

**Carrie Tingley**  
**1877-1961**

**By Jan Sproull**  
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"Wife of ..."

Your biographer begins.

"Wife *of* ..."

Captive Carrie, framed by walls.

Who lived inside your cage, Carrie Tingley?

Beautiful specimen, smiling sweetly, you bear the stripes of prisoner's garb,  
updated by social standing.

Black lines on white silk to frame your milk meek face.

But you weren't really weak, were you, Carrie?

You founded --- or as your biographer put it, you "*Wife of ...*" were  
"instrumental in founding" --- the "Carrie Tingley Hospital for Crippled  
Children."

Wing-clipped cripple, you knew pain, yet you persevered, you resonated, you  
created space for the broken-wing club to fly.

Your portrait painter did not let us see your healing hands.

We witness killed animal fur.

Muffle your gestures, mute your touch.

Hunter's muff hides your magic fingers, "Wife of... ."

Furry feathers fetter your head.  
Smile all the prettier for the fashion.

In your fur-decked silken prison stripes, you did not breathe a word of your true condition.

Your biographer called it tuberculosis.

You came to New Mexico, coughing on cultural deceit.

The town, Hot Springs, where your hospital building sat, calls itself Truth or Consequences now.

Now...

We fill our lungs with your truth, Carrie Tingley.

We spit it out.

Carrie for Governor ... of her own life.

Carrie for Clan Mother ... of children who run free.

Carrie Tingley.

"Muse of..."

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