

Lind.Z

“You want to know who killed my mum? Santa, the Easter Bunny, St. Patrick ... pick.”

Backstory...

When she was 13, Irish lass, **Lind Cormac** had no idea how good she had it. She assumed her opulent, nouveau riche existence was the norm. Her family had a River Liffy side home in Dublin's most affluent community. Lind was popular in Alexandra College's Junior School for girls. She made high marks. She wore the latest fashions. Her father, **Oingus Cormac**, was a world renowned architect. Her mother, **Aisling Cormac**, was the best step-dancer in Ireland.

Then came Christmas...

Lind, using her father's credentials, won a commission to build an outdoor stage for the **Archdiocese of Dublin's** Christmas festival. Before opening the church's purse strings, the **Reverend Father, Liam Bartley**, provided a clear directive, “the birth of Christ must take center stage.”

A prodigy from the age of three, in her father's dogmatic minimalist architecture firm, Lind is thrilled for the chance to test her skills.

Lind carves a beautiful manger from a single piece of ancient wood and places it in the center of a hexagon shaped stage. She fashions tall bleachers on sides 1, 3, and 5. Racks of lights fill three towering metal trees. And there are tall braziers.

On Christmas Eve, clergy, Dublin's elite, and Lind's father gather on the bleachers. A church choir, instrumentalists, and the usual assemblage of Nativity actors emerge from hidden staircases. The choir's bold and beautiful songs bring passion unexpected from the actors. Everyone is overwhelmed, moved to tears. The lights fade to black.

Lind sits inside a control room filled with lighting and music panels. Rumbling 18 wheelers pull up. Men, frustrated with working in the dark, curse. Minutes pass before the trucks fire their engines into gear and steam off. Their din is replaced by an unmistakably jubilant throng.

A single ultra bright light appears over the stage. The people in the bleachers blink back their sight. Their surprise is palpable. Big structures on flat beds now fill sides 2, 4, and

6. Huge movie screens cover the back of the bleachers, showing the stage. A sea of 20,000 people with more streaming in surrounds the stage.

Santa's workshop, a twisting serpent slide decorated in St. Patrick's Day greenery, and an Easter egg, are all three stories tall. A colorful band stands ready on the workshop's roof. Reverend Father and **Dublin's Mayor**, implore Lind's father, for an explanation. Oingus is shocked to find out he won the commission.

Music! Dancers pour out of the three structures clad in their respective holiday garb. They swirl and leap, song after song. Lind beams from off stage at her mother, in the middle of the fugue. Aisling's outfit combines all three holidays; she's stunning.

Artsy cannons around the stage fire grapefruit sized balls full of gasoline; they arc into the braziers. Boom. 10' high flames shoot into the air. Lind's voice on the mic, "three holidays, celebrated as one, will bring forth our savior for real." Reverend Father has seen enough. He storms down the bleacher stairs. Oingus, "let me deal with her," he calls out.

The cannons fire balls higher this time. They explode into showers of snow like confetti. Spectators surge into the buildings, filling their windows and balconies. They slide down the slide, and scale the lace rope around the easter egg.

The music slows and Aisling approaches the manger with the stylized walk of a ballerina. The crowd gasps when a hologram of a baby sits up to meet her.

"Mother," the baby says. Aisling falls to her knees with arms outstretched. The baby grows to be a toddler and climbs into Aisling's arms. She hugs him close. Confetti bombs, in every color, explode above. Its effect is magical. Everyone and everything turns still.

Aisling, "are you Chirst?" A handsome male dancer kneels next to Aisling, putting his arm around her. Toddler, "I am, he. And I rejoice to see you with your true husband." Oingus, shocked by the revelation of another man, sees red.

Aisling, "how have you returned?" Christ grows into a tall thin boy. He links hands between aisling and the male dancer. "Your daughter opened the door when she combined all these holidays." Aisling, "we've needed you for so long."

Gas bombs fly into the air, reigniting the braziers to even greater heights. More confetti bombs. The shouts of clergy, "she mocks us," are drowned out by excited onlookers. Christ grows into a young man. Christ, "I think I'd like a green beer."

A girl in a Leprechaun outfit bumps into Oingus as she runs onto stage with two tankards. She passes a beer to Aisling; Christ already has his. Christ, “a toast ...” In the control booth, a priest rips away Lind’s notes: fleeing. Christ, “Live Long and Prosper.” The crowd is confused and concerned. Christ, “Dance with me Aisling.”

Christ grows into a man, and Aisling starts to spin around him. Everyone else melts away from the stage. The spot lights go out, leaving the flaming brazier to show the way. The dance beat softens and Aisling and Christ turn slowly arm in arm.

Santa, the Easter Bunny, and St. Patrick, order their respective canonniers to fire. More snow confetti fills the sky over the stage. The canons fire again and again until confetti is inches deep. As a song ends, the canons fire once more. From the swirling confetti falls an unexploded ball.

The ball bursts above the couple enveloping them in burning gasoline. Aisling is overcome instantly, forced to her knees, screaming bloody murder as she burns to death before the horrified crowd. Christ keeps dancing, his love unquenchable.

The aftermath of the festival nearly mirrors the horror of Aisling’s death. Lind, her father, various clergy, Santa, and others, are all suspects, tried and convicted on the world stage, though no one is charged, a tragic accident the final decree.

The next three years are torture. Oingus has drunk his firm into ruin. Lind, now 16, lives with her grandparents. There’s no money and Lind’s in public school, failing. She refuses therapy, but it’s clear she needs it; that, or medication.

Lind sits on a bench outside of her father’s squalid apartment watching the disheveled man stare at a television. She’s surprised when he stands up, shaking his pizza neckerchief off his chest. He opens the door just long enough to toss out a backpack.

She waits until her father passes out to approach it. Without looking inside, she hoists the backpack to her shoulder, surprised by its heavy weight. In her tiny bedroom, she dares to take a look inside; the contents take her breath away.

Lind sits at a drafting table at a local college. The college boy next to her, an architecture student, watches her, unsure what to expect. Lind pins a notice to the large paper. A world wide contest is detailed: the best office building design will win a commission in the millions of pounds from a Hong Kong shipper.

The college boy watches in awe as Lind draws one minimalist office building after another with blazing speed and accuracy. There’s always a point where she gives up and rips up the paper. The college boy’s stack of drafting paper is running thin.

Lind flips through pictures of buildings on her phone. “I’m sorry, dad. I’m not you.” When the next draft is finished, the facades of four distinct, famous, Baroque buildings face a minimalist’s courtyard of dreams. The surrounding structure grows from flat long graceful rectangles, transporting rivers of water across vineyards of stone, to towers of glass that line up to form the sails of a Chinese Junk. Taken as a whole, it’s clear the junk is sailing to exotic, rich ports.

Finished, she thanks the college boy. They hug and Lind cries into his shoulder. She rolls up the paper, depositing it into a shipping tube. “If you need me, friend, come to the building’s coronation, years hence. I will give you a tour.”

Months later, Lind’s father is sitting on his couch when he’s startled by a loud knock. He ignores the persistent pounding until he can’t take it anymore. He opens the door, prepared to bark his discontent. A crisply dressed man greets him. He explains that he’s won the “Great Build Contest,” and he’s needed to meet the press on the marrow.

Oingus sits at a long table in a fancy hotel ballroom stuffed with executives from the Hong Kong shipping company, and reporters. They start the meeting, projecting an artist’s colorful interpretation of Lind’s draft. Anyone who knows Oingus, knows he is appalled by what he sees. It’s everything he despises about architecture crystalized into one awful edifice. Lind, peers at his expression from behind the buffet. Her heart breaks.

Lind waits outside of the ballroom. When the doors open, she bravely stands her ground as the attendees press past. When it’s her father’s turn, he refuses to make eye contact with her. Lind bursts into tears.

Sitting at a **Bus Eireann** stop, Lind scrolls down a bank statement on her iPhone. She stops at the last two transactions: a plane ticket on an Aer Lingus flight for €600, and a withdrawal of €2,000. Her account is next to €0. **Sampson Hooper**, so well dressed as to be striking, if not for his looks and apparel, then the misfitting bus, exits, and promptly takes the seat next to Lind. Sampson says, “the agreed-upons need a wee larger audience. Two thousand of the willing.” Lind, “I’m the slag, then? You’ll settle for twenty less?” Sampson presses an envelope into her jacket pocket. Sampson, “Veronica Mars lives again.”

Lind sits in the Aer Lingus airport terminal, scrolling through pictures of her father at the ground breaking in Hong Kong. An announcement, “last call for Los Angeles.” Lind makes her way to the ticket checker. “Travel safe as the birds,” the checker says. “Up and away then, Ms. Mars, it is.” Lind, in the accent of Midwest America, “Lin-Vee-Onica.” Lind disappears down the jet bridge.

Rocket: (16) He's Lind's best friend in Ireland. He is a parapalegic, losing the use of his legs in a hit and run bicycle accident. Lind turned his house into a rollercoaster. Rocket is known throughout Ireland for racing his wheelchair through wild twists and turns and loop-the-loops. His parents started a restaurant for handicap people to have unbridled fun while racing around their tracks and eating great food. Rocket