

Linda Lee Inc.

by LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE



BEGIN HERE TODAY
 His insatiable appetite for cheap flirtation and frequent periods of heavy drinking, had almost destroyed the love which LUCINDA DRUCE, prominent Fifth Avenue society matron, held for her husband. After five years of married life, she had decided that her beauty, youth and charm were not sufficient to hold Bellamy. At a fashionable dinner, the Druces met RICHARD DAUBENEY, Lucinda's old sweetheart, and MRS. AMELIE SEVERN, with whom Bellamy at once proceeded to carry on an affair. Amelie and Bellamy lunch at the Cluque Club and Amelie suggests that Bellamy divorce Lucinda. He refuses and she suggests that possibly Lucinda may divorce him.

GO ON WITH THE STORY
 "Deal with that when it comes up, Franky, don't believe it ever will. Don't mean to give Linda any reason I can avoid."
 "What you mean is, you really love—"
 "I mean," he cut in sharply, "whatever my shortcomings, I respect Linda. I won't hurt here if I can help it."
 "How charming of you!"
 For all acknowledgment she received a silent inclination of his head; and she began to laugh dangerously, eyes a-brim with hatred, the heat in her cheeks, shaming their rouge.
 "Well, thank God I've come to understand you before we went any farther!"
 "Amen to that."
 "And so all your love making has been simply—"
 "The same as yours, Amy."
 "Then why did you ever make love to me at all, please?"
 "Because you let me see you wanted me to."
 The brutal truth of that lifted the woman to her feet. "I don't think I care for any more luncheon," she said in a shaking voice. "If you don't mind—"
 Bellamy rose, bowing from his place. "Not at all."
 He offered to help her with her fur, but she wouldn't have that, threw the garment over her arm and flung round the table, then checked and looked back. "You understand—this ends it—for all time?"
 "I couldn't do you the injustice of thinking anything else."
 She made a tempestuous exit through the curtains.
 Bellamy consulted his watch. Just on two, Linda's luncheon party would be in full swing. He had nothing better to do, might as well look in at the Ritz. Linda would like it.
 To the luncheon-hour mob that milled in the foyer of the Ritz-Carlton hotel, Lucinda Druce presented the poise of a pretty woman who had never known care more galling than uncertainty as to her most becoming demeanor.
 "But I never dreamed you three knew one another!" she was exclaiming in the surprise of finding Fanny Lontaine with those whom she had bidden to meet her. "Fanny why didn't you tell me?"
 "But I didn't know—your Nelly Guest was Ellen Field married."
 "That's so; I'd completely forgotten you both come from Chicago."
 "Hush!" Nelly Guest gave a stage hiss. "Someone might hear. And all these years I've tried so hard to live it down! It's so fair—"
 Six years married, Fanny retained, and would till the end, whatever life might hold in store for her, a look of wondering and eager youthfulness. Romance trembled veritably upon her lashes. She had a way of holding her lips slightly apart and looking steadily at one when spoken to, as if nothing more interesting had ever been heard by the ears ambushed in her bobbed, ashen hair. Her eyes of a deep violet shade held an innocence of expression little less than disconcerting. Her body seemed never to have outgrown its adolescence, yet its slightness was quite without any singularity or awkwardness, it flowed roundness without plumpness, a stroke of physical genius.
 "It's heavenly," she now declared, coolly staring at their neighbors through the smoke of new cigarette—simply divine to be home. I'm sure I'd never want to see Europe again if it weren't for prohibition."
 "You're not going to suffer on that account today," Jean Sedley promised, producing from her handbag a little flask of jeweled gold.
 "But I shall!" Fanny protested with tragic expression. "It's the frightful hypocrisy that's curdling my soul and ruining my insides." Fanny had launched into a startling detailed account of London's latest fad in "treatments"; and Lucinda's thoughts turned back to her other self.
 How to go on now to play out this farce of a life with Bel when faith in him was dead?
 Strange that faith should have been shattered finally by such a minor accident as her overhearing that morning's "treachery." And she had tried so hard to win him back, only to learn he had gone from her arms to telephone with lips warm from hers, to another woman, to change a place of assignment because he had merely ferreted out the fact that his wife was intending to lunch at the restaurant of their first choice!
 Her cheeks kindled with indignation—and blazed all the more warmly when she discovered that she had been staring squarely at Richard Daubenevy, who was lunching with friends at a nearby table.
 But Dobbin bowed and smiled in such a way that Lucinda's confusion and her sense of grievance were drowned under a wave of gratitude. She nodded brightly.
 "Good old Dobbin! She had never appreciated how much she

husband to dine with us—say next Thursday?"
 "I don't know. That's one of the exciting things about being married to Harry Lontaine, one never knows what tomorrow will bring forth. We've got to go to Chicago soon, because father's rented enough to leave me a little legacy, nothing to brag about, but nothing people in our position can afford to despise either."
 "I do want to meet your husband."
 "You will soon enough. He's lunching some men down in the grill, a business luncheon, American cinema people."
 "He's interested in the motion picture business, then?"
 "In a way. He has secured options on the American rights to some Swedish productions."
 Lucinda turned round to the waiter. "You may bring coffee to us in the Palm Room."
 Fanny's husband came in shortly after Lucinda and her guests had settled down to coffee and cigarettes in a Palm Room.
 Tall and well made, Lontaine had the good color of men who care enough for their bodies to keep them clean of the rest that

comes of indoor stodging. The plump and closely razored face seems perhaps a shade oversize for features delicately formed. He affected a slightly mischievous and when he spoke full lips framed his words noticeably. His habit was that of a man at ease in any company, who sets a good value on himself and confidently looks for its general acceptance.
 He talked well, with assurance, some humor, and a fair amount of information. He had lived several years in the States, off and on, and on the whole approved of them. He had potted a bit with the cinema at home and he might jog out to Los Angeles and see what was to be seen in that capital of the world's motion-picture industry. England, he didn't mind admitting, had a goodish bit to learn from America in the cinema line. If you asked Lontaine, it was his considered belief that the really top-hole productions of the future would come of combining American brilliance of photography and investiture with European thoroughness in acting and direction.
 This forecast was uttered with an authority that impressed even Lucinda, elaborately uninterested as she was. She had maintained a

half-smile of amiable attention which would have deceived a sharper man and let her thoughts drift on dreary tides of discontent.
 Hour by hour the conviction was striking its roots more deeply into her comprehension that life with Bel on the present terms was unthinkable.
 A losing fight. One were mad to hope to win. Already Bel was lost, caught in the mad dance of the system's bashants, already drunkard and debauchee. Nor might all her love redeem him. And O the pity.
 Tears started to her eyes, she jumped up hastily lest her friends should see, mumbled an excuse, and made her way out to the foyer, turning toward the women's cloak-room.
 The foyer was still fairly thronged; she was almost in Bel's arms before she saw him, so near to him that she caught, as she started back, a heavy whiff of breath whisky-flavored.
 She heard him say, "Why, hello, Linda! what's the hurry?" and cut in instantly with a gasp of indignation: "What are you doing here?"
 (Continued in Next Issue)

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 (Encore) Little Crumbs of Happiness—(Trombone Solo)
 Wimmie
 I Ain't Nobody's Darling

2—OPERATIC AND POPULAR AIRS MISS GEORGIA THONSEN
 Carmen—Lucia—Faust
 Tell Her at Twilight
 Look for the Silver Lining
 Garden of Roses

3—CHINESE LULLABY HAPPY SIX
 Ty-Tee
 Leave Me With a Smile

4—FAMILIAR AND POPULAR SONGS MISS BEE KERWIN
 Dapper Dan
 No One's Fool
 Takes a Good Man To Do That

5—SOUTHERN MELODIES HAPPY SIX
 (Encore) Jabberwocky

INTERMISSION

6—OPERATIC ECHOES HAPPY SIX
 Mile, Modiste
 Humming
 Alice Blue Gown
 Pal O'Mine
 Gypsy Blues

7—IRISH TUNES MISS GEORGIA THONSEN
 Killarney
 Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms
 Love Sends a Little Gift of Roses

8—DANCE SYMPHONIES HAPPY SIX
 It's You
 How Many Times
 Fancies
 Sunny Tennessee
 South Sea Isles
 Stealing

9—FAMILIAR AND POPULAR SONGS MISS BEE KERWIN
 Look What a Fool I've Been
 Oh How He Can Kiss
 Let Your Conscience Be Your Guide

10—FINALE HAPPY SIX—MISS THONSEN—MISS KERWIN
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 All That I Need Is You—Yoo Hoo

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| Women's Silk Hose
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Men's up to \$1.00 silk neckties, brocaded and knit, as sorted patterns and colors. Choice this sale, 2 for | Men's Dress Shirts
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White nainsook athletic union suits. \$1.50 is the regular price everywhere. Choice this sale, each | Infant's Socks
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