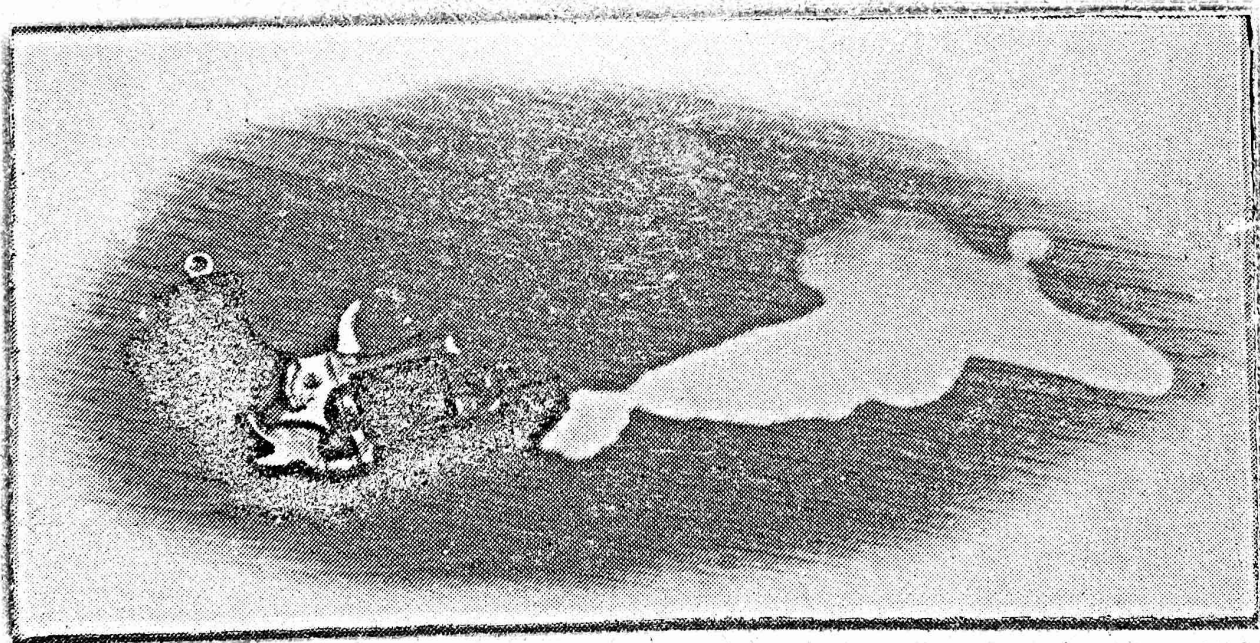


The Childlike Life of

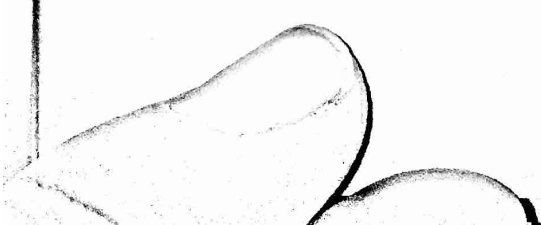
**THE
BLACK
TARANTULA**



by The Black Tarantula

15th 1/25

**THE CHILDLIKE LIFE OF THE
BLACK TARANTULA
BY THE BLACK TARANTULA**



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Florida

**The Childlike Life Of The Black Tarantula
By The Black Tarantula
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Intention: I become a murderess by repeating in words the lives of other murderesses:

CHAPTER I

SOME LIVES OF MURDERESSES

June 1973

I become a murderess.

I'm born in the late autumn or winter of 1827.

Troy, New York.

My childhood is happy, and my parents allow me to do whatever I please as long as I, by my actions, don't infringe on their high social standing. My father is a great and wealthy man, a tall man, whom I look up to. As a child, among my dolls, I feel safe. I will never die. No one can hurt me. My mother, my father, my two older sisters, my younger sister, and my brother often ignore me, or promise to love me, give me a present, then don't; and I cry. My name at this time is Charlotte Wood.

I don't remember any of my childhood before I was 6 years old when I start learning to read. My eldest sister marries a baronet and lives in England; my second elder sister marries a doctor and moves to Scotland. I'm an obedient child: I stubbornly do what my parents and their associates want me to do. I hallucinate. I climb trees, stick needles up the asses of young boys. I hallucinate that the Virgin Mary wears black leather pants and a black leather motorcycle jacket, she climbs trees, she doesn't give a fuck for anyone. (I call up D in Los Angeles do you want to sleep with me with me when and where there why don't you spend a few days with me I'll call you tomorrow. No call three days later I'm maniacal I have to see D I don't know him hello I've got a ride to Los Angeles lie I'm not sure I know where we can stay should I not come up come up. We don't touch talk about anything personal until we get to motel never talk about anything personal spend night together I have to be at Irvine in the morning I'm busy call me Friday. Do you want me to call you yes. I call Friday call Saturday Sunday this is Kathy O uh do you want to spend a night with me again are you too busy I'm too busy uh goodbye have a good time in New York uh goodbye.)

When I'm 16, I board for the next two years at the

Female Seminary in Troy, the school my elder sisters went to. The school sits by a large lake, or ocean; I spend my free time staring at the blue then green then white water. I want to be a mermaid: I swim under the heavy water with my legs together; the heavy muscles in my arms move the rest of my body. I want someone, a man, to walk up to me while I'm standing on a stone terrace, put his arms around my shoulders, his hand brush the hair off my forehead. While I'm at school, I meet the only love of my life. He is honest with me, as intelligent and paranoid as I am. My father forbids our marriage because my lover's family has insufficient social connections. When my (adopted) father suspects I've been sleeping with my future husband, he slobbers over me. Rape. My parents take me out of the Seminary, 1846, and return me to their home in Quebec.

I'm 19 years old. I meet Lieutenant William F. A. Elliot, eldest son of a baronet, who loves me, and, with the help of my parents, forces me to marry him. I have to get married. My new husband plans to take me to New York to England but I'm no longer safe. I change my woman's clothes to man's clothes, roam through the streets of New York. My parents, my husband, and I have locked me in a prison and I'm unable to fuck anyone. England is worse. Europe is

worse. Scotland France Italy. These are the first signs of my madness.

Despite my two children (I fantasize D calls me that's impossible I fantasize he reads my letter to B he finds out decides he likes me we're both in New York or Los Angeles he undoes my black velvet cape, puts the palms of his hands over my nipples, rubs his hands quickly up and down his hands swerve around to the center of my back he pulls my body against his body I begin to open my stomach he leads me to a hard bed lays down his stocky body under me) I leave my husband, I decide, I get out, leave my children out I go back home to America. My maid Helen comes with me. I hate everyone, I want to kill everyone, a rich famous man at a hotel in New York City sees me, I know what he wants, I go back home. The man has a lot of influence. My parents hate me, they drive me out of their house in Quebec, I've left my husband, I have no right to leave a man especially a man who loves me, I'm weird, I'm not a robot. Get the hell out, get the hell out of here. Do what I want. Get the hell out everywhere. Fuck them. Fuck them shit up their ass.

I have no money I'm on the street I'm dying no one's going to help me they step on me I puke puke I cause whatever happens to me I'll get the

fuck out of here.

On the boat back to New York I have paranoid delusions: I believe that the man who is staring at me is not staring at me out of desire, lust etc. Spies daunt my footsteps at every hour of the night. I allow the man to talk to me so I can find out who my husband my parents has hired him to spy on me. Fuck me. I don't love this man; in the future I will never love him. I have a paranoid delusion I'm revenging myself on my parents. I'm escaping. I become crazier.

I give a party for my doll.

In Albany: I'm 23 years old; my lover tells me I'm beautiful and intelligent. I can't speak to anyone else but him. After skulking in the streets of Troy, I force myself to move to Albany, New York where I'll be freer. I'm constantly alone; I have no one to talk to. There's no one to whom I can be myself. The people who live in Albany hate me; they don't notice me, I'm in disguise, they talk solely about me when I can barely hear them. (I sneak down to the dark green hall to the edge of the doorway of my parents' bedroom I'm supposed to be asleep my father's telling my mother I'm bad and worthless child I can barely hear what my parents are saying.) I have to buy a pistol I scare my new maid so much she swears out a warrant for my arrest. Everyone hates me they

just want to fuck me they don't want to fuck me. The cop finds me with my new lover; my lover gets me out of jail. No matter where I move in Albany everyone talks about me. I force myself to move back to Troy.

Seclusion

25. Not 25.

To escape my parents, I tried to fuck whoever I wanted, lean on a number of people; I become more closely imprisoned. I don't want anyone to tell me what I should do. I don't want anyone following me around, secretly gossiping about me, because I'm not also a robot.

In Troy I learn not to talk to anyone, even my maids, I make my life-long plans in secret. I travel to Boston, then to England, back to my beloved husband. My lover follows me to Boston, he puts his arms around the upper part of my body where are you going I'll take care of you I love you I'm the only person who can take care of you he's tall and thin grey hair I don't care who he is I don't care what he looks like his hand swings down the side of my thin body into the waist the broad spread of my ass I don't know what I look like skin separates from skin in my cunt the skins below my navel around my navel reveal a hand curves around the edges of the soft skins.

He takes my left hand places it below his cock on softer skin his hand rests above my hand his cock rises above his hand I shape move my hand around his skin he begins to moan I hear body rolls side to side I squeeze my hand in out I feel his hands grasp the turns of my shoulders push me down along his body his body lies over my body so that his cock moves in and out of my mouth between the opening of the skins I form a long narrow tunnel I begin to move my thighs up

(I come out of the bathroom buttoning my pants I ask him to put on the T.V. my left hand touches his shoulder he suddenly turns toward me I've wanted him to turn toward me quickly I feel wet lips tongue in the center of my mouth the sudden change from dream-fantasy to reality makes me unable to react he lifts my body over his body on to the bed I feel his tongue enter my mouth the sudden change from fantasy-dream to reality makes me unable to react we both lie on our right sides I in front of you your cock touches the lips of my cunt enters the wet canal your arms tightly clasp my body around the waist warm fur up down my spine your cock slips out I bend my body until my hands almost touch my toes though I lose warmth of your skin I can feel your cock moving inside my skin skins I can begin to come the muscles

of my cunt begin to move around your cock my muscles free themselves swirl to the tip of my clit out through my legs the center of my stomach new newer muscles vibrate I'm beginning to come I don't know you)

These are my insanities:

I tell people I see on the street my neighbors are conspiring against me. I arm myself with pistols, threaten my enemies I'll rape murder them. My neighbors are a band of burglars who're planning to rob me. One of them has stopped all navigation on the Hudson. I hold a magic cork in my mouth which will accomplish everything. As the sun comes up each morning, I wander around the streets of Troy in disguise. I can appear to be sane (a robot).

I will never again write anything.

My only friends are the poor unwanted people of Troy. I hate the rich shits, will do anything to destroy them. I'm not political. I buy my meagre groceries from a grocery-saloon keeper, an Irish bum, Timothy Lanagan, who has a wife and 4 children. I know that I'm drinking too much beer and brandy, I'm too close to myself to think clearly about my degradation, my unhappiness, I'm scared all the time. I don't know what to be scared about. I love I don't love I hate I don't hate I'm scared I'm not

scared I kill I don't kill. I'm beginning to learn who my enemies are.

One day the spring of '53 I'm at a dance in the Lanagans' booze-parlor I've learned how to speak the correct language one of the disgusting men insults me. No one believes he insults me. I don't know anyone I can really talk to. The Lanagans' filth ask me to leave. I'll show them. This time I'll revenge myself. I tell my gardener to ask the Lanagans to lend me two dollars. My gardener's thinking of killing me I ask the Lanagans myself for the two bucks they don't have any money they're starving I know exactly what's happening. I go back home. (I dream I return to New York I'm going to miss an important meeting of radicals in the middle of St. Mark's Place I sit in an uptown apartment stare out a window of course I miss the meeting I wander into the church when it's empty night.)

Two hours later I walk into the Lanagans' back room tell the Lanagans and the mysterious men the truth: my husband just had a railroad accident. I know exactly what's happening.

Two hours later I walk into the Lanagans' back room. The Lanagans are eating. I ask the Lanagans for an egg, and Mrs. Lanagan gives me the egg and a peeled potato. I invite her and her sister-in-law to

drink beer with me. I know I'm a drunk. I'm clever, this is my plan:

I ask Mrs. Lanagan for sugar they refuse I just bought sugar I ask Mrs. Lanagan to put powdered sugar in my beer she brings back powdered sugar in a saucer, two glasses, some beer. I ask Mrs. Lanagan for enough beer to fill the glasses to the brim I now have the sugar bowl in my hand. She leaves gets more beer. I spoon the sugar and arsenic I bought ten days ago to kill rats in the beer. Mrs. Lanagan notices powder on the top of the beer. It's good to drink. Lanagan calls his wife to mind the store Lanagan drinks the untouched beer. The sister-in-law drinks her beer. Two hours later Mrs. Lanagan tells me I've killed her husband and sister-in-law. She tells me to go home.

I feel angry. I've forgotten how to feel. I feel like I've done what I wanted. I feel elated. I've succeeded forgetting my parents. (I awake between 11:00 and 1:00 for a half hour to an hour clean up, talk to friends, eat, spend an hour on the beach, exercise, work for the next 8 hours taking 3 or 4 short breaks, eat a quick meal, drink wine or play chess to calm myself, fuck or don't fuck, fall asleep. I speak to almost no one because I find it difficult to find people who will accept my alternating hermitage and

maniacal falling-in-love. My style forces me to live in San Francisco or New York. I don't want to learn to drive a car I love cities I have to be sure I keep working hard in a large city.) During my childhood I give ample signs I'm wild, unlike my parents and other people. I run away with a gang of gypsies from my family's estate, my father is heavy dull I'm meek my mother's beautiful I elope with one of the grooms. I have gold hair, large blue eyes, I'm always laughing. I'm very tough. Because I won't stop being a tom-boy, my parents decide I have to get married. I want to get married to get away from my parents do whatever I want to do. I'm born poor St. Helen's, the Isle of Wight. 1790. As a child, I had hardly any food to eat. My parents go to the work-house; I become a farmer's maid. The shits begin to tell me that if I don't become humble, respectful, I have to have security. . . . I'm going to rape you you need security. I become chambermaid in a hotel. I know better.

They take me to jail. My lover who has kept me in the white house by the river never appears to help me. The Troy Female Seminary where I went to school announces in the local newspaper that Charlotte Wood lives in England. I'm Henrietta Robinson. My brother visits me in prison, due to the uproar, shaking, I'm not his sister. I wear a veil. I try

to commit suicide but the shits save me. How do I get the vitriol? They make me confess the truth.

(I live quietly I change my way of life I eat grains vegetables some dairy products because I have an ulcer I'm too poor to see a doctor about once a month I fall in love with someone at the same time I live with Peter who I love I rarely form friendships I deal awkwardly with people I fall in love with.)

I'm born poor St. Helen's, Isle of Wight. 1790. As a child I have hardly any food to eat.

I'm still a child when I see my father and mother dragged to the local poorhouse, I walk alone on the city streets an old man stops me asks me if I need help I run away a dark man sticks his hand under my sweater touch my flat chest a local farmer takes me in general maid. Three years of shit I have to be tough I learn fast. I know I have to get myself what I want; the farmer boss-man his wife below him tell me I can't do what I want. If I don't do what I want humble respectful, I'll lead a happy life. The fuck with the farm-life I vanish

I walk through a black world if I want something I have to get it. These are my next jobs—before I begin to do what I want: assistant in a millinery place in the

West End of London where I get fired for sleeping with a workman, I learn I can't sleep with who I want until I get enough money; I almost starve; hawk oranges in the gallery of Covent Garden theatre; become the mistress of a wealthy army officer. I'm too insecure, I'm still almost a slave, I'm not yet fully planning every step of my future life, but grasping on to this man who can feed me and clothe me and hold me warm.

I make my first mistake: I become too calm I identify too much with this man who stops me from starving. I become confused, I forget my ambition and the ambition becomes misplaced: I have clothes so I want more clothes; I think I can do what I want without fear of starvation so I order my lover around. I'm learning about lies. (I wear men's clothes, jeans cut an inch above the hair of my cunt I hold the jeans up with a studded brown leather belt when I sit on my waterbed where I write the material of the crotch of the pants presses against my cunt lips I'm always slightly hot I masturbate often when I write I write a section 15 minutes to an hour when I unbuckle my brown belt either unzip my jeans and/or squeeze my hand between the cloth of the jeans and my abdomen the lower palm of my hand masturbating calms me down maintain a level energy

I can keep working the last two days I haven't wanted to fuck P because D hurt me I wear men's clothes jeans cut an inch above) I act too much like a man, I seem too forceful; despite my beauty my lover leaves me. I'll give you 50 pounds a month, I need more, you spend too much money, you don't save up enough money. I look at myself in the mirror I don't understand whether I'm beautiful plain or ugly I have to use what I see as an object make it as attractive as possible to other people. Now I'm two people.

The second step of my success begins in hell. No one notices me despite my beauty and intelligence; I try to teach myself politics and philosophical theory but I begin again to starve. No one can get me down; I'll show the creeps. I'm wandering in hell the streets stink of shit I want to be able keep doing new and different actions I can't find how, the dogs eat the limbs of living humans and howl. Robbers mingle with the corpses of rich men and no one denies the rich the aristocrats anything. I decide to become servant to the madame of a brothel patronized especially by foreign royalties and noblemen forced to flee the enmity of the revolutionary governments in their own countries. The social bums, as long as their vision isn't annihilated by starvation and fear, usually know more about the ways men operate and kill in a city,

than do the wealthier. I go straight for the information, the knowledge, I'm too curious; I'm too vivacious charming dazzling to be fired. I hide my ambition then my knowledge behind this new front. Fuck them, I don't have to pretend to be humble and sweet. The only men I meet are the servants of aristocrats, not the aristocrats themselves.

The Duc de Bourbon one night tells his valet Gay that all beautiful women are stupid. Gay protests, mentions me, does His Royal Highness want to meet me? I've somewhat attracted a near relative of Queen Victoria and an earl, but I'm not sure of them. This time luck favors me. I meet the Duc de Bourbon in the house in Piccadilly and become his mistress. Almost the entire rest of my life I devote to His Royal Highness, who I do not love, but use. Intellectually, I don't know if I can love anyone. I want what I want if I let myself become involved with a man his socially-made power over me will make me merge with him. I'll lose myself, my ambition. Perhaps at some times I love the Duc de Bourbon, but at every moment I have to tell myself I'm using him, I'm separate from him, so that I keep our powers at least equal. His Royal Highness, like me, is ambitious, and I know how to play someone who is like me.

First, I have to insure that I'll never again hawk

winkles in a Covent Garden theatre, work for a fat imperious prostitute in any house, spread my legs, watch women smile flirt with men I know they hate I always try to look young that's the only way I can keep my lover I'm 23 years old I look at pictures of myself when I'm 20 so I know how to compose my facial muscles so I still look like I'm 20 I do a strip to keep the muscles under my skin tight and smooth why do you ruin yourself this way I'm too old to sleep with a woman I'm getting older I'll stop being beautiful my intelligence can't influence His Royal Highness unless it's backed by a strict education; I have to force His Royal Highness to respect me and need my advice about his personal and political affairs.

My goal: to enslave the Duc de Bourbon so I'll be safe, be part of the court aristocracy, so noble men and women will ask for my opinions, especially the men, I can kick them in their asses for the rest of my life. No one will look down on me and starve me again. The Duc de Bourbon laughs at my charming desire to study; I learn French, Greek, Latin the expertise of a university don: Ὡς τῆς Θήβας πατρικήν ὑπόληψιν I have to learn to use my defeats. I never again become defeated.

About the Duc de Bourbon: My name is Sophie

Dawes. He is married. A reversal in the politics of France restores to him his vast ancestral possessions and political powers. By this time, I am the only member of the royal set who can influence him, who can please him, who has his trust. He returns home to Chantilly, his palace: he tries to explain to me that recent upsets in the French government force him to live quietly with his wife and to abandon me, his mistress. He's a tall slender man, a man whose subtle and quick intelligence is hindered by his belief in the restrictive morals of his ancestors. He's frightened of being alone and being disliked. I become scared of again starving and of being without him. I show him he's blind: he'll never again feel the touch of my hands inside his thighs, he'll live alone, not even knowing if his abandonment of me helped his political career and the affairs of the Country. I love him more than I ever have or will. How can I tell? (remember)? I'm scared, I'm no longer beautiful: I'm tall and heavy, my features are large, slightly red. I can only rely on my wits, like any man.

What happens? I enter the palace, Chantilly; the Duc de Bourbon subjugates his poor wife; for 14 years I rule that part of the court aristocracy. I want both men and women to love me. I don't have enough control the women look down on me; they

sense I once worked in a whorehouse, I'm not married, fuck them, I'm not a robot, I want to love them, I want to walk into a room, watch them flock to me so I can kick their shit up their assholes. When you've come from the gutter, done everything you can to stay alive, rich and famous, you don't forget anything, you get a photographic memory. I tell the Duc de Bourbon I want to ease his wife's position at Chantilly. I now make use of the ambiguity of my position at Chantilly to raise my social position in the Court. I bribe an old matchmaker 10,000 francs to tell Adrien Victor de Feucheres, a young nobleman in the Royal Guards, that I'm the daughter of the Duc de Bourbon and have a dowry of ten million francs. I have to get married.

The next day I marry Adrien in London; my lover gives my husband a position in his household. I meet the King and Queen of France. I entertain royalty; I'm 29 years old; I'm not beautiful; I own jewelry, horses and carriages; my husband purchases two estates for me because his other property, when he dies, descends to his nearest blood relation; I visit the Court several times. What does this wealth mean to me? I can no longer remember any of the events of my childhood. One of my brothers dies in a workhouse infirmary. I'm able to do the work I want

and have the men I respect discuss my and their work among each other and with me. I care about the economic aspect as much as I care about my fucking with men. I often sleep with my women friends, I lie under heavy quilts, my body next to my friend's body; I place my lips on her lips, I put my left arm under her sweet head, dark curling hair, my right arm around her left shoulder my hand touches her back. Her thousands of long arms draw my body against the front of her body so my head rests under her head in the hollow of her neck and chest. My eyes are closed. For a long time we lie still like this we both rest at the edge of sleep. I don't have the leisure to be monogamous. Other women sleep around our bed watch us. My sex operates as a mask for my need for friends.

I make a major mistake. I stop trying to gain more power; for me, respectability. My husband realizes that I'm the Duc de Bourbon's lover, not his daughter; censures the Duc de Bourbon, god knows for what the fucking moralist; writes to the King; resigns his commission in the Royal Guards; and disappears. The King informs me I'm no longer allowed in Court. The Duc de Bourbon tries to console me, give me more money. I spend almost all my money trying to reobtain my right of entry to the

Court; I can find no way to do what I want. This is the first time anyone has absolutely denied me (I remember). I can't understand, deal with the situation. I begin to become monomaniacal and learn about the nature (nonnature) of reality.

The duke, like most men over 70, is attracted to young charming women. I'm neither young nor charming; he could abandon me any day, tell me nothing until disaster occurs. I discharge almost all the servants who are loyal to the duke; I substitute my servants who check all his mail. The duke might revenge himself on me for his imprisonment by secretly making a new will and dying. I fight. I have to get as rich as possible.

If I make the duke leave me all his money, the duke's relations will begin a series of lawsuits which will, at best, tie up the money while I'm alive. I ask the duke to make the younger son of the Duc d'Orleans, the cousin of the King, his heir. (1) The Duc d'Orleans is almost impoverished, will gladly help me obtain the money if he can get part of it. Poverty destroys stupid scruples. (2) The royal family will help settle the will, as relatives to the Duc d'Orleans, and then'll grant me the right of entry to the Court. The duke refuses to make a d'Orleans his heir. I force him to. Am I doing wrong? The duke

secretly plots to flee Chantilly; I find this out; he hides in the corner of an old room, his frail body shakes when he sees me. He tries to bribe me to leave him. 50,000 pounds. I watch myself destroy him, I become more scared that he'll take possession of me. I'm often too frightened to fuck, to let myself open myself. Masturbate.

The King informs me he is graciously pleased to receive me at his Court. Louis Philippe becomes King of France. One night the duke and I are dining at the Chateau de Saint-Leu, a present the duke has given me. (I don't like or don't care about most people; when I decide I like someone I overreact I scare the person. I know I'm going to overreact, no one I like will like me, I try to hide my feelings by acting like a sex maniac, excuse me, would you like to sleep with me, I begin to think I'm only sexually interested in the person. I chase the person, I'm vulnerable, I act as tough as possible to cover my vulnerability. I don't know how to tell people I like I want to be friends, sit next to them so I can smell the salt on the skin, try to learn as much as possible about their memories, ways of perceiving different events. Because most people I like don't like me, I'm scared to show them I like them. I feel I'm weird. I don't comprehend what signals a person I like gives indicate the person likes

me, what signals indicate the person dislikes me.) The duke, two gentlemen-in-waiting, and I play whist; the duke calmly tells Gay, his head valet, he wishes to be woken at 8:00 the next morning, and retires to his bedroom. I feel restless. I see a warm friend of mine, a woman servant, who tells me she knows the duke has made a secret will which disinherits me. Where's the will? She shows me the will. If I destroy the will, the duke will eventually discover its disappearance, make a new will. I can stop this only by killing him. My friend understands. We sneak quietly to the duke's bedroom, we use two of the duke's handkerchiefs to strangle him in his bed, sailors' knots my nephew taught me when he stayed with me at Chantilly; we move the huge heavy bed the duke sleeps in two feet away from the wall, hang the thin body by the handkerchiefs from the fastening of the long French window, the feet of the duke 30 inches above the floor. The duke seems to have committed suicide.

My name is Laura Lane. I'm born in Holly Springs, Mississippi, in 1837. My name is Adelaide Blanche de la Tremouille. I, K A, fall in love with D; D burns me.

When I'm 16 I marry William Stone who owns a li-

quor store in New Orleans. He likes to think of himself wearing black leather, studded flashy boots, he drinks, shoots bullets into the walls around me, I learn to handle guns, I have to do what I do, into the chicken coops, he threatens he wants to kill someone. I learn about that fantasy. He holds a gun to my head when he's drunk so he can watch me throw fits. I love my mother; we decide to go off to San Francisco together. First fantasy.

I marry Colonel William D. Fair, a lawyer. Lawyers tell you what's wrong, what's right. The colonel shows me if I don't do what he wants, he'll kill himself. Phooey. Two years later, he shoots himself in the head with a Colt six-shooter. Am I supposed to feel guilty? Second fantasy.

My mother, I, my year-old daughter Lillias, with three hundred bucks, head for the silver, Virginia City, Nevada. Head for the money without a man. I have to do what I have to do. Single-handed I open the Tahoe House, make a success out of my hotel. I don't want to sit in my room, count my money forever; I got sexually burned twice. Big shit. I want more than money and fame. Third fantasy.

I meet Alexander Parker Crittenden and fall deeply in love with him. He's 46, a hawk; the first time we fuck, he holds me on top of him in bed, he's surpris-

ingly gentle especially since he's a bad fuck. Has no idea how to touch the skin around my clit, give me pleasure. Fourth fantasy.

My mother believed that marriage, both marriage and monogamy, cause the people involved to lose their ambition, wits, and sense of humor, especially the people who have less of the power. My mother's neighbors soon showed my mother they would accept no bastard weirdos in their robot town; my father, a well-to-do Englishman, flees with me to England.

On April 9, 1895 I marry a man who I've met only once before my father's paid him to marry me because I'm a bastard.

The story of seven years: The early 1860's in Virginia City, Nevada. 30,000 people shove to get themselves as rich as possible. I don't want to be rich and famous. You can kill whoever you please as long as you've got a reason. Make one up. Wild dogs howl beneath the gangrened limbs of the old. Respectable has no real meaning. I'm 19 years old five feet three inches tall large dark eyes dark curly hair I know about music and art. Crittenden's a famous lawyer; elected to Nevada's first General Assembly; holds one of the most successful corporate practices in the state. Like me, he believes in being politically powerful, socially respectable, and rich. We're both tough;

we do what we have to do; we don't believe in bucking other people, the society, unless we have to. We're both loyal Southerners who respect the ways of luxury and tradition. When some fucking Yankee runs his puke Union flag up the pole that stands outside Tahoe House, I flash my revolver, order the Yank off the roof; no; I shoot the son-of-a-bitch.

The bastards arrest try me for attempted murder. I appear to go along with society, but that's what they are: bastards. Crittenden, my lover, has the same respect for society I've got. I use my flashy looks. He uses his prestige and money: impanels a jury of twelve secessionists, prays aloud to Shakespeare and Jeff Davis; his silver tongue gets me off the hook. I learn about the nature of reality and love Crittenden even more. In this situation, murder means nothing.

All that matters to me is my love for Crittenden I think about him every hour I imagine I see him again he tells me he hates me I turn around in the bathroom I see his blue eyes next to my eyes I put my hands on his shoulders he closes my body with his body his skins close wild horses around my skin.

What are the sources for this insane love? In what ways is my desire to have someone I love with me connected to a desire to murder? (When I'm a child, my parents own a summer house by the Atlantic,

every afternoon between 5:00 and 8:00 I walk on the sand by the green ocean, I climb up to the ends of the jetties, watch the waves break as they turn under each other, not back/forth, but back/forth under/same/time/as/over/back/forth.) I decide I'll do anything for Crittenden. A few days after my acquittal I learn Crittenden's married, has 7 children. Crittenden convinces me to have dinner with him and his wife at the Occidental Hotel in San Francisco. I descend into slavery, I let a man drive his fingers into my brains and reform my brains as he wants. Crittenden follows me back to Virginia City; my mother kicks him out of Tahoe House, refused to let him see me; I buy a house in the rich part of town and move in with Crittenden. Crittenden invites his wife to stay in my house. Why do I let Crittenden enslave me? I'm lazy. I'm no longer interested in this. I remember my second husband; I shoot at my head with a gun.

Stop. I go from trap to trap to trap. Crittenden's still promising to divorce his wife. I follow Crittenden to San Francisco; I have more money than I need. I have more than I want.

I almost die from a stillborn childbirth; I tell my husband I'm not going to have a kid again. I didn't want to marry him; I don't want him around, ruling me. Fuck all of them.

If someone bothers me, I shoot her/him. I shot that Union soldier on the roof, and Crittenden got me off the hook. Crittenden now tells me Mrs. Crittenden's back East; he won't let her again into California. I'm his slave and believe him. I don't want to be a slave. I aim a five-shooter at Crittenden, fire, and purposely miss him. I marry this guy Snyder who's a weakling; in a month Crittenden arranges for me to get a divorce so I can return to him. He begins to furnish a house on Ellis Street for his wife who's returning from the East. (A wants to fuck E. A's sleeping with me he puts me to sleep in the attic M's fucking next door I hear A make love to E through the floor. I open the attic window climb down the roof, shimmy down a long pole, I run back to school A tells me he'll decide between me and E; I'm better. He picks me. Next day he tells me E's pregnant, get out this instant.) Crittenden's going to get a divorce, go East with me. For the moment I'm content. I don't believe him, I pretend I believe him. I have to learn how I can co-exist with my tempestuous emotions. I'm mainly interested in myself. I buy a new gun: a sharp four-shooter. (After L at night goes to sleep he has to work the next day I think about killing him I imagine I walk up to the bed in which he's sleeping with a knife stick the knife through the left

side of his body under his ribs.) On November 3 Crittenden stops at our house, I know it's the last time; I want to be tough; I won't be hysterical; if I don't hate someone I have to be hysterical I can't let the first emotions out I'm not his robot his fuck. He could belong to me; I have to kill the other people he thinks he belongs to. I'll be a vegetable. (I let L hit me leave me broke without a home because I no longer want to fuck him he lives at the same time with a new lover his new lover watches him hit me makes comments about the scene. I let L tell me the only thing I'm good for is fucking, the only reason he lives with me.) I want to be rich and famous; no, I want to be able to talk with people without having them put me down.

I put on a huge velvet cape, a hat with a thick veil, my holster and gun; I follow my lover carefully silently in a hack I secretly hired yesterday, past low brown and grey buildings whose empty windows rats hover over, past women and men walking arm-in-arm as if they can. (In New York, I shaved off my hair, wore a black bishop's coat, jeans, heavy boots, so I'd look like a boy; if a man asked me the time in public, I'd kick him. I tried to meet more women, I couldn't figure how; everyone disliked me) Secretly I board the El Capitan, the opium-infested side-

wheeler that's going to ferry my lover to his so-called wife. People crowd around me; they want to confuse me, gather me; I become lost. I don't like to be in a crowd of people unless I'm invisible I have fantasies I'm invisible or people rush over to me how are you darling do you want to sleep with me? The ferry docks; I rush through the crowd to see Crittenden meet his wife; bodies block me; I can't do what I want; I see Crittenden and Clara sitting on the upper deck; Clara's hands are crossed, I see a blue dress with tiny white flowers, gloves, why gloves; I think she's smiling, a stupid kid in a military uniform, Crittenden's smiling; I can't even escape into my own pretensions. I watch every movement they make. I hear a whistle, 5:50 P.M. the side-wheeler's about to return to San Francisco. I'll never see Crittenden again. (I don't know how to deal with someone I love or want to see refusing to see me, disliking me. I finally force myself to see that the people I love (some) dislike me. Even though they dislike me, I can't them; I keep trying to talk to them, I keep bothering them, make them dislike me more, me more entangled in fears/shynesses. They show they hate me; I see myself sitting under the clothes in my closet; I don't see anyone; I wait for the hole to close.) I shoot Crittenden; he mutters something; I

drop my gun, wait for the police to capture me. I'm hysterical start screaming louder and louder.

All the above events are taken from myself, **ENTER MURDERERS!** by E.H. Bierstadt, **MURDER FOR PROFIT** by W. Bolitho, **BLOOD IN THE PARLOR** by D. Dunbar, **ROGUES AND ADVENTURESSES** by C. Kingston.