

Blood from Black Wattle

A woman in a black dress and white headband stands in a dark forest, holding a glowing lantern. The scene is illuminated by numerous small, bright yellow lights that create a bokeh effect in the background. The woman's expression is contemplative as she looks upwards.

Dulcie
The Muse

God's gold-grey-green religion,
Burned bright on winter's bone.

— 'Wattle Hymn', from the
Notebooks of Cyrus Browne.



Mrs Dulcie Deemer in her infamous leopard skin costume at the riotous Artists' Ball at Sydney Town Hall, 1923.

FLAW		STRENGTH
<i>This is your spotlight flaw</i>	INNER STRUGGLE	<i>This is your spotlight strength</i>
Dulcie's struggles Choose one as your flaw/ strength test for this game Celebrity / Authenticity <i>Joie de vivre</i> / Honesty Outrageous / Responsible	Test 1 (Set Up) Overcome <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Fail Test 2 (Point of No Return) Overcome <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Fail Test 3 (Crisis) Triumph <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Loss	

IN-GAME CHARACTER CHANGE

One transformation during play. A relationship, an inspiration, an obsession, a sundering, a personality change, an outpouring of emotion either positive or negative. Bring your inner life into gamespace. How does the transformation change you?

SKILLS

- Anti-Intellectual4
- Be Dulcie Deamer5
- Born Actress.....4
- Bushcraft (Australian).....1
- Challenge Convention.....5
- Chaste4
- Contortions (Splits)5
- Cthulhu Mythos.....0
- Dance Your Socks Off6
- Deflect Unwanted Attention4
- Dodge2
- Dress Up (Theatrical Disguise).....4
- Hide.....2
- Hide True Feelings4
- Inspire Others.....3
- Joie de vivre*5
- Occult.....2
- Pub Etiquette.....4
- Ride (Horse)2
- Rifle.....0
- Spot Hidden.....4

HEALTH

- Dead as a Maggot (0)
- Carking It (1)
- Crook as Rookwood (2)
- Completely Rooted (3)
- Sick as a Dog (4)
- A Bit Bugged (5)
- Fit as a Malee Bull (6)

SANITY

- Off to Woop Woop (0)
- Full Bunta (1)
- Mad as a Cut Snake (2)
- Off like a Frog in a Sock (3)
- Gone a Bit Troppo (4)
- Loose a Few 'Roos (5)
- The Full Bottle (6)

FEARLESS (DB + 1) (MAX 5)

-

LUCK

-

QUEER

-

SENSUAL

-

MYSTIC

-

Before I left Sydney I ...
 (Researched something, purchased something, talked to someone (Flashback)
Use once if required.

DULCIE: THE WOUND, THE SCAR, THE LIE

<p>Dulcie's Wound: Mask of Celebrity Being 'Queen of Bohemia' is a full time job. People expect so much. Yet I have lost my husband, and my mother raises my four children.</p> <p>Dulcie's Scar: Mania Being the celebrated Queen of Bohemia; being outrageous, being a leader, being constantly entertaining, being highly independent, living on the fringes, focusing on writing.</p>	<p>Dulcie's Lie: Irresponsible I am irresponsible and selfish. I cannot care for my children. I am a failure as a mother.</p> <p>Associated Attitudes Annoyance, desire, impatience, indifference, insecurity, reluctance.</p> <p>Positive Aspects Most people are enthralled by Dulcie: her mask slips only rarely. She is adept at reading and inspiring people. She constantly pushes the boundaries of social convention and expectation.</p>	<p>Negative Aspects Dulcie is trapped by her own persona, and she does not know how authentic it is. She can be irresponsible. Her celebrity status often attracts unwanted personal attention.</p> <p>Healing As an artist, Dulcie can heal herself through the creation of a great work or the performance of a great act, or nurturing such in others.</p> <p>If her actions or inactions have bad effects, Dulcie may see a need to change.</p>
---	---	---

Dulcie Deamer



MERRIN BROOKE
 A bright, talented and beautiful young woman, still innocent of so many things in life. In need of guidance: over-reliant on her youthful coquetry. Experienced in exposing flim-flamery.



KENNETH SLESSOR
 Dapper poet and respected journalist with the Sydney Sun. A reluctant bohemian, Ken needs to unwind a little. A gentleman and friend.



WILLIAM BOYNE
 A dark and brutal Northern Irishman obsessed with destroying the Mythos. Often seeming inhuman, he appears close to breaking point.



HOPE
 Enigmatic sculptor and street tough. A shy lost soul, a mystery. He has little trust in people and needs to experience love.

New Zealand-born Dulcie Deamer is a charismatic and vivacious woman in her thirties: a prolific and talented writer. Her views are daring for the age and so is her behaviour.

Dulcie has been an actor, journalist, world traveller, wife and mother before becoming a leader of Sydney's bohemian community.

Born in 1890, Dulcie grew up in the New Zealand bush. At seventeen, she joined a knockabout company of theatrical barnstormers. That same year she won a major short-story competition run by the *Lone Hand* magazine; 'As It Was in the Beginning', a sensual tale of Neolithic life and love.

Within a year Dulcie was married and had started on years of international travel with her stage-struck husband, Albert (Goldie) Goldberg, a hopeless dreamer. Fifteen years her senior, Goldie proposed the same day he met her.

The couple travelled, with brief spells in Sydney, until the early 1920s. They lived in America, England and France, and visited many countries.

Despite the rigours of her nomadic life Dulcie was able to bear six children—two sons were to die early—and wrote books, short stories and travel pieces to help feed and clothe them.

Dulcie's novels include *The Sutte of Safa*, "a hot love story about Akbar the Great"; *Revelation* and *The Street of the Gazelle*, set in Jerusalem at the time of Christ; and *The Devil's Saint*, a tale of Middle Ages witchcraft.

In the early 1920s three of Dulcie's novels were run as serials in the USA by the giant Hearst newspaper network, making her one of the most widely-read authors of the day. The daring eroticism of her romantic plots made her very popular indeed.

Dulcie is frank about her work. It is competent enough, well-crafted and, most importantly, saleable; but it is not deathless art.

Years of travel, frequent pregnancy and the loss of two children have taken their toll on Dulcie's health and on her marriage. Around 1917 she had a nervous breakdown, and her relationship with Goldie deteriorated.

Dulcie's mother had brought the children up in Sydney during her travels, and continued to do so after Dulcie's separation from Goldie in 1922. Dulcie had few maternal instincts and this arrangement guaranteed her freedom. She remained in Sydney, working as a freelance writer and journalist (including stints as an investigative reporter and Australia's first female boxing commentator!)

Dulcie contributes stories, articles and verse to the *Australian Woman's Mirror*, the *Bulletin* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*, sometimes using pseudonyms. She often writes for women on issues of daily life and independence.

Living at the Cross, Dulcie is now an habitu  of most of the town's Bohemian caf s. She has earned a reputation for performing the splits, dancing the hula ("It's simply a matter of revolving one's body around one's navel") and for her exuberant jazz dancing.

With china doll features and lustrous 'jewel-bright' eyes, Dulcie is a stealer of scenes and of hearts. She embodies *joie de vivre*, the joyful exuberance of life, a term she herself often uses.

Dulcie was the belle of the riotous first Artists' Ball in the Sydney Town Hall in 1923. She pranced around the dance floor as Eve, dressed in a leopard skin and skin coloured tights.

In 1925, in celebration of her great popularity, Dulcie was crowned 'Queen of Bohemia' in an elaborate mock ceremony.

Dulcie can be an outrageous flirt and has been propositioned many times. Her response is often a curt, "I am vowed to Diana!" and perhaps she means it. Dulcie has other things on her mind, such as writing.

Dulcie's salon is an enlightened alternative to much of the Sydney Bohemian scene, from which women are largely excluded. Her emphasis on frivolity and on keeping things strictly above board at gatherings enables other women to participate freely, without having to endure overt sexual harassment.

Battles between flesh and spirit underlie much of Dulcie's written work. She maintains a mystical attitude to life that incorporates elements of Theosophy, including a belief in reincarnation.

On adolescent rambles through the New Zealand bush Dulcie experienced mystical ecstasies. She sometimes encountered a 'Presence' in a tree-fern gully that filled her with religious awe.

Recent tragic and horrific events in Sydney have opened Dulcie's eyes to malignant cosmic forces, and she has faced peril and madness, aided by her current companions.

Despite Dulcie's achievements both as an author and journalist, her life itself is perhaps her most important art, her real masterpiece. Dulcie Deamer is, in short, famous for being Dulcie Deamer.

Dulcie's life outwardly seems bright and filled with laughter. Her companions are her joy and inspiration. The money comes, the money goes, but hers is a life few women might achieve. There is of course, a cost.

This trip to find a missing girl near Braidwood may result in an article for the Bulletin, perhaps a series. It is equally a chance to spend time in the country with companions and perhaps, if only for a short time, to stop being Dulcie Deamer.

Mary Elizabeth Kathleen Dulcie Deamer (1890-1972) was a New Zealand-born Australian feminist, free-thinker, novelist, poet, journalist and actor.

At the time of this adventure, Dulcie is the doyenne of Sydney bohemia, living hand to mouth as an essayist and author.



Blood from Black Wattle by John and Philippa Hughes. This is a playtest version.

Enquiries: john.hughes@anu.edu.au

Game page: <https://myth-o-logic.org/convention-modulz/blood-from-black-wattle/>

Dulcie's Fiction

The Strong Man squatted beside her; she did not shrink. He put his hand on her hair; she bent her head as if to display it to him. Truly it was a wonderful colour. Like a fox's midwinter coat. The man was filled with a vast satisfaction. Tomorrow he would bring her wild strawberries in cool leaves, and redberry spoils for her threading. The lion's teeth also should be pierced and strung. No other woman of the cliff-dwellers would possess such a necklace.

—*As It Was In The Beginning*

I am type of singleness. . .
Dazzling breasts that never bless
With their bared surrendering
Amorous strengths that man may bring
To their conquest. They are free
As two wild white mares may be

By a fainting wanderer seen
From a midnight-dark ravine,
Spur his thirst and hurt his soul,
So I stand the hopeless goal
Of the finite world's desire.

—'Artemis'

My jungles! Quick with lawless, fearless life;
The teeth of love, the deathfang of a knife,
And satyr brawls, and Maenad women's strife.
I'll enter by some strait, scarce-lighted door,
Cross with bare feet the dank and wine-wet
floor
Ah! Now I am the Emperor's wife no more!
Swordsman, Greek boxer, Goth they wait for me;
Now does my body live now am I free!
My shredded robe slips downward to my knee. . .
I am as naked as Life's naked flame!
None ever spoke of law or coward shame
In that spring-fevered world from which I came.

..
... I fear no death. Let swift sleep end the game!

—'Messalina'

O give the Silver Branch into my hand,
That I may go to the Silver Fountain
That springs in Otherworld's caverned mountain
Where the dragon sleeps on the strand
Of the tide on which there is no return;
And the boat is waiting, and silver light
Showers the shadows of Wonder Night.

—'The Silver Branch'