

MERRIN BROOK



ASPIRING NOVELIST

THE TURN OF MIDNIGHT WATERS

MERRIN

MERRIN BROOK

ASPIRING AUTHOR

AGE 18

SPECIAL SKILLS:

Challenge Convention	35
Feign Bohemianism	55
Literature & Writing	25
Recognise Flim-Flam	60
Spot Hidden..	75
Swim	35
Mythos	05
Occult.	10

EDUCATION:

Presbyterian Ladies College,
Sydney.

POSSESSIONS:

Typewriter, blank paper, tickets
to the Artist's Ball.

CHARACTERISTICS

STR	45	CON	70	SIZ	45
INT	80	POW	55	DEX	65
APP	70	EDU	70	SAN	48

HEALTH

- ☐ Dead as a Maggot
- ☐ Crook as Rookwood
- ☐ Completely Rooted
- ☐ Sick as a Dog
- ☐ A Bit Bugged
- ☐ Hearty
- ☒ Absolutely Stoked

VITALITY

- ☐ Unconscious
- ☐ Woozy
- ☐ Dazed
- ☐ Head-achy
- ☒ Fine
- ☐ Magnetic
- ☐ Masterly

SANITY

INSANE 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34
35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50
51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66
67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82
83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99

LIBIDO

FOCUS



QUEEN OF THE NIGHT?

Young Merrin Brook stands poised on the cusp of adulthood, with a vibrant energy and charm. Gentle by nature, she seems to genuinely share her father's lifelong passion for exposing falsehood, though her current obsessions centre on becoming a novelist, and on the upcoming Artist's Ball, her ball costume, and her determination to be crowned Queen of the Night.

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 mystery.

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

To break her growing seclusion, 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 distrust of outsiders. 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. People knew about Miss Merrin, and would see her safely to and from her destinations. Even the local gangs smiled and let her pass. She had become 'one of us'.

Urged on by family and friends, Merrin made her début at last year's Artist's Ball, and won renown for her costume as 'the leopard skin princess'. The recognition has greatly increased Merrin's self-confidence—it is usually the flamboyant Bettie who

attracts the public attention—and this year she intends to win the Ball's most coveted prize and be crowned Queen of the Night. But first she needs a costume...

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 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, has proven to be a godsend. Yet their friendship remains almost entirely platonic—a 'spiritual musehood' to use Cyrus' term—despite no lack of initiative on Merrin's part. To add to the heady mix, Bettie's beau Posso is also flirting with Merrin. It's very flattering, and more than a little confusing.

Cyrus is suffering badly under the stress of his coming poetic debut, and is assailed by terrifying nightmares and waking visions. His despair is growing.

Terrance Brook suffered terribly at the death of Constance. Grief and advancing sickness have made him an invalid. And now the, enveloped in a deep gloom, terrance is casting aside his long-held beliefs and renowned skepticism to embrace an esoteric and outré doctrine of a new age. Terrance is changing.

The Brook sisters have written to the man Terrance respects most in all the world, the Suzerain Lazarov. They have pleaded for the Russian occultist to intercede to assist their ailing father.

Publisher and poet August Orrin has offered to train Merrin as a manager at his Roo Stream Press. Respectability may be within her grasp. Orrin is a long-time family friend, an adopted uncle to the girls, but cut off all communication shortly before Constance's death. It is a painful and embarrassing situation, and neither Terrance nor Bettie will speak of it. Merrin has not yet mentioned the offer.

Notorious occultist Owen Aherne has insisted Merrin join him on the organising Committee for the Artists' Ball. The creepy old man seems quite besotted with her, but has always been a perfect gentleman.

Adult life is confusing. Wider society is much less welcoming to young women than sheltered family circles. Through it all, Merrin seeks something real and valuable in her life.

PEOPLE

THE BROOK FAMILY

Terrance Brook: your father, renowned theosophist and skeptic, disabled by crippling illness and in the sway of new beliefs.

Elizabeth 'Bettie' Brook: your sister, giddy socialite, 'Backless Betty from Bondi'.

THE VISITORS

Lazarov: mysterious and charismatic Russian occultist.

William Boyne: brutal Irish investigator, a survivor.

THE SUITORS

Cyrus Browne of Sydney Towne: your boyfriend, a poet and dreamer.

Posso Seaton: manager of Black Star nightclub, shifty companion to Bettie.

OTHERS

Tilley Devine, vice queen, 'the wickedest woman in Sydney'.

Marina Shrouds, an ambitious crime boss, rival to Tilley Devine.

August Orin, South Pacific trader, Arts benefactor.

Owen Aherne, infamous occultist and poet.

Vida Nix, a forthright Woolloomooloo parish and community leader.