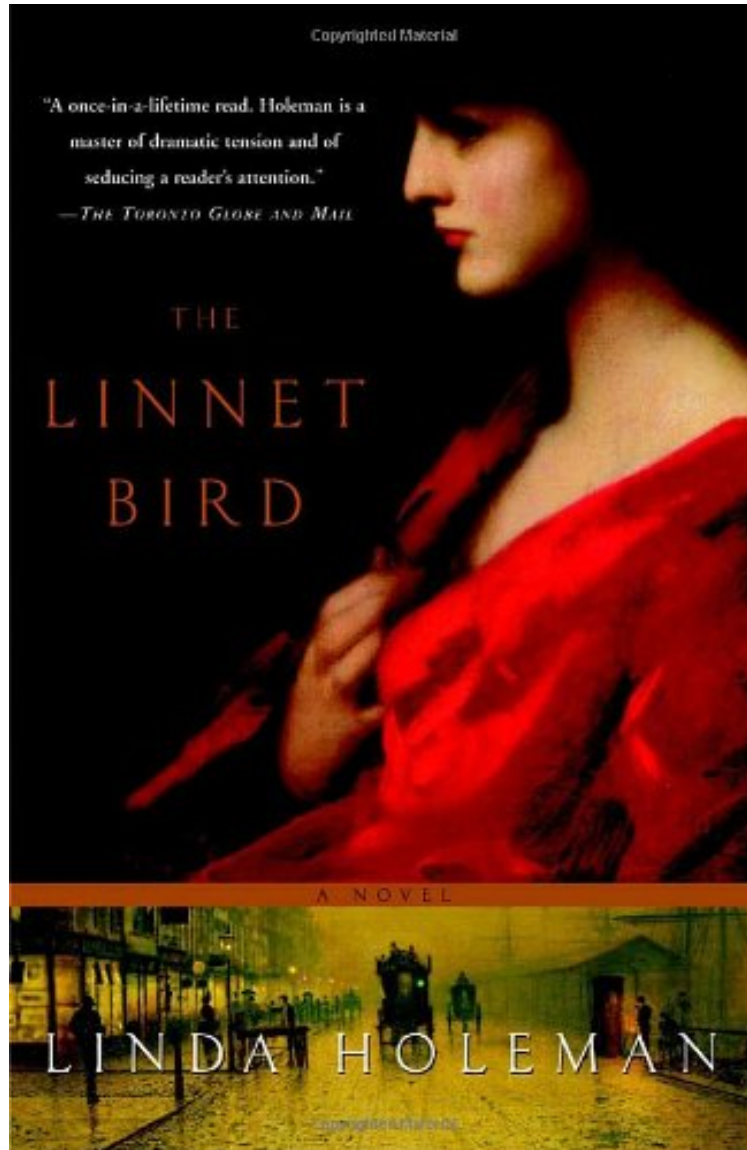


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The Linnet Bird: A Novel

Linda Holeman

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Linda Holeman : The Linnet Bird: A Novel before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Linnet Bird: A Novel:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Heroine who is So Compelling!By Linda Quintana MansouriOne of the 'best of the best' books I've read and I have read some outstanding historical fiction in the past few months. The story of Linnet was compelling from the first chapter. All the realism of her life in England, might be difficult for some to read but as a social worker, I found it to be realistic without resorting to 'shock value'. Linny was a

sympathetic character as she went through her life in England and all people she interacted with. Going to India, was an escape and an opportunity to find 'her true life', as Chinese Sally said. I loved the 'fight' Linny had in her and continued to have, and her relationship with her Aya, Malti. The section of her being taken to Kashmir was beautifully and sensitively written and I read it many times after I finished the book. I don't want to give much away to the potential reader. I was hoping that the Pathan in Calcutta would be revealed, although I think we all know who it was, even after all those years. This is a book I will definitely read again and hope the author writes again!

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. "Smoking opium is an art." By pjburn1823-1840, Linny Gow makes her way from the open sewers of Phoebe Ann Back Street, Liverpool, then Calcutta and Simla, India, a remote Kashmiri settlement, and finally back to Liverpool. She has buried people she loved and people she hated, borne children from both, borne grievous injuries, physical, emotional, social. She's been declared dead, named a whore, befriended helpless folk, married a noble, loved an outlaw, and given birth to her redemption.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Not a light, carefree novel by any means. By Wendy Price I did enjoy the novel. I really did, but wow it is dark. It shows that Linny Gow will do whatever is necessary to survive. She has some horrible things done to her early in life and she has to fight hard to overcome them. What I liked most about the book is that Linny doesn't come out unscathed. She comes away from the bad times changed. She's not a Pollyanna character that one often reads about (that usually bores me to tears). She seems like what I think a real person might be. Maybe she's what a real woman might have been during that time period if she wanted to try to escape the sad, dirty path that had been laid before her.

In the claustrophobic, mannered world of British India, Linny Ingram seems the perfect society wife: pretty, gracious, subservient. But appearances can be deceptive. Linny Ingram was born Linny Gow, an orphan raised in the gray slums of Liverpool. Sold into prostitution by her stepfather when she was only eleven, Linny clung to the belief that she was meant for something more, something better, than life on the cold, dangerous streets. A stroke of luck granted Linny the chance to re-create herself as a proper middle-class young lady, allowing her to join "the fishing fleet"—young women of good birth who sailed to India in search of husbands. India, with its exotic colors, sights, and smells, is a world away from the cold back alleys of Linny's childhood. But even there, she is haunted by her past, and by the constant threat of discovery. Soon she finds that respectability and marriage bring a new kind of imprisonment. But having come so far, Linny is not about to surrender easily. In the lush tropics of India she finds not only the means of rebellion . . . she finds that she may be capable of feeling love and freedom after all.

From Publishers Weekly A historical romance with a soft-focus cover, Holeman's first adult novel (she's written a handful of young adult books, including *Search of the Moon King's Daughter*) opens in Calcutta but quickly flashes back to 1823 Liverpool, England, where its heroine, Linny Gow, is turned into a prostitute by her father shortly after her 11th birthday. Surrounded by poverty and brutality, Linny clings to her dead mother's assurance that she has noble blood, a distinction that solidifies her determination to escape from her sexual slavery and break into the genteel class. Holeman excels at painting the different milieus of the time—from the clammy docks where the whores ply their trade, to the stuffy drawing rooms where the ladies gossip over tea, to India, where a "fishing fleet" of poor young well-bred women go in search of husbands. Her physical descriptions can be powerfully tactile and absorbing. But her storylines are couched in clichés, and much of Linny's character is determinedly anachronistic; she's almost proud, for example, of her sexual experience. Such flaws will likely put off those expecting a more rigorous depiction of the period, but Holeman's novel may nonetheless prove an engrossing favorite with historical romance aficionados and fans of Sarah Waters's Victorian dramas. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From Booklist Liverpool, England, in Victorian times was no place to be a poor girl. Linny Gow knows this firsthand. When her mother dies, her father begins prostituting her at the age of 12. Linny manages to leave prostitution, and with the help of a kindly would-be doctor, she begins to pass herself off as a middle-class woman. When Linny gets the opportunity to leave England behind, she sets off for India without looking back. In India she meets the cruel Somers Ingram. Ingram recognizes her from her days in Liverpool and blackmails her into a sexless and violent marriage. Coincidences and luck, both good and bad, abound. Linny's intelligence and pluck may be almost a cliché in historical literature, but the plot moves at a fast enough pace, and the descriptions are so vivid that the book becomes a page-turner. Marta Segal Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved.

"Spellbinding . . . The Linnet Bird is a highly satisfying story of the triumph of will over circumstances." —Orlando Sentinel

"A once-in-a-lifetime read. Holeman is a master of dramatic tension and of seducing a reader's attention." —The Toronto Globe and Mail