name every time they change dolly’s duds. Like many a signatory, you sign on the bottom—specifically, my cushy tushy.

*She yanks a permanent marker out of the sand pail.*

Would you stop that wretched wailing and futile flailing, you big baby? This is only to sign your death certificate, not your derriere. Does that make you more comfortable? Or less? If you’re experiencing discomfort, that rocker-slash-carrier thing you’re strapped into is adjustable in three different positions. At least one of them should be suitably soothing. Look, I’m warning you: if you kick the bucket, I’ll accelerate this assassination. I mean it!

*She snatches up the sand pail and plucks a skein of yarn from the interior.*

Now, I know what you’re thinking: yarn is far too quaint to act as a restraint. But you see, I’m not so much demented as I am...fermented. You’d be agitated too if some soon-to-be manacled man misappropriated you. Fortunately, the creation you cribbed from me has now been subjected to infiltration by me. And this doll may be inhabited, but she is by no means inhibited!

Not anymore, anyway. When I was alive—as an actual human, of course, not as a Baby Alive—I was soft-spoken, soft-hearted, softie extraordinaire. Which is why my Doll Babies, the source material for your cockamamie Cabbages, are what we artsy-craftsy folks call soft sculptures. Your artistry, on the other hand, is confined to that of con.

Let’s skip down memory lane, shall we? In the mid-1970s, you adopted my Doll Babies at a craft fair, the only kind of fair with which you are familiar; unless you count the fair sex, but you

don’t—you *discount* them. You then proceeded to mark up the dolls: posterior *and* price. Subsequently, you adapted them for mass production without my permission.

What possessed *you*? I put my heart and soul into my dolls. I only put my soul into yours, which you put into a vegetative state. Gag me with a spoon. Nope, wrong pronoun. Gag *you* with a spoon.

*She reaches into the sand pail and withdraws a sizable spoon.*

What do you expect? I was, after all, remade in the 80s, you unconscionable copycat.

Understandably, I was mortally wounded by your wrongdoing. I stewed, I sued, I settled. I also forgave and forgot. But now that I’m no longer mortal, I can resurrect those wounds and...*patch* them up. From beyond the grave, I get to do something beyond the pale. And I don’t mean the Garbage Pail. Those putrid people are splendidly sardonic. I, on the other hand, am delightfully demonic.

But then, it’s hard for specters *not* to be in good spirits on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>. Well, the 13th year of the 2000s, but close enough. Not only is it the year of my passing; it’s the day of your reckoning. Oh, but you’ve already figured that out, haven’t you? I’m not the only one whose eyes are wide open. On this red-letter day—I know, I know: green is your cabbage color of choice—CPK stands for capture, pulverize, knock off...the knock-off.

In summary, this one-woman revival of *Guys and Dolls* is not going to end on a high note for you, baby daddy.

*She executes—emphasis on cute—the cabbage patch dance.*

Hey, if the spirit moves you...

All right, that’s enough child’s play. It’s time to cleanse you of your sins, you little stinker.

*She inserts her hand into the sand pail and emerges with a rubber duck.*

A rubber duck for the dead duck. Bloodbath time has never been so obscene—or serene.

Any last words?

*She makes a sinister shushing sound.*

I wasn’t talking to you. I was talking to me. The ghoul always has the last word, fool.

*Cate begins skipping rope once more, chanting her chosen jump rope rhyme.*

Cabbage Patch, Cabbage Patch  
Baby-faced

Cabbage Patch, Cabbage Patch  
You’re erased  
Cabbage Patch, Cabbage Patch  
Cradle will rot  
Cabbage Patch, Cabbage Patch  
Kid you not!

*Blackout.*

**THE PLAYWRIGHT SPEAKS...** *Inspired by [this article and mini documentary](#), this piece imagines a scintillating scenario in which the soul of the late female who created the Cabbage Patch Kids possesses one of the dolls and proceeds to demonize, terrorize, and pulverize the male who pilfered and profited from her creation.*

**AUTHOR BIO:** When it comes to writing, Allison Fradkin is like a woman possessed. Scriptly speaking, she delights in applying her Women's & Gender Studies education to the creation of satirically scintillating stories that enlist their characters in a caricature of the idiocies and intricacies of insidious isms. An enthusiast of accessibility and inclusivity, Fradkin freelances for her hometown of Chicago as Dramatist for Special Gifts Theatre, adapting scripts for actors of all abilities; and as Literary Manager for Violet Surprise Theatre, curating new works by queer women.