

BONNY LEE BAKLEY was a veteran con artist who swindled lonely men out of their money until a bullet to the head stopped her cold.

Now, as her widower husband Robert Blake faces charges that he murdered her, the defense is expected to put her twisted lifestyle on trial as well.

Blake's lawyer, Harland Braun, says there were many people who might have wanted Bakley rubbed out because of her scams, which focused on fleecing lonely hearts to finance her dream of marrying a celebrity.

The bleach-blond temptress was a cunning pro, sending provocative letters and X-rated photos to entice her victims. In one raunchy snapshot, she appears spread-eagle on the trunk of a convertible while fondling herself.

"You'll soon find out I am the type of girl who is totally uninhibited," she'd write in her letters. She also placed ads and nude photos in singles magazines.

"Men wrote to her and she'd write back asking for money, first-class tickets and hotel reservations," reveals longtime pal Ray Hale. "She'd visit, but deny them sex, saying she wanted a diamond ring first.

"They'd buy rings, then she'd sell them and use the money to travel to L.A., New York and Las Vegas, where she'd bribe maitre d's, tour managers and concert promoters to help her meet celebrities.

"Bonny always wanted to be a big star in Hollywood,"

Who was Bonny Lee Bakley? BULLET TO THE HEAD ENDS BLAKE WIFE'S CAREER AS CON ARTIST



Bonny Lee Bakley chased celebrities like Jerry Lee Lewis (top left) and Elvis (above). She sent lonely hearts raunchy nude photos and kept them on the hook long distance

he adds. "And she figured the next best thing was to either date or marry one."

According to Hale, Bakley claimed to have been with Marlon Brando's son Christian, Twist king Chubby Checker, actor Robert De Niro, rock legend Jerry Lee Lewis and pop crooner Frankie Valli.

He also says she made enough money from her scams to buy two homes in Memphis, Tenn., and one near Los Angeles.

"Bonny told me she had hundreds of lovers," Don Wilson, a friend from Tennessee, tells GLOBE. "I feared for her because she was always doing something crazy and she knew it. She told me, 'One day, one of these guys is going to kill me.'"

Bakley met Blake at a Los Angeles jazz club in 1998 and in June 2000, she gave birth to a daughter, Rose. She told pals at the time she didn't know if Brando or Blake was the father, but after DNA tests proved Blake was the dad, he married her. She lived in the guesthouse behind Blake's L.A. home.

Incredibly, even as the actor's bride, Bakley continued her scams, his lawyer claims. "Robert warned her to give it up and she said she would," says Braun. "But apparently she was still doing it."

Another noted defense lawyer, Barry Tarlow, says Bakley's background and lifestyle are crucial to proving Blake's innocence.

"Her past is a nightmare for a prosecutor," he says. "Her outrageous lifestyle will become the center of the case." - ROBIN MIZRAHI

BARETTA STAR'S STUNNING CONFESSION

(Continued from center pages) was isolated from other inmates in the hospital unit and always escorted by staff outside his cell. Every 15 minutes, a guard checks on him through the 9-inch-square window in the solid steel door.

Prison-fare is bland: eggs, pancakes or oatmeal for breakfast, cold-cut meats and sandwiches for

lunch and chicken or meatloaf with potatoes and vegetables for dinner.

"Blake is in an 8-foot by 10-foot concrete room, where the walls are painted an antiseptic white and the only window is a tiny shatterproof glass square in the door," says a police source.

"He sits on the tiny metal bed that's bolted to the floor, resting his

head in his hands and just staring up at the ceiling. When he isn't sitting on the bed, he is pacing to and fro like a trapped animal."

Blake has been charged with murder, two counts of solicitation of murder, conspiracy and the special circumstances of lying in wait - which makes him eligible for the death penalty. He's pleaded not guilty.

His bodyguard, Caldwell, was charged with conspiracy to commit murder. He too has pleaded not guilty.

GLOBE SPECIAL REPORT
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