

SYNOPSIS

LUCINDA CHARDEN, one of the five richest girls in the world, is tired of all the publicity that her millions have brought her and decides to "get away from it all." With the aid of her trusted cousin, BILL SHALER, she assumes the name of LUCY CRANE and enrolls as a special student in chemistry in Merrimac University. Here she meets Professor JOHN HARVEY who falls in love with her and asks her to marry him. She is afraid to tell him that she is Lucinda Charden, the Platinum Princess, for she might lose him—and she loves him. She decides to tell Bill Shaler all about her professor and ask for his advice.

While Lucinda is away in college, a double, NORA MALLOY, who can easily pass as her twin sister, has taken her place, with great success. In the following installment, Lucinda discovers, to her great sorrow, that Nora Malloy's impersonation of her has been too perfect and that Bill Shaler has arranged everything too well.



A Novelette By Stephen Vincent Bennet

Lucinda, watching the green country slip past the windows of the train, felt a helpless sense of being drawn back into a vast, inexorable machine. She was still Lucy Crane—her clothes, her handbag, her lipstick—they were all still Lucy Crane's. Lucinda Charden used another shade of lipstick, and everything about her was different. Lucy had got sunburned, even, canoeing on the river, with John—not the smooth sunburn of the expensive beaches but sunburn that freckled the bridge of the nose and lightened the hair. For that matter, Lucy Crane's hair was lighter anyway, lacking Philippe's ministrations—and Lucy was eight pounds heavier than Lucinda had ever been. That was happiness and work and Mrs. Garrity's dinners, Lucinda supposed. She felt a different person. And yet she would have to be drawn back into the net of Lucinda Charden. There was a fatality about it.

Well, she would just have to throw herself on Billy's mercy. He had been disturbing over the phone—disturbing and irritated. But he had finally snapped out of it and they had made their arrangements. As soon as she got to New York she was to register as Lucy Crane at a small hotel near Broadway—Billy had given her the name. Then she was to walk out of the hotel and go up to the penthouse. Meanwhile the stand-in was to leave the penthouse, go to the hotel and remain there as Lucy Crane, while Lucinda and Billy made plans.

For three weeks after the night by the river Lucinda had drifted, inhabiting the green Eden of all young, happy lovers. And yet even in Eden there were thorns and

briery patches. John was so good, so trusting—so unexpectedly boyish, now all his defenses were down. He was not only a lover but a gay and amusing playfellow. Planning for the future together should be one of the happiest times in their

lives, thought Lucinda, rebellious. But how could she join enthusiastically in plans for a future that could not exist, as planned?

Suddenly Lucinda felt afraid. She was unprepared, inexperienced, unready. Marriage couldn't work out, really, for either of them—they came from different worlds. Her one little dip into reality had been pleasant. Better creep back to the safety, the fortune, the soft, unchallenging life, and make an amusing story of her adventure. She hadn't hurt John really, yet; he'd forget her.

Lucinda, walking through the fa-

miliar lobby into the familiar elevator, felt shy, shy as she had been the first day at Merrimac. She was glad of the dark glasses, the veil and the low-brimmed, unfashionable hat—they made a shell around her. They were necessary, too—Lucinda Charden couldn't walk out of the building in one set of clothes and walk into it, half an hour later, in another.

The elevator rose smoothly, stopped, and the door slid open.

She was in the familiar foyer—funny to ring the bell and not have a key. It wasn't Rose or Margaret who opened the door—someone new. But Billy was supposed to open the door! Oh, well, what was the difference? She was tired of being two people; she wanted to get it over with. "Is Mr. Shaler in the living room?" she said, in her own voice.

"Yes, miss," said the maid and went away.

Lucinda took off her hat and veil in front of the little mirror in the hall, removed the glasses. "Yes, I've changed," she thought, looking at the mirror. "I'll have to spend weeks at Philippe's." She suddenly felt a stranger in her own house. And where was Billy?

She waited impatiently for a few moments. But Billy didn't come. She started for the living room, swung into it—and stopped dead.

There were five people sitting in the room. Lucinda felt the breath catch in her throat as she looked from face to face. Billy, Aunt Fol; a man with big shoes—and, incredibly, unbelievably, Nora Malloy—herself. They were all looking at her with blank, unrecognizing eyes.

"What is it?" she said. "A joke? What's the matter? Billy! Aunt Fol!"

The man with the iron-gray hair turned suddenly to Billy. "Do you mind if I take charge of this, Mr. Shaler?" he said in a pleasant voice.

"I'd be very glad if you did. We all would," said Billy seriously. Lucinda noticed that he looked through her and beyond her as if she were a ghost.

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The man with the iron-gray hair rose and approached her. A reputable man, the sort of man who sat on boards of directors and held public positions. She turned to him confidently.

"I don't understand this at all," she said, with dignity. "My cousin and my aunt do not seem to recognize me. Is my aunt ill? Are you a doctor?"

"Now, young lady," said the iron-gray man, "that's better. We don't want any unnecessary trouble about this—and there won't be any if you're sensible. But you see, we know who you are."

Lucinda stared into his hard eyes for a moment as the room swam beneath her feet and righted itself. "Then you know I'm Lucinda Charden," she said.

"Now, that's just the trouble," the iron-gray man said. "We hoped we wouldn't have to go into that."

"But you don't understand!" said Lucinda. "And I don't understand this—this horrible silence! Billy! Aunt Fol! Say it isn't true!" There was no reply. "But I am Lucinda Charden!" she said.

The iron-gray man sighed. "All right, young woman," he said. "We hoped to get through it without that. But if you ask for it, you'll get it. You realize, of course, that you're making a serious charge. I'm Colonel Babcock, Police Commissioner of New York City."

"It isn't a charge," said Lucinda indignantly. "It's the truth! I'm Lucinda—"

"Just a minute!" barked Colonel Babcock. He turned deferentially to Aunt Fol. "Miss Charden," he said soothingly, "do you recognize this young woman as your niece, Lucinda Charden?"

Aunt Fol's face was flushed. "Of course that—that person isn't my niece! My niece Lucinda is right beside me on this sofa. Yes, 'Cinda dear, and though it's all perfectly awful I'm glad it's happened really because I've kept telling you about impostors and you never would believe me, and now, thank goodness, I hope you're getting a little more sense."

"Thank you very much, Miss Charden," said Colonel Babcock. "Do you recognize this young woman as your cousin?"

Billy shook his head. "I do not." "Oh, oh, oh!" said Lucinda, her world crumbling around her.

Colonel Babcock jerked his head. "Mr. Wilcox?" he said to the man in the big shoes.

"I have seen Miss Charden eleven times in the past two years in the office of the Charden Estate," said Mr. Wilcox in the mechanical, businesslike voice of a dictograph. "Cannot claim anything but a business acquaintance with Miss Charden but I certainly know her by sight. This young woman is not Miss Charden. There is a decided resemblance, though Miss Charden's hair and eyes are much darker than

LITTLE PRICE

By BETTY L. KNOWLES

*When I consider Love and its brief hour—
A melody, flung to an evening star;
A stab of sweetness deep enough to scar
Its etching on the heart of every flower;
A surge of beauty, fading as it glows;
The sudden flame of meteoric light;
A solitary echo in the night—
I wonder that the power of love still grows.
Can one dear hour be worth the bitter tears
Of loneliness and everlasting pain?
The answer surely must be no—and yet
Brave Pyramus is smiling through the years,
And Sappho's heart still sings its sweet refrain,
And death seems little price to Juliet.*

this young woman's. However, there is an entire dissimilarity of personality. I am prepared to swear that this young woman is not Miss Charden."

Lucinda put up her hands as if to brush away a net of cobwebs, closing around her. For the first time since she had entered the room she felt afraid.

"I demand to see Mr. Janeway," she said stubbornly.

"Mr. Janeway is in bed with a cold or he would be here," said Colonel Babcock. "Of course you can see him if you want. But frankly, what is the use?"

"Oh, you'll be sorry for this!" said Lucinda, gasping.

"None of that, young woman!" said Colonel Babcock, with a rasp in his voice. He turned to Aunt Fol. "Miss Charden," he said gallantly, "you've been very brave, and

we all appreciate it. But we don't want to expose you to further unpleasantness. If you and Miss Lucinda Charden would like to retire—"

The terror tightened, gripping Lucinda's heart. It wasn't a joke; it wasn't even cobwebs, now. It was a net of invisible wires of steel that tightened while she struggled helplessly.

"Oh, Aunt Fol!" she said. "Dear Aunt Fol, don't leave me, please! You can have her, too, if you want her—I'm sure she's been kind to you. But don't leave me alone with them!"

As she stared at the older woman with desperate hope, she saw for a moment something wake in her eyes—puzzlement, confusion. Then it passed, and she was just a tired old woman who hated unpleasant experiences.

"I'm—tired," said Aunt Fol, in a queer, cracked voice. "'Cinda, take me to my room. I want to lie down."

"Yes, dear," said Nora Malloy, helping her to her feet. "There." She turned for a moment. "Thank you, Colonel Babcock—and you, too, Mr. Wilcox. I'm very grateful," she said earnestly, in Lucinda Charden's voice. "I'm sorry my aunt is upset," said Nora Malloy. "I'm not. It's just too divine. Having someone else say they're you. Don't hurt the poor thing," she said lightly. "I'd even like to talk to her afterward if you think... It's some kind of neurosis, I suppose."

"No, no, my dear Miss Charden," said Colonel Babcock gallantly. "You've already done more than your part."

Lucinda wanted to scream, to shout, to draw fingernails across that smooth face that was so like her own. But she mustn't do that. She must be dignified. They'd never believe her if she wasn't.

"By the way, there'll be highballs and things on the terrace when you gentlemen are through," said Nora Malloy. "And let me know if I'm wanted, Billy."

"All right, 'Cinda," said Billy. "Swell girl." Then the old woman and the younger one were gone.

"And now," said Lucinda, her heart shaking with terror, "may I ask the reason for this preposterous masquerade?"

"Oh, we'll give you all the rope you want," said Colonel Babcock jovially. "Sit down, if you like. I'd have had you arrested at the station, but both Mr. Shaler and Miss Charden made particular requests that the matter be handled as privately as possible."

"I suppose you really are the police commissioner?" said Lucinda, suddenly.

Colonel Babcock laughed. "If you want to telephone headquarters—"

"Perhaps I'd better break in for a minute," said Billy Shaler. "As I told you, Colonel Babcock, when

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PRINCESS...

(Continued from page 17)

we had our first meeting three weeks ago..."

Lucinda sat in her chair and heard his voice go on. She was suddenly very tired. She ought to fight, but she couldn't summon the strength. She didn't hate Billy; she felt something too cold and quiet for hate. Funny, never to have suspected that all this lay under the charm.

"I didn't pay much attention to the first letters," said Billy. "I get so many goofy ones. I wish I'd kept them now, or turned them over to you. But I didn't want to worry 'Cinda—and if the papers had got hold of it—"

"I appreciate that," said Colonel Babcock. "But—"

"Then she started calling me up. At that time," said Billy, "she claimed to be Lucinda's sister, by a secret marriage. Now, the story seems to be changed."

"Of course I'm not my own sister. I'm Lucinda Charden," said Lucinda. Then she caught Billy's pitying look, and rage flared up in her. "If you don't believe me," she said, "why don't you let me write my own name?"

She had expected Billy to look stunned, defeated. Instead, his mouth wore a slight smile.

"Told you so," he said to Colonel Babcock. "Remember the other letters?"

"Yes," said the colonel. "Well, we're giving you a lot of rope, young woman. But go ahead—write your name."

Lucinda sat down at the desk. Her hand was shaking violently, but she gritted her teeth and wrote "Lucinda Charden" as firmly as she could.

Colonel Babcock tore the sheet of paper from the pad, took another sheet from his pocket and held them both up to the light. Then he passed them to Mr. Wilcox, without comment.

"Very naturally," said Mr. Wilcox, "no one but Miss Charden know of the private mark. We only put that into effect the first of this year—it seemed a wise precaution. But even so..."

"Well?" said Colonel Babcock.

"Well," said Mr. Wilcox, "if this signature were on a check of Miss Charden's and had her private mark, I might accept it. But I think I would call up Miss Charden. In the case of any sizable sum—I he smiled a mechanical smile—"I should certainly call up Miss Charden and have her verify the entire transaction."

Advice To Girls

WHETHER you are a little girl or a big girl; whether you are a daughter of the poor or a daughter of the rich; whether you are a freshman or a sophomore, a junior or a senior—you are all alike. Each of you is important. Each of you counts for something. Each of you has the possibilities of goodness, of worth and of usefulness. Everyone has a corner to fill in this world.

GIRLS' WEEK points the way to how you can be at your best wherever you may be — at home, at school, at work, on the playground, or in your neighborhood. Make this week a week of discovery — discovery of your own strengths and weaknesses, your abilities and your needs. Make it a discovery of your best opportunities for being of service to others, not only during the Girls' Week but during the 52 weeks of every year. May the Week release in every one of you ambition, enthusiasm and determination to make of our Philippines a more fit place in which every Filipino child may live and where there may be a more satisfying life for all our people. Let your motto be, "TO FIND AND GIVE THE BEST".

—JOSEFA JARA MARTINEZ
(Secretary, Y. W. C. A.)

"And I may warn you, young woman," thundered Colonel Babcock, "that forgery carries a severe penalty in New York State. Well? Anything further to say?"

Lucinda stared at him defiantly. She had a great deal to say. She would tell them, clearly and coldly, how she, Lucinda Charden, had got bored with being rich. And how, with Billy Shaler's assistance, she had hired a double to take her place in her world, while she went off to study biochemistry at a university. But even as she opened her mouth to speak, she saw how incredible it sounded. It needed facts, dates, witnesses, a hundred small corroborations to be convincing.

"No," said Lucinda. "You don't believe me. I have nothing further to say."

"Well, that's fine," said Colonel Babcock. "Now we can talk turkey. We — For heaven's sake, Shaler, what are you doing?"

Billy looked up, startled, and Lucinda noticed now that he had been tearing up the slips of paper with the signatures into small pieces and setting a match to them. "Oh, I'm sorry," he said innocently. "Were they important?"

"Important?" said the colonel heavily. "They're evidence, man!"

"Goof Shaler again!" said Billy penitently. "But—oh, well, look, Colonel—does it matter? After all, if it ever comes to trial, she'll have to do it again. And unless she

practices—well, rather more successfully than she's done so far—" He left the sentence in the air.

"Well," said the colonel, "I don't suppose it does really matter, at this point. We have plenty on her alerady. But never tamper with evidence young man."

"I'll remember," said Billy, and Lucinda thought she caught a twinkle in his eye. It was the last straw. She rose. The floor swam under her feet, but that didn't matter. Nothing mattered any more except getting away.

"All right," she said breathlessly. "You don't believe me, so I'll be going."

"Not in such a hurry, young woman," said Colonel Babcock. "This party's only beginning, and you and I are going to have a nice little chat."

* * *

Lucinda Charden, staring at the wall-paper of her cheap hotel bedroom in the Fifties, wondered which of them she hated most. Not Aunt Fol—Aunt Fol was just old and stupid and rather pathetic. She didn't care which niece she had so long as the niece listened to her and petted her a little. "If she'd ever really loved me," thought Lucinda forlornly, "she'd have known right away, but she never has. And that's as much my fault as hers."

She didn't really hate Mr. Wilcox. She didn't hate Billy—it was something other than hate—a central disgust, a cold quietness. And

oddy enough, she didn't hate Nora Malloy. She had a small, unwilling admiration for her. The girl had played her part so perfectly. "I wonder how Billy got to do it," thought Lucinda. "Oh, well, what's the use wondering?"

After careful reflection she decided that the person she really hated was Colonel Babcock. He had been so heavily paternal, so menacingly bland. If it were left to him, she gathered, she would at this very moment be in the Tombs. But the Chardens had decided — perhaps unwisely—not to press the charge.

"We'd rather think of it this way," he had said: "that a little girl brought up in a small country town in meager circumstances—oh, you needn't look startled! We have all the information about that. An ambitious and brainy little girl, by the way, for she makes a good school and college record, in spite of the fact that she's all alone in the world."

He had smiled, thought Lucinda, like a compassionate shark. "Yes, a good record. But she's ambitious. And she has daydreams of being, perhaps, a Platinum Princess. And then she finds out that there is a Platinum Princess—and the picture in the newspapers looks rather like her. So she starts cutting out those pictures; she starts reading all she can find about this—ahem—more fortunately circumstanced other girl. And that was the way it started, wasn't it?"

Thank goodness, thought Lucinda, he had given her no chance to reply.

"But then," he had proceeded, "things get more serious. She actually begins to think that she is the girl in question. She builds an illusion about it and acts on that illusion. And so there's trouble—serious trouble. Something that might wreck that young girl's life. Well, we don't want that young girl to wreck her life. We want her to go back to her studies. But naturally we want some satisfactory guarantee that this — this absurd delusion won't go on."

Lucinda had listened. She'd said "Yes" when she could. No, she wasn't under arrest—she was being taken back to her hotel, to think things over for a while. She had better not leave the hotel without permission—in fact, there would be little use trying. And phone calls, especially to newspapers, would be highly inadvisable. Just a good night's sleep, perhaps, and think things over.

She was free to go down to dinner. (Continued on page 43)

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were retained in their present positions in respect to The World Calendar—for instance, Wednesday, July 4—a business man would at least know where to find them. He would not be confronted with the problems which arise as a major holiday advances, during a series of years, past the week-end—falling on a Thursday, let us say, and thus making Friday a bad business day, or falling on a Tuesday and making Monday a bad business day.

But there could easily be a general agreement, under The World Calendar, that the important holidays in every country—those which really cause a general cessation of work—should be assigned to Monday. Holidays are usually either seasonal or anniversaries. If they are seasonal—for example, if they mark the beginning of any one of the four solstices—they can be shifted a day or two. June 18 or June 25 feels as much like summer as does June 21.

As to anniversaries we must remember that there is and can be no such thing as an exact anniversary. Under our present calendar we celebrate a day which we call December 25, but actually we begin each celebration (between Leap Years) about six hours too soon. This is because it takes the earth not 365 but 365.2422 days to get around the sun. When we throw in a Leap Year we catch up or drop back, whichever way one looks at it but the interval is 366 days. An exact anniversary would have to begin at a certain fixed spot in the earth's orbit regardless of what time the clock said it was. The exactness would hardly compensate for the confusion.

In dealing with holidays, of course, we must never forget the emotions and habits which attach to them. Independence Day has intangible values for Americans. Bastille Day for the Frenchman, Boxing Day (the Monday after Christmas) for the Englishman, and a long list of religious holidays for those adhering to the great sects—and for many who are far from devout. How much of the pure joy of spring, there is, for instance, in a lovely Easter Sunday. How much of the pleasure of Christmas comes from the sense of the returning sun!

We don't want to destroy any of the poetry of holidays, nor do we need to. Let the holidays continue to stand for different things to different people in different countries. Let them be religious or patriotic, as they are now—or let them be merely jolly, as one supposes December Y or June L will be under The World Calendar. Let Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists, Confucians, Taoists, Americans, Englishmen, Irishmen, French, Italians, Germans, read their own meaning and their own traditions into the days they commemorate. The hum-

an race must reach back into time and remember. It is good for it to do so, especially in these days of fierce and rapid change. There is a comfort in feeling the kinship between oneself and one's ancestors.

Moreover, we can afford more holidays but to make good use of them. The use which a man makes of his leisure hours and days may come to be as important as the use he makes of his working periods—even more important. The schools will educate as much for hobbies and avocations as they do for trades and professions. Libraries, theaters, radio and motion picture programs, amateur athletics, parks, playgrounds, laboratories to which the layman may resort, all sorts of commercial recreation, are likely to take on even more significance than now.

The culture of a nation may come to be judged by what it does with its holidays—whether its diversions are on the whole genial, wholesome and one might even say *creative* as well as *recreative*, or whether they take the form which results in a headache the next morning.

We may come to speak of the play-week with just as much seriousness as we do of the work-week and we may do quite as much to adjust it to human needs, comfort and convenience. But it will need some thought and experiment to make it come right. The combina-

tion of Mr. Robinson's Monday-holiday plan with The World Calendar plan would seem to the present commentator an excellent beginning.

The World is, after all, linked by the intangibles—by sentiment, by customs which can be made to have a universal appeal, by attitudes which are human rather than national or racial. If we were more rational these intangibles might outweigh some of the tangibles which make trouble—the economic rivalries, the pressure of populations on frontiers, the armies and the navies. The present writer is not so naive as to believe that a World Calendar or a world agreement as to the incidence of holidays would end war and bring in the millennium. Yet there is something gained when there is international agreement about anything, no matter how small. And there could be agreement about a calendar and about the placing of at least a few holidays.

The imagination jumps ahead a little. May not the time some day come when there will be holidays that belong to the whole human race and are celebrated with equal zest at the same periods in every land on the face of the earth? These might be linked with the changing seasons but they might commemorate victories and great occasions which are human, not na-

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ner in the hotel dining room—that had been specified. But she didn't want food. She wanted John Harvey; she wanted the comfort of his arms and his trust. Or even if he didn't trust her any more, she wanted him. He must understand; they fight things through together. But John Harvey was two hundred-odd miles away—and she had been warned not to make telephone calls.

The first thing to do was to get out of this place; get away where Colonel Babcock would not find her. She counted the money in her purse, feverishly—twelve dollars and some change. Twelve dollars wouldn't take her very far. But it would take her somewhere where she could think in peace.

Could she bribe a chambermaid to change clothes with her for twelve dollars? But then she would have no money. She held her head in her hands, trying feverishly to think.

For Billy and the Malloy woman mustn't get away with it, not while she had a drop of blood or a breath of life. John would see it her way when she explained it to him—he must. It would take lawyers and money—a lot of money. It would mean trying to find old servants who'd know her when she was a child, and hiring handwriting experts and taking journeys.

It was disgraceful not to have an identity stamp, a birthmark, some absolute identification. When John and she had children, she would insist upon that. Fingerprints! She stiffened for a moment, and then slumped back. No use. She had never had her fingerprints taken. And Nora Malloy's, not hers, would be on the things in her bedroom.


It would be a long fight—years, possibly—but it must be fought. She would buy those years from John's life—pay him richly for them. Later on, he could have the best laboratory in the world. If he failed her, even so she would have to fight. But he mustn't fail her. And she knew that he wouldn't.

Meanwhile, there was something at the back of her mind—something that had flashed and gone again when she thought of fingerprints. Some quick solution that would make the fight half won. What was it? She pressed her hands to her temples.

[To Be Concluded Next Month.]

TESORO


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tional—some great epoch in the conquest of disease, some great liberating invention, the first steps toward the abolition of war.

Time and holidays are both, in a way, human devices, of interest and concern the world over. They might be made of real service as a means of breaking down the barriers between peoples.