

# Linda Lee Inc.

by LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE



Derisive cackles and guffaws of clowns broke out on all sides, a space was cleared round the unfortunate.

"Are you all right, Cinda?" Dobbin asked. She nodded and tried to smile. "Let's get out of this."

"No—wait!" Lucinda insisted. Perhaps she's hurt."

She brushed her arm aside, only to discover that the overthrown woman had regained her feet, and now stood matching her partner in shrewish fury as, grinning foolishly, he scrambled up.

"You clumsy dumbbell!" she stormed in a rasping voice that must have carried clearly half across the room. "I hope to Gawd I got enough sense not to dance with you again when you're pickled!"

And catching her first glimpse of the man's crimson face, Lucinda yielded all at once to Daubney's insistence.

But she never quite knew how they got back to their table.

IX

But even with the three sides of the box affording their false show of privacy, it never entered Lucinda's head to sit down and pretend nothing had happened, the instinct to fly at once from this theatre of disgrace was still predominant. Only for a moment she rested standing while her eyes, darkly dilate, sought Daubney's.

"You saw him, of course?"

Dobbin made a vague gesture of sympathy. "Frightfully sorry."

Lucinda shrugged. "Don't be. It wasn't your fault."

"I presume we couldn't have been mistaken..." Dobbin ventured half heartedly.

"No; it was Bel. I think I'd like to go. Let me have the carriage check, and I'll wait in the car."

Daubney surrendered the pasteboard slip and called for the check as Lucinda went out.

At the street door she gave the attendant the carriage check together with a coin. "And hurry, please!" The man saluted respectfully and vanished.

She hastened to the street, a move which she found immediate reason to repent. Only a few feet away Bellamy stood with an affectionate arm round the shoulders of the door porter. A knot of grinning bystanders had already begun to gather.

Bel's derby was periously perched, his overcoat domed in haste, when he peered over his shoulders, though he had contrived to worry two buttons through the wrong buttonholes, and he was explaining, unconsciously to everybody within a wide radius, the personal service he required in return for the ten dollar bill which he was waving beneath the porter's nose.

"Now, hahn, Jim... Do mind my callin' you Jim, do you, ol' scout?... Get this straight: My wife's here 'tnight 'nd I don't want her to know I wash here, shee? If she don't know I wash here, she's got nothin' on me, nothin' 'tall, shee? So you don't know me, you never heard of me, shee?"

"Yes, Mr. Druce."

Sick with mortification, Lucinda turned from the sound of that babbling voice of a fool—and heard her own name pronounced.

"The car is here, Mrs. Druce."

In a wild stare she identified the face of her chauffeur, saw that he understood the situation and was anxious to be helpful.

"Wait!" she quavered.

And then by a miracle of will power she managed to master her nerves and, putting aside her horror and humiliation, took thought quickly and clearly.

"All I want you to do is remember, if Mishish Druce asks if you've seen me, you never heard of me, don't know me 'tall—shee, Jim, got what I mean?"

As Lucinda approached the porter must have guessed who she was, for he spoke to Bellamy in a low voice, and the latter swung round with startled eyes and a

dropping jaw. She closed her fingers on his wrist and put all her strength into that grasp.

"Come, Bel," she said clearly and not unkindly. "Please don't keep me waiting. The car is here, we're going home."

For a moment the balance wavered, then Bel's eyes fell, and she knew she had won.

"Oh, a right," he mumbled with strange docility. "Din' know you were waitin', Linda. Get 'r' in the car—be with you in jush a minute."

"No," she said firmly—"you're coming with me now."

She drew him away. He yielded without remonstrance, permitted her to lead him to the door of the car, stumbled in on his knees, and crawled up to the seat.

Lucinda followed, the door closed behind her with a clap sweeter than music in her hearing. And with ruffling gears the car shot out of range of those leering faces.

Lucinda had forgotten Dobbin as utterly as if she had never known him.

Bellamy lay in a loose slouch, breathing heavily. The passing lights revealed the stupidity of his congested features. His eyes were half-closed, he seemed to be asleep.

When at length the car stopped, she jumped out and, leaving Bellamy to the care of the chauffeur and footman, ran up to her rooms. The maid waiting there she dismissed for the night in half a dozen words whose decision sent the woman from her in astonishment.

Alone her first move was to secure the door communicating with Bel's rooms. Then she threw herself upon the bed. She heard Bel's maudering incoherently to his valet; the valet seemed to be trying to make him listen to reason and failing in the end. The neck of a decanter chattered against the rim of a glass, there was a lull in the murmur of voices, then a thick cry and the thud of a fall. After that the quiet was little disturbed by the valet's labors with the body of the drunkard. Eventually the man went out and closed the door.

In the subsequent silence the clock chimed twelve.

Lucinda rose then, and changed to her simplest street suit.

For half an hour or so she was busy at desk and dressing-table, packing a cheque book and her jewels with other belongings in a small hand-bag. She did not falter once or waste a single move through indecision. Indeed, it did not once occur to her that there was anything to be done but what she meant to do.

Shortly after one o'clock, she left Bel snoring, crept down the stairs, and with infinite stealth let herself out to the street.

Spurred by irrational fear lest Bellamy wake up, discover her flight, and give chase, Lucinda made in haste for Fifth avenue; a cab slid up to the curb, its driver with two fingers to his cap soliciting a fare. Lucinda breathed the first address that came to mind—"Grand Central, please"—hopped in, and shrank fearfully away from the windows.

At the station a negro porter with a red cap opened the cab door and took possession of her single piece of luggage, and when she had paid off the taxi and looked to him in indecision, prompted her with: "Whut train was you wishin' to tek, ma'm?"

An instant later Lucinda was wondering why she replied: "The first train for Chicago, please."

She knew no reason why she should have named Chicago rather than any other city where she was unknown and where she might count on being free to think out in her own time and fashion.

XII

"Inexpressibly shocked. Arriving tomorrow. Will call on you ten a. m. Meanwhile Bank of Michigan will supply you with funds in any amount you may require if you will be pleased to identify yourself to Mr. Southard there."

The author of this telegram, which was delivered on the morning of Lucinda's fifth day in Chicago, was punctual to the minute of his appointment; otherwise he would hardly have been the rectangular gentleman of the frock-coat school that he was.

Notwithstanding that Harford Willis was pledged to a code of morals and manners vinted in the early eighteen-eighties, and so implacably antagonistic to the general trend of present-day thought on the divorce question, his great affection for Lucinda predisposed him to allow that the course she had taken with Bellamy had been the only one his conduct had left open to her.

"My dear Lucinda," Willis intoned deliberately, "I must say you seem to be bearing up remarkably well, all things considered, remarkably well."

"I've stopped howling and drumming the floor with my heels," Lucinda admitted—"if that's what you mean. When I found it didn't do any good, I gave it up, and I've felt more cheerful ever since."

"Cheerful!" Willis repeated in a sepulchral voice.

"More like an average human being who's been horribly hurt but who can't see why life should be counted a total loss for all that."

"You don't think it would be worth while," Willis suggested, "to be in duty bound," "to forgive Bellamy, give him another chance?"

"I don't know that I've got anything to forgive him, Mr. Willis.

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CHARLOTTE, N. C.

Why should I forgive him for being true to himself? It's myself I can't forgive, because I was silly enough to let him go on as long as I did, making me a laughing stock. Besides, I'm not so sure it's good for us to be forgiven our sins; we're all such vain creatures, we're too apt to take forgiveness as a license to misbehave still more. . . . Don't you see?"

(Continued in Our Next Issue)

### MR. MORGAN ON UNION

President N. C. Synod Preached Sunday—Some Local News Items.

Rev. J. L. Morgan, president of the North Carolina Synod, preached at Union church last Sunday morning. Taking for his text: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love where with he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved); And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," Rev. Morgan delivered one of the most powerful and soul-stirring sermons we have ever heard. It was truly a wonderful message from God.

Union Luther League held its regular devotional meeting Sunday, May 14, and an unusually large crowd attended. The league will give an ice cream party Saturday night, May 28, in the church grove, the proceeds going for the benefit of missions. The public is cordially invited to attend.

Rev. Jacob L. Morgan and family, of Salisbury, took dinner at Union parsonage with Rev. Haigler and family, Sunday.

Mr. Douglas Bankett who is working in Charlotte spent the week-end here with his father, Mr. W. L. Bankett.

Messrs. J. H. Barringer and Charles Lyerly have gone on a trip to Columbia, S. C., in their big truck. They are hauling a truck load of fine cattle.

The hail storm which passed thru our community or rather asy thru the edge of our community—Saturday did quite a bit of damage. It struck Mr. Robert Lentz's farm pretty severely, doing much injury to the growing crops and fruit.

John Lowery is getting ahead of the other colored farmers in this community, he has been having his land prepared with a tractor.

The peach crop in this community is the finest we have ever seen; there will be fruit in plenty this year.

The wheat crop is looking much better now than it did about two weeks ago; it shows up for a pretty fair yield.

We still consider M. A. Goodman's oats the finest in the state and will continue to do so 'till someone else gives us conclusive proof to the contrary.

Mr. Edgar Bankett, auto mechanic in Winston, spent the week-end here with homefolks.

Messrs. M. A. Goodman, John Blackwell and some others, have been working the roads across their farms. This is a step in the right direction. Good roads is something every live, up-to-date, progressive community must have.

M. A. Goodman's farm roads are in the best condition of any farm roads we know of.

We visited Venus' town—sometimes called Faith—Sunday afternoon. There were two things we noticed about Faith: One was a man setting on his porch with a crown of red roses on his head (he must have thought he was king of Mothers' Day) and the scarcity of girls. Nothing but old ugly men around Faith; we wouldn't live in Faith very long before we began importing some pretty girls.

There will be a "big" game of baseball on the Kesler diamond Saturday afternoon at four o'clock. The contest teas will be the heavy

**J. BERTRAM SIMON.**  
A well-known photographer of Tacoma, Wash., who says that since taking Tanlac with such good results now knows why everybody is praising this wonderful medicine.



"When they told me about Tanlac it seemed almost too good to be true, but since taking the medicine I know for myself that all they said about it was so," said J. Bertram Simon, 1031 E. 46th St., Tacoma, Wash., a well-known photographer.

"I suffered from rheumatism in my shoulders for ten years and at one time had to go to the hospital. I was down in bed for months and hardly able to turn from side to side. I couldn't sleep and I don't believe I had a day free from pain. My appetite failed and I couldn't digest a thing properly. Gas made me have heartburn for hours after meals.

"In a very short time after I started taking Tanlac I actually felt like a new man. I am now entirely rid of rheumatism and my stomach is in first class condition, while I have gained ten pounds and never felt better. I have recommended Tanlac to a number of people and I am always glad to say a good word for this remarkable medicine."

Tanlac is sold by all good druggists.

Kesler nine, and Bob Sugg's speedy aggregation of high school players from Salisbury. It will not be the regular Salisbury high school team but the majority of the players are boys who played on the high team the first part of the season. Among those who did not play on the high team this year are Joe Goodson and Bob Ellis. Ellis playing for Salisbury last year was what we considered the best high school first baseman in the state; and he can still deliver the goods. This game promises to be a good one, come out and see it. The excitement starts at 4 o'clock.

There will be an ice cream party at L. A. Kesler's next Saturday night May 20, under the auspices of the baseball club. Everybody is cordially invited to come out. Bring your girl, boys.

A giant edible mushroom four feet in diameter, was found on an estate in St. Germain, France.

**SOUTHERN RAILWAY CO.**

The time of arrival and departure of trains are published as information only, not guaranteed.

Arrives from	Departs to
3:00 a. m. N. Y.-Birmingham 2:35 a. m.	2:40 p. m. A. Ville con. at Barber 2:40 p. m.
5:00 a. m. Batin-Norwood 9:25 a. m.	8:45 p. m. Batin and Norwood 4:45 p. m.
7:00 p. m. Knoxville 9:30 a. m.	9:30 p. m. New Orleans-N. York 9:25 p. m.
9:20 p. m. New Orleans-N. York 9:25 p. m.	12:20 a. m. Birmingham-N. York 2:25 a. m.
3:45 a. m. Charlotte-Washington 5:55 a. m.	3:50 a. m. New York-Augusta 6:00 a. m.
5:05 a. m. New York-Atlanta 8:10 a. m.	8:35 a. m. Richmond-Charlotte 8:45 a. m.
2:30 p. m. Anville-Westminster 2:40 p. m.	4:30 p. m. Westminster-Danville 4:35 p. m.
2:50 p. m. Charlotte via Barber 2:40 p. m.	5:00 p. m. Atlanta-Richmond 8:25 p. m.
8:40 p. m. Augusta-New York 8:50 p. m.	10:20 p. m. Atlanta-New York 10:30 p. m.
9:45 p. m. Asheville 10:00 p. m.	11:30 a. m. Asheville 6:10 a. m.
9:10 a. m. N. York-New Orleans 9:20 a. m.	11:45 a. m. N. York-New Orleans-N. Y. 11:50 a. m.
7:30 p. m. N. Y.-New Orleans 7:45 p. m.	9:40 p. m. Danville-Charlotte 9:25 p. m.

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### Loses Wife and Three Daughters

The most bereaved man in the world today is William F. Busby, millionaire Philadelphia oil man, whose wife, Edith (right) temporarily erased, six herself and her three children, Mary, 8 (above), Edwina, 9 (center) and Orestes, 11, by turning on a gas jet in the Busby summer home at Atlantic City.