

**Blood from Black Wattle**



***Merrin***  
***The Innocent***

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

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



A gathering, the Wheel House, Potts Point, June 1926. Left to right: a gentleman visitor who most politely insisted he not be identified, Miss Bettie Brook, Mr Terrance Brook, Miss Merrin Brook, the poet Mr Cyrus Browne of Sydney Towne.

<b>FLAW</b>	<b>INNER STRUGGLE</b>	<b>STRENGTH</b>
<i>This is your spotlight flaw</i>		<i>This is your spotlight strength</i>
<b>Merrin's struggles</b> Choose one as your flaw/ strength test for this game  Manipulative / Respectful Naive / Realistic Guilty / Self-loving	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	
Bushcraft (Australian).....	2
Challenge Convention .....	3
Charm.....	2
Cthulhu Mythos.....	1
Dodge .....	4
Feign Bohemianism.....	3
Flirt to Gain Way.....	3
Hide.....	4
History (Australian).....	1
Inspire.....	4
Literature.....	2
Occult .....	3
Pistol.....	0
Pub Etiquette.....	1
Recognise Flim-Flam .....	4
Ride (Horse).....	2
Rifle .....	0
Spot Hidden .....	5
Swim .....	3

HEALTH
<input type="radio"/> Dead as a Maggot (0) <input type="radio"/> Carking It (1) <input type="radio"/> Crook as Rookwood (2) <input type="radio"/> Completely Rooted (3) <input type="radio"/> Sick as a Dog (4) <input type="radio"/> A Bit Bugged (5) <input checked="" type="radio"/> Fit as a Malee Bull (6)
SANITY
<input type="radio"/> Off to Woop Woop (0) <input type="radio"/> Full Bunta (1) <input type="radio"/> Mad as a Cut Snake (2) <input type="radio"/> Off like a Frog in a Sock (3) <input checked="" type="radio"/> Gone a Bit Troppo (4) <input type="radio"/> Loose a Few 'Roos (5) <input type="radio"/> The Full Bottle (6)

FEARLESS (DG + D) [MAX 5]
<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
LUCK
<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
QUEER
<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
SENSUAL
<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
MYSTIC
<input checked="" type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

**Before I left Sydney I ...**

(Researched something, purchased something, talked to someone (Flashback)  
 Use *Once* if required.

## MERRIN: THE WOUND, THE SCAR, THE LIE

<p><b>Merrin's Wound: Innocence</b>          A sheltered upbringing, loneliness and a need for control are all aspects of Merrin's innocence.</p> <p><b>Merrin's Scar: Guilt</b>          An irrational sense of being responsible for her mother's death have made Merrin vulnerable, insecure, and consumed by guilt.</p> <p><b>Merrin's Lie: Manipulation</b>          Merrin can use her youth and charm to control a person's</p>	<p>attention and get her way. Her playful banter and flirting is no longer innocent, but manipulative.</p> <p><b>Associated Attitudes</b>          Desire, elation, satisfaction, curiosity, excitement, empowerment, denial, doubt, frustration, insecurity.</p> <p><b>Positive Aspects</b>          Merrin expresses her emotions freely. She can builds healthy and nurturing relationships. She is easy to like.</p> <p>She understands how to use her personality to bring about a desired result.</p>
	<p><b>Negative Aspects</b>          Merrin can misjudge when to display her charm. She is naive about possible reactions and dangers.</p> <p>Her manipulations can invite distrust, and further lower her self-esteem.</p> <p><b>Healing</b>          Bitter experience is part of growing up. Merrin needs to confront the outcomes of her actions and see them as self-serving and controlling.</p> <p>True adult friendship may create a bridge and the opportunity for realistic self-assessment.</p>

# Merrin Brook



**DULCIE DEAMER**  
 A brilliantly talented woman, a novelist, a leader, the scandalous queen of Sydney's bohemia. You value her guidance and friendship.



**KENNETH SLESSOR**  
 A gentleman, a dandy, a respected reporter and poet. Stand-offish by nature, but not immune to your charms.



**WILLIAM BOYNE**  
 A sullen Irishman, deadly and competent in the ways of violence. A strong man, seeming broken inside.



**HOPE**  
 Enigmatic sculptor and street tough. Surprisingly gentle in his way. You have caught glimpses of his talent and his unique way of seeing the world.

Eighteen year old Merrin Brook stands poised on the cusp of adulthood, with a vibrant energy and charm. Thoughtful by nature, she seems to genuinely share her father Terrance's passion for exposing falsehood and occult flim-flamery, though her current obsessions centre on becoming a lady novelist, on finding her path in adult life, and in clarifying her vexing relationship with her young man.

English immigrant and naval engineer Terrance Brook has a lifelong interest in the unexplained, and is the Australian Secretary of the Society for Psychical Research. Ailing and physically weak from a degenerative ataxia and now confined to a wheelchair, Terrance is a distant but generous father to his two daughters, Bettie and Merrin, and is attempting to guide them to independence after the turmoil surrounding the recent death of their mother Constance, a notorious free-thinker and suffragette.

When younger, both Merrin and her older sister Bettie assisted their famous father in investigating mediums and spiritualists. Merrin learned to be observant and forceful when necessary, and developed a strong sense of justice. Together, the family exposed false mediums and huckster fortune tellers, supposed ghosts and dodgy poltergeists. Once or twice, they came across something deeply disturbing, phenomena that denied any rational explanation.

For Merrin, these experiences, despite their squalid nature, opened the gateway to the romance of Mystery. She has become an obsessive reader of penny-dreadful detective fiction, especially those works where fearless young women enter a man's world to do a man's job and solve a deadly mystery.

The sudden death of Merrin's mother Constance some three years ago brought great sadness and uncertainty. Merrin completed her schooling at Presbyterian Ladies College with difficulty, retreating into an inner world.

Elder sister Bettie rebelled after her mother's death, becoming a giddy socialite, associating with many of Sydney's criminal underworld. Bettie is a notorious police-baiting pioneer of practical ('scandalously brazen') bathing costumes that she wears on excursions to various local beaches. She is known to the yellow press as 'Backless Betty from Bondi'. A thoroughly modern woman who smokes, drinks, swears, and drives a car, Bettie is hardly a lady, but Merrin can see the attractions of her chosen lifestyle. However, Bettie's behaviour has broken her father's heart.

To break her growing seclusion, on matriculation Merrin began voluntary work with waterside unions based around the wharves of Woolloomooloo, teaching wharfies and their wives to read and write. The area had always terrified her with its poverty, violence and intense dislike of outsiders or notions of charity. After a few initial setbacks, the experience proved transformative. Here was a vibrant community that not only accepted her, but also embraced and protected her.

Merrin has been drawn deeper into Sydney's bohemian circles through her young man, Cyrus Browne of Sydney Towne, a talented but eccentric poet. (His real name is Herbie. He's a dairy farmer from Budgewoi). Though known to tentatively sip a glass of shandy, puff a cigarette, utter a blue phrase or advocate world revolution, Merrin's bohemian transgressions are more exploratory than rebellious. She is beginning to realise she is not really bohemian, being well off, comfortable and not much liking beer.

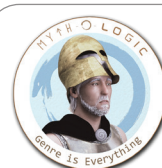
Cyrus, for all his insecurities and foibles, was initially a godsend. Yet their romance remains almost entirely platonic—a 'spiritual musehood' to use Cyrus' term—despite no lack of initiative on Merrin's part. She is growing more uncertain and confused, wanting desperately for the relationship to become just a little more physical.

Increasingly, Merrin depends on her youth and charm to get her way, especially with men. These acts of coquetry are no longer innocent, and can veer toward manipulation. Merrin knows this is wrong, but enjoys the power and attention. There is potential here for serious hurt.

Recent experiences in Sydney have deepened Merrin's exposure to the terrible unknown, yet have brought this unlikely group together as they battle against horror and insanity.

This investigation should offer a welcome respite: a trip to the country with new-found friends, and to help in locating a missing girl.

Adult life is confusing. Wider society is much less welcoming to young women than sheltered family circles. Merrin is torn between the desire for freedom and the demands of family and expectation. Through it all, she seeks something real and valuable in her life.



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

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Game page: <https://myth-o-logic.org/>

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