

KAT MEADS

What Lies in Closets

It's long past two a.m. but not quite three. I'm roaming the house, listening to a Leonard Cohen CD through headphones so as not to disturb the man and cat in residence who can sleep between two a.m. and three. Leonard Cohen's lugubrious lyrics, Leonard Cohen's dirge-like vocals: a soundtrack supremely suited to the walking exhausted.

More than halfway through my usual wandering circuit—kitchen/glass of water, living room/magazine rack, office/Internet connection—for no reason other than boredom, I deviate from routine, turn into a spare bedroom, yank open the closet door and begin to rifle through the boxes and bags of papers packed inside. There is stuff here I haven't touched since moving from my last address, files I haven't opened since moving East Coast to West. Just as I'm laying hands on a beat-about envelope marked "Patty Hearst," "Sisters of Mercy," Jewish Cohen's oh-so-Catholic song of comfort-seeking chimes in. A coincidence, yes. Also supremely apt. Although purportedly inspired by a three-way romp in a hotel room, those lyrics incorporate longing for comfort from higher sources as well.

Comfort from sources high and low.

Something Patricia Campbell Hearst, Catholic girl/heirress/victim/symbol could have used

February 4, 1974, after dining on canned chicken noodle soup and tuna fish sandwiches, after watching *Mission: Impossible* and *The Magician* on television, after trailing her soon to be ex-fiancé to the door of their apartment, 2603 Benvenue Avenue, Berkeley, at or around 9:20 p.m., and lingering in the vicinity when he so unwisely allowed in a female miming distress. Could have used during and after the beating of said fiancé and the abduction of herself from their modest, temporary home filled with macramé plant holders, a kitchen pegboard of pots and pans. Could have used while being dragged down the steps, smacked in the face with a rifle butt and locked in a car trunk. Could have used after being tossed in the first "people's prison" in Daly City in her blue terrycloth robe and panties, site of her sleeping/unsleeping bed for (best estimate) thirty days, then on to Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, for another (best estimate) twenty-seven days of captivity inside closet number two. Could have used for the next nineteen months in the company of eight, then two, who wished Death to the Fascist Insect that Preys on the Life of the People. Could have used when FBI agents burst into the apartment she shared with a woman, a feminist, on 625 Morse Street, San Francisco, September 18, 1975, 2:25 p.m., 592 days after the

first apartment storming. Could have used after pissing her pants and surrendering without fight to another show of force. Could have used as a jailed ninety-pound "urban guerilla" continuously menstruating, en route to a collapsed lung and conviction for her part in the Hibernia Bank robbery, net proceeds \$10,660. Could have used while serving twenty-one months of a seven-year sentence before President Jimmy Carter granted her executive clemency and Prisoner 00077-181 walked out of the Federal Correctional Institution in Pleasanton with a flowered throw she'd crocheted, a guard dog named Arrow, a bodyguard boyfriend named Bernie, and, against all odds, a grin, her sanity and a sardonic sense of humor, retained or recovered.

Or not.

Depending on one's politics.

If, wearing my blue but not terrycloth bathrobe, I got in my car and drove without recklessness or excessive speed north on Interstate 880, I could be casing that Benvenue Avenue four-plex in an hour's time. If, instead of taking 880, I drove north on 280, into the city, in approximately the same travel time, I could be rubbernecking the Morse Street capture site of Patty Hearst and Wendy Yoshimura because, in the context of now, I reside in the Golden State's Bay Area.

In the context of then, February 1974, I lived, weekdays, in the Piedmont of North Carolina. On weekends I drove 200-plus miles east to overnight on my parents' farm. The purpose of that to- and fro-ing was distraction. About what my personal future should contain, I could form

no strong opinion. About what I *hoped* it would contain: equally fuzzy. The night the Symbionese Liberation Army kidnapped the heiress, a Monday night, I would have been back in the Piedmont, finished with another shift of my dead-end job and feeling grateful for the affections of a dog that considered me the center of his (limited) universe. Even so, I would have retained a parental-home-mindset because I needed until at least Tuesday night to readjust to the idea that I was a grown, independent woman, living a life that supposedly confirmed those two adjectives. In effect I was someone who remained suspended between worlds, extremely susceptible to conditions of flux and float. As such, I was the ideal consumer of a story whose star exchanged one kind of existence for another without the bother of planning or input.

About Patty Hearst in 1974, I remember thinking: *She's not where she was. She's not by choice where she is. She's not free to return to what was, since altered. So what now?*

The file in my California closet contains the *Time* magazine issue with Patty/Tania's mug shot on the cover, part one of *Rolling Stone's* account of Patty's cross-country escapades with the Harrises, and the ragged front page of the September 24, 1975 edition of the *Greensboro Daily News*, bearing these three headlines:

PATTY SWEARS TORTURE DROVE HER TO
INSANITY

MENTAL TEST ORDERED FOR SARA JANE
MOORE

"SQUEAKY" RULED COMPETENT TO STAND TRIAL,

BE OWN LAWYER.

A slim file—but one that need not *remain* a slim file. It occurs to me as I stare at the mug shot—the severely plucked brows, the limp and plastered hair, the dark and darker circles around those dim and vacant eyes—that quite possibly I’ve stumbled on a bit of salvation. Even a minimal review of what has been written, filmed, argued and counter-argued about Patty Hearst since 1974 will take hours—many, many, many hours.

And so, as an insomniac, I think this about Patty Hearst: *goody*.

To quote Hannah Arendt: “Events, by definition, are occurrences that interrupt routine processes . . . Predictions of the future are never anything but projections . . . of occurrences that are likely to come to pass if . . . nothing unexpected happens.”

Nothing unexpected. Check.

To quote Patty turned Tania turned Patty Hearst, memoirist, in *Every Secret Thing*: “I . . . sense there is little one can do to prepare oneself adequately for the unknown.”

Little one can do to prepare. Check.

To quote author/actress Patrica Hearst Shaw, speaking with Larry King in a broadcast that aired in 2002: “We all think we’re pretty strong and that nobody can make us do something if we don’t want to do it. That’s true until somebody locks you up in a closet and tortures you and finally makes you so weak that you completely break.”

True until. Check.

To quote John Wayne: “It seems quite odd to

me that the American people have immediately accepted the fact that one man” (Jim Jones) “can brainwash 900 human beings into mass suicide,” (in Guyana) “but will not accept the fact that a ruthless group, the Symbionese Liberation Army, could brainwash a little girl by torture, degradation and confinement.”

Torture, degradation, confinement. Check. (And note that “little girl.”)

A self-styled revolutionary corps of ten, two of that number in jail for the murder of Oakland Superintendent of Schools Marcus Foster, the majority women, the majority suburbia-raised and college-educated, acting under the leadership of General Field Marshall Cinque (a.k.a. Donald DeFreeze), the SLA’s single black member, decide to snatch a UC Berkeley undergrad, a nineteen-year-old rich bitch from Hillsborough, slumming it with her grad-school boyfriend on Benvenue Avenue. Their target’s most brazen act of defiance prior to that cohabitation? Telling a nun to go to hell.

Rather remarkably, the scheme succeeds.

I first read Shana Alexander’s *Anyone’s Daughter: The Times and Trials of Patty Hearst* when it was published in 1979. Second time through, what’s most striking is how very much Alexander dislikes Catherine Hearst, that “brightly Lana Turnerish,” yet also “strangely Chinese” woman with “tiny feet,” “cotton-candy hair,” and “flawless makeup.”

About Mrs. Hearst’s mental makeup, Ms. Alexander reports: “A special kind of perfection

also marks this woman's mind. It is not a perfection of stupidity, though her singlemindedness can make her appear that way."

About Mrs. Hearst's environment, the Hillsborough community, Ms. Alexander reports: "Hillsborough does not produce people with flexible minds . . . without doubt the most boring enclave of privilege I had ever visited, lacking weather or even scenery to fall back on when in conversational distress."

About the interview with Mrs. Hearst that appeared in the July 1974 *Ladies Home Journal*, Ms. Alexander reports: "The article is heavy on Catherine's hobbies—stargazing, supermarketing, and the study of the genealogy of the ancient royal family of Hawaii."

About Catherine Hearst's background, Ms. Alexander reports: "In the late 1930s . . . Catherine Campbell, the belle of Atlanta, was a finalist in the nationwide Scarlett O'Hara contest to find an unknown actress to star opposite Clark Gable in *Gone with the Wind* . . . Catherine Campbell Hearst is, before everything, a Southern girl. She would no more reveal her true feelings in public than she would sit with her legs uncrossed."

That "Southern girl" remark.

Southern born, I am particularly (perhaps too particularly) alert to Southern bashing. A hundred pages or so into *Anyone's Daughter*, I begin to suspect the Southern slur trumps the Hillsborough slur in Ms. Alexander's ranking of insults. I begin to suspect Ms. Alexander went looking for a weeping, wailing mother in visible distress, hair uncombed, dress askew, and when

she found, instead, a steely Southerner determined never to let the "public" see her "crack," I suspect the contradiction pissed off Ms. Alexander. I suspect that development threatened the narrative already scrolling inside Ms. Alexander's head if not yet transferred onto the page.

Also not a Catherine fan: Steven Weed, once prospective son-in-law. Weed pans Mrs. Hearst's "insular upbringing," "overreliance on prescribed drugs," and lack of mothering skills. Her fervent Catholicism, he asserts in *My Search for Patty Hearst*, "only increased her inability to come to grips with an increasingly secular world. Though a member of the Board of Regents, no one could have been less well suited to . . . understand the problems at Berkeley."

Mid-trial, Patty's lawyer, F. Lee Bailey, describes Catherine Hearst as a "terrible pessimist. Deep down she thinks that . . . her daughter will go to jail"—which might also count as a jab if she hadn't called it exactly right. Her daughter did indeed go to jail. Which makes Catherine Hearst closer in category to a gritty realist, does it not?

Catherine Hearst, according to both Alexander and Weed, castigates her daughter's fiancé for falling short of the Clark Gable/Rhett Butler manliness bar. "Whatever happened to the real men in this world?" Catherine hisses at Weed. "Men like Clark Gable? No one would have carried off my daughter if there had been a real man there!"

When Steven Weed meets Catherine Hearst's daughter at the Crystal Springs School for Girls, he's twenty-three, Patty's teacher. She's seventeen.

In *My Search for Patty Hearst*, Weed insists Patty pursued him, not vice versa. If so, he's an easy catch. Promptly he dumps the woman he's living with for the heiress. His "tiny, small-boned and compact, almost childlike" new lover—a merely "competent cook"—has a "choppy, determined little step" and is "never one to suffer a lack of confidence." In her Daddy-bought MG, they zoom off to vacations at the Hearst family retreats, San Simeon to the south, Wyntoon to the north. They get engaged. They plan to marry because Patty wants to get married—not because he sees an opportunity to live off a trust fund. (Perish the thought.)

In Patty's counter-version of that place and time, she complains: "Most of our friends at Berkeley were *his* friends . . ." When those friends visit, her fiancé discourses "for hours on some minute point of nineteenth-century philosophy or English punctuation." Bored, she "slip(s) away to the kitchen" to bake a cake. "I came to see that my first true love was not perfect," she writes. "He was not only intelligent and self-confident; he was also arrogant and condescending." As the wedding date approaches, the pending bride experiences "doubts and fears." To escape the nuptials, she considers "joining the Navy." She also slips into a "depression." Others assure her pre-wedding jitters are quite normal. She tries to believe that bromide—but does she?

February 4th.

The pending groom of a willing/unwilling bride passes another day studying philosophy, another (half) night in front of the television. Then comes

the fateful knock on the door. Attacked, battered and bleeding, Weed escapes the apartment, runs out the rear door, onto the patio, over a fence, then over a second fence, before realizing, in his own words, "no one was chasing me"—those no ones otherwise preoccupied with dragging his fiancée down the steps and stashing her inside the trunk of their getaway car.

Running in the opposite direction.

Not what Catherine Hearst would classify a real-man response.

Steven Weed, the fellow Patty never again sees or speaks to after the kidnapping, publishes his book six years before she publishes hers. He "turned to writing because it was therapeutic," he informs Shana Alexander, and part of that therapy seems to be listing further screw-ups and/or embarrassments. Called into U.S. District Attorney James Browning's office to identify one of the Hibernia Bank robbers, he tells Browning "of course" it's Patty, signs the back of the photograph as evidence of that identification, agrees to "appear before the grand jury as a character witness" and only "halfway down the stairs" realizes he's just helped "build the case" against his former roommate. Dining with an "attractive young reporter" from *Newsday*, he gets "pleasantly high" and supplies a "tape recorder full of raw material" that results in an article that both infuriates and dumbfounds the usually genial Randolph Hearst. "What the hell is with you? You get up there with some girl . . . and just bubble like a yeast cake."

Toward the end of *My Search for Patty Hearst*, Weed declares his "disappointment" with Patty

and states that when he thinks of her as a "victim," he still loves her, but when he thinks she's acting in the manner of a "spoiled brat," he loves her not.

Getting kidnapped is a high price to pay for getting shed of Steven Weed, but too high?

Debatable.

Arrogance. Presumption. Cockiness.

In 1974, many under thirty in America assumed the divine right to pronounce and denounce. If we disagreed with governmental policy, we expected that government to listen. If we were against a war, we expected its prompt end. If we disliked the "leader of the free world," we expected him and his entourage to pack bags for exile in San Clemente. If we rejected monogamy, materialism, the house/car/kids model of achievement, we expected our dissension to be more than tolerated. We expected loud applause. Accordingly, if we fancied someone, we insisted that someone could and should be ours for a night or long weekend sans regrets, recriminations, or the mess and muck of further entanglement.

In retrospect, what seems most striking about that era's sense of entitlement was its nonexclusive, democratic base. A certain segment of the young in any era assume entitlement because their heritage and daily circumstance support the snobbery. But in the late Sixties and early Seventies, scholarship students, farm children, and the offspring that factory wages fed and clothed also believed and behaved as if we too counted among the anointed. Backed by several generations of wealth, Patty Hearst qualified as old-school privileged. Her age

and college of choice made her one of the new-school privileged as well. It was a risk: combining an old-school bank account with new-school accessibility, and it got her kidnapped.

Privilege, entitlement—neither concept holds up well under adverse circumstances. Fifty-seven days of closet confinement, for example.

The first closet in Daly City: 5 1/2 feet long, 2 feet deep.

The second closet on Golden Gate Avenue: 5 feet long, 1 foot 7 inches deep.

My 600-square-foot 1974 rental off the Chapel Hill/Durham bypass featured a 5' x 2' bedroom closet. The enclosure barely accommodated the width of a coat hanger. Sticking an arm inside to snatch a blouse incited my claustrophobia. Her tiny compactness aside—height 5'2" or 5'3", depending on the source, weight 110 pounds going in—Patty Hearst survived inside those people's prisons cramped and crimped, sleep-, light-, and fresh-air deprived. It is beyond my capacity to imagine confinement in such close quarters fifty-seven days and nights.

The kidnapped says she was transferred in a plastic garbage can from the closet of the Daly City safehouse to the closet on Golden Gate Avenue. Not surprisingly, Bill and Emily Harris say otherwise. They say the abducted was never confined to any closet; that the door of Daly City closet was always open; that her hands were never tied. They also say Patty Hearst spent no time whatsoever in the Golden Gate Avenue closet because by then she was a certified SLA'er

renamed Tania.

Much of *Every Secret Thing* reads like a forced, if precise, recitation of what happened when, but not the descriptions of closet confinement and its effects. Those lift the neck hairs. Blindfolded, she's tossed inside. She's bleeding on the leg, her face still throbs from the earlier rifle butt blow. Her tears soak through the blindfold, lubricating it, causing it to slip. She's terrified she'll be blamed for that slippage, and terror makes her cry harder. The closet stinks of "sweat and filth." Old carpet remnants have been nailed to the walls and door, ceiling to floor, as crude soundproofing. "I might as well have been in an underground coffin," she writes. Time passes, but how much? She can't distinguish night from day. Maybe she sleeps, maybe she doesn't. Above all else, she feels "uncontrollable fear" of being killed by captors she "could not stop" from doing so.

During Hearst's closeting, she loses fifteen pounds of fighting weight and comes to despise (among other things) the smell and taste of peppermint tea. When allowed out of the closet to pee, she does so blindfolded, with an audience. Her first bath: also with blindfold intact, also with an audience. She asks if she can remove the blindfold to wash her hair and face, bath two. "They held a meeting on that," she writes, a bit of the famous/infamous sarcasm spiking through before vanishing, even in recall. "I was so thankful for that bath and hair wash one would have thought I was being led to a party . . ." In the bathroom, when the blindfold comes off: "Everything looked so strange, so out of proportion. Everything around

me appeared huge, distorted and constantly moving like ocean waves."

Back in the closet, she wakes from a "fitful" nap, convinced she's dying. She realizes that even if she were "free to walk away," she can't because she can't stand without assistance. "I was so tired, so tired; all I wanted to do was to sleep . . . and I knew that was . . . fatal, like the man lost in the Arctic snow, who, having laid his head down for that delicious nap, never woke again."

Afraid to sleep.

In my universe, that comment scans like punishment reserved for hell.

In the 1988 film *Patty Hearst*, directed by Paul Schrader and based on *Every Secret Thing*, the protagonist is played by Natasha Richardson, daughter of Vanessa Redgrave, a fairly radical lass herself. For much of the film, the camera's view is the closet view: the darkness and shadow, the visual and audial skew, the activity outside it, the terror within. Limited set, small cast, a film with the look and the feel of a play, Richardson's voiceover narration a pitch-perfect rendition of her character's speech—a monotonic flatness that can, almost imperceptibly, rise to deliver a sting.

No hint of sarcasm in the first communiqué, recorded in the closet. Not on the actual tape, as included in Robert Stone's documentary *Guerilla: The Taking of Patty Hearst*, nor on the tape's filmic recreation, delivered by mimic Richardson.

"Mom" (pause) "Dad" (pause) "I'm" (pause) "okay" (pause).

When Hearst records that tape she's not okay or anything close to that state of being, but she's still

breathing. A victory of sorts. Another unchartable chunk of time passes. She's still in the closet. And it's inside that closet that she resolves not to die "of (her) own accord," to "concentrate on staying alive one day at a time."

Once she stops fearing second by second for her life, once fear transforms into something like adrenalin jolts caused by a voice, a movement, a body in that closet in addition to her own, I have no trouble believing Patty Hearst resolves to play the odds. No trouble believing that she finds it inconceivable that Hearst money, influence, and power haven't yet set her free. Even less trouble believing that after swinging a gun in a bank lobby and joining the ranks of the FBI's Most Wanted and crisscrossing the country and *still* not being found by any of those supposedly looking so hard and desperately for her, she concludes that whatever life has become is probably the way life is going to stay. Deal or die. The burning question being: did she deal by converting or by conning?

"Liberated" from the closet, her first opportunity to match faces with voices, I like to think the granddaughter of gamesman William Randolph Hearst masterminds a gullibility test. When the blindfold comes off and she utters that ludicrous but very well played "You're all so attractive" remark, I like to think W.R.'s granddaughter does so for reasons other than terror and despair. If the SLA "militia" growls and grumbles and reminds her that "attractiveness" is hardly a deciding factor in the violent overthrow of the American government, the response confirms opponents of a certain cast. If, on the other hand, they grin like

vainglorious fools, as they do in the Schrader film, there's wiggle room.

Enter Tania, stage left.

Attractiveness.

Sexual desire, after fifty-seven days and nights in a closet.

Even in a contentious trial, the prosecution doesn't dispute defense testimony that sexual feelings are among the first to go for persons held captive, a psychological/physiological finding with relevance to the Patty/Tania/Willie Wolfe/Cujo pair-off. A prep school grad, a UC Berkeley undergrad whose interest in prison reform leads him to Black Cultural Association meetings at Vacaville Prison and into the orbit of Donald DeFreeze. The doctor's son who renounces college to be a grunt in DeFreeze/General Field Marshal Cinque's army. At twenty-three, the youngest captor, the closest in age and background to the captive. That Willie Wolfe.

At her trial, Hearst swears she couldn't "stand" the guy. Regardless, fictioneers (Christopher Sorrentino in *Trance* and others) prefer guerilla love to rape and revulsion. In the final communiqué, Hearst calls Willie/Cujo the "gentlest, most beautiful man" she's "ever known" and declares neither "ever loved an individual the way we loved each other." She sports his Olmec monkey gift around her neck until the Los Angeles inferno and thereafter keeps it in her purse, where it's found by the FBI. The fact that she saved that gewgaw? Also a gift to the prosecution. She *must* have loved the slain. But what if, upon release from closet

number two, still shaky in the legs and unsure of her ability to escape entire, W.R.'s granddaughter sizes up her partnering options and deems Willie Wolfe the lesser evil? What if she displays the trinket around her neck only as long as the giver is around to expect/demand that show of devotion and afterward hedges her bets by stashing the trinket in her purse?

It's a theory.

During the trial, the prosecution refers to Patty Hearst's "unparalleled capacity for sarcasm." Hyperbole, one hopes, given the sarcasm fodder daily provided by the SLA. The plum wine cache. The combat drills in the hallways of safehouses. The sexual politics of who would sleep with the General and who with the hierarchy's lesser lights. Angela Atwood, Nancy Ling Perry, Patricia Soltysik and latter day SLA convert Kathy Soliah—all actress wannabes, according to former San Francisco *Chronicle* reporter Tim Findley. Picture it: the granddaughter of the paramour of Marion Davies competing for the role of most convincing urban guerilla, an actress-in-training long before she meets John Waters.

First stage credit: the role of Tania.

First film appearance: The Hibernia Bank Robbery.

Costume: shag wig and trench coat.

Prop: semi-automatic carbine.

Because she's so convincing in the role of bank robber/terrorist, her comrades assure her she'll now most definitely be shot if captured/recaptured. Welcome to the club, comrade. If Patty/Tania

initially doubts the dire prediction, what occurs in L.A. must look a lot like confirmation.

Because Bill Harris can't refrain from shoplifting a pair of socks (a bandolier, he claims) from Mel's Sporting Goods on May 16, because in the scuffle he loses a Colt revolver registered in the name of Emily Harris, because Yolanda/Emily insists they abandon Cinque's VW van, the police discover the safehouse on West 84th Street and then the very un-safe safehouse on 54th Street. From a Disneyland motel room, May 17, Patty/Tania and the Harrises watch the firefight and barbeque that ends the lives of six SLA grandees, including General Field Marshal Cinque who, according to autopsy reports, doesn't quite go down with the ship or in like fashion with his comrades, but dies of a self-inflicted bullet to the brain à la Hitler.

In a 2001 CNN broadcast, Patty Hearst once again explains "how she felt" about the shootout.

LARRY KING: Now, you've been kidnapped for 90 days when this famous shootout occurred. Where were you?

HEARST: I'm trying to think now. In a motel with the Harrises.

KING: Were you watching this?

HEARST: Yes.

KING: What did you think?

HEARST: Of . . . ? You know, they were saying the whole time that they thought that I was in there."

In there, dying, with the rest.

Did or didn't the FBI and the Los Angeles

Police Department believe she was inside that East 54th Street bungalow? Patty/Tania assumed they did, and still the bullets flew and the fire burned.

In the SLA's arsenal: four automatic weapons, six shotguns, six handguns and various pipe-bomb materials. The LAPD's counterforce: 9000 bullets, 125 tear-gas canisters, 321 police vehicles, 2 helicopters, 410 siege officers, and 196 crowd-control and security officers. Not counting the FBI surcharge, Shana Alexander estimates eradicating six SLA members cost the government approximately \$68,000.

And Patty/Tania's fate once that directive is accomplished? To flee fire, death, and L.A. via Interstate 5, that speedway renowned for multi-car collisions, tipped big rigs, fog-outs, dust storms, and a Denny's restaurant every two exits. To embark on another feckless chapter of life on the lam hidden beneath a blanket in the backseat of a car also occupied by the least winsome pair of a not very winsome lot: Teko and Yolanda.

Teko and Yolanda.

A strain on the nerves, in the best of circumstances.

He's volatile, a ranter, a hitter; the shortest guy on the playground, the white guy who desperately wants to be black. Her manipulations are more covert and cunning, a schoolmarm in revolutionary garb. She's overly fond of discipline, of punishing the slackers who fall short. As a twosome they bicker incessantly, neurotically enmeshed but determined to behave as if they

have thrown off the bourgeois pox of manners and monogamy.

Willie Wolfe she "couldn't stand," but Hearst's reaction to the Harrises is far more scathing and intense. That "violent, evil, unpredictable, incompetent" pair she "loathed," and Wendy Yoshimura, who joins the entourage on the East Coast, seems to share Hearst's low opinion of Teko and Yolanda. Unlike the Harrises, during the summer of farm hideouts, Yoshimura comports herself with calm discretion, a model of levelheaded reliability (i.e., supremely competent). Back in the Bay Area, Yoshimura and Patty/Tania set up house apart from the Teko/Yolanda sideshow. No doubt a welcome respite. Also extremely short lived. The Tania part of the Patty story is all but done.

September 5, 1975. Sacramento. Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme attempts to kill President Gerald Ford with a .45 caliber Colt.

September 18, 1975. San Francisco. Fugitive Patty/Tania is captured in an apartment with two communal carbines and her own personal revolver.

September 22, 1975. San Francisco. Sara Jane Moore attempts to kill President Gerald Ford with a .38 caliber Smith & Wesson.

Violent femmes.

Guerrilla girls.

In California, an outbreak of girls and guns.

Newly jailed, Patty/Tania can't remember the courses she took at Berkeley or where her sisters went to school. Her scores on the Minnesota

Multiphasic Personality Inventory place her in the “feeble-minded” range. After nineteen months with the SLA and its remnants, Patty Hearst takes the Sentence Completion Test, whose diagnostic purpose is to provide “insights into the defenses, fears and preoccupations of the patient,” and finishes these starters thus:

My greatest trouble is the present and the past, and I guess the future too.

The dark it's there, I mean.

Death you have to accept it.

In the opinion of *Guerilla* documentarian Robert Stone, Patty Hearst should have been treated as “an ordinary young woman who got kidnapped and joined a cult.” In the taped communiqués that range in sentiment from *Mom, Dad, I'm okay* to *I hope I can get back really soon* to *ditch the black dress, Mom, I'm not dead* to *I don't think you're doing everything you could do, Dad* to *I've decided to stay and fight* to proclaimed adoration for that most beautiful of men, the dead Cujo, Stone says, “You can feel her transforming her personality. That's what happens in cults.”

Instead of advising his client to throw herself on the mercy of the court, F. Lee Bailey and team opt to argue brainwashing.

When the jury files in to deliver the verdict, according to Shana Alexander, before that verdict is announced, Patty Hearst mouths the word “guilty,” suggesting that over the course of an abduction, closet captivity, life on the run, San Mateo County jail incarceration and trial preparation, the defendant has become marvelously adept at reading the expressions,

intuiting the decisions and anticipating the actions of those in whose hands her fate depended.

“I don't blame them,” Patty Hearst says of the jury who convicts her. “Unless they had been there, there was no way they could understand.”

No way.

Details of the sort that stick:

Emily Harris appropriating the blue terrycloth robe Hearst was wearing when abducted, laundering it, repairing the tears and curling up in that garment across the room from its previous owner.

Patty/Tania sharing “pig lookout” duty with Cinque her first night out of the closet, the two of them staring through razor slits in the curtains, 11 p.m. to 2 a.m.

The People In Need/Hearst food giveaway administrator cum FBI informer cum would-be assassin Sara Jane Moore who, asked how to report the hijacking of a Hearst-supplied food truck, quips: “Start it with, ‘Once upon a time there was a truck.’”

A Download-for-Free! essay on essayexpress.com whose cadence, concept, reasoning and punctuation are the stuff of teacher nightmare. To wit: “She lived in a mansion . . . she was a woman who was part of some crimes.”

A mansion-dweller, a perpetrator of “some crimes.”

Patty Hearst, Trivial Pursuit category.

At the end of the movie *Patty Hearst*, Richard as Hearst remarks in trademark deadpan

"I finally figured out what my crime was. I lived."

Lived through what to become what?

Body snatch, closet confinement, SLA menace and braggadocio, the perpetual fear of being killed by comrade or G-man. Capture and transport to another lock in/lock up, this one with actual bars, where dead rats appear on her mattress and her menses won't stop and her lung collapses and those who supposedly love her won't fire the showboat lawyer who advises her to take the fifth forty-two times on the witness stand. A conviction, a jail term that brings her to the letter-writing attentions of correspondent Charlie Manson and ultimately to the attention of President Jimmy Carter who issues—after almost two years of time served—an order of executive clemency.

The publication of a tell-all memoir that begins with a list of her civilian-life protections (locked doors, home security systems, additional guard dogs, firearms). A two-months-out-of-prison marriage to her bodyguard who looks to make about three of Steven Weed. Glammed up, fattened up, this Patty Hearst incarnation promotes her book on talk shows, explains what she will ever after have to explain, justify and defend: what she did, why and when at the ages of nineteen and twenty. She hosts a televised tour of San Simeon for the Travel Channel. She coauthors a mystery/historical romance set at San Simeon featuring passages of dialogue and passions a-tumble such as: "Lucas," she repeated, while he slid to the couch and wrapped her up in his strong, sure arms."

Not just arms: strong, sure, Rhett Butler-esque arms.

She becomes a fixture on the East Coast/New York social scene, organizes charity events, poses arm-in-arm with her two daughters, one a Paris Hilton doppelgänger. She co-stars in films by John Waters, once playing the mother of a kidnapping terrorist. On his way out of Dodge, President Bill Clinton grants her a Presidential pardon.

She celebrates—or ignores—her fifty-first birthday. Her mother is dead. Her father is dead. Along with several cousins, she sues the Hearst Family Trust for access to financial records sealed to thwart the ransom demands of SLA copycats. On her way to court, impeccably groomed (her mother would be so proud), she is run at and jostled by reporters on deadline. Microphones and cameras thrust in her face, her eyes go a little opaque but she responds to the shouted questions, gives the news hounds a quote ("It's a free speech issue") and walks on, walks on.

In the house she lives in there are closets—there must be. Closets more capacious, it's fair to guess, than the closets of her imprisonment, but closets all the same with doors that shut and possibly lock. On occasion, Patricia Hearst Shaw, wife, mother, matron, must have cause to step into one or another of her closets, to sense, to be reminded of, its parameters and the darkness that collects inside once that door is closed.

Patricia Hearst Shaw sleeps in a house with closets.

Stunning, isn't it?

