

★ FEMALE ★ FORCE ★

# SILVER SCREEN *Legends*

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LUCILLE BALL ★ MARILYN MONROE ★ LIZA MINNELLI







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# LUCILLE BALL







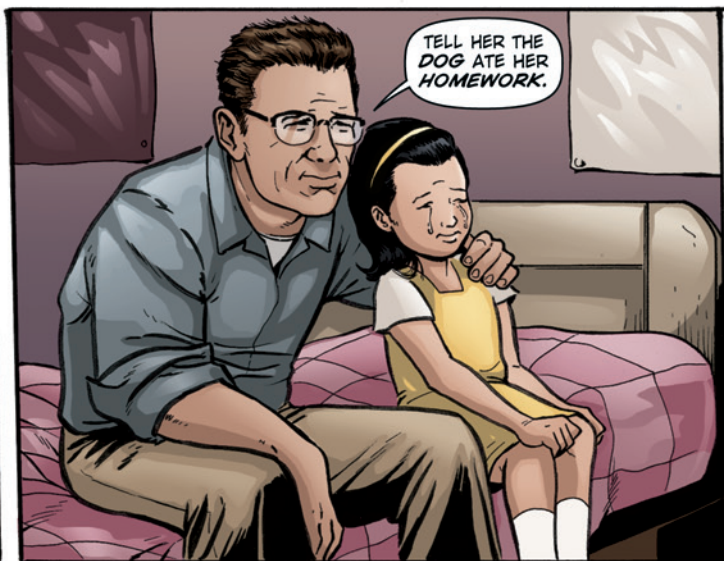
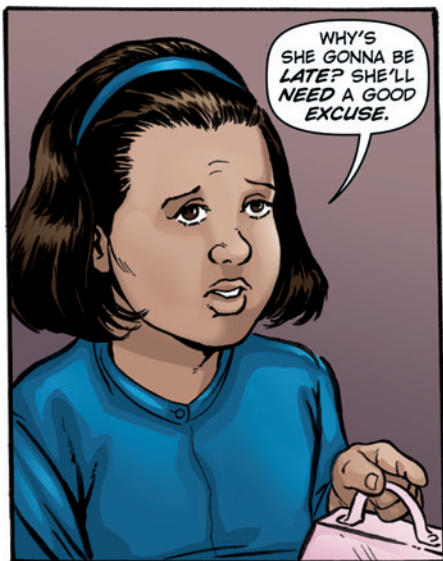
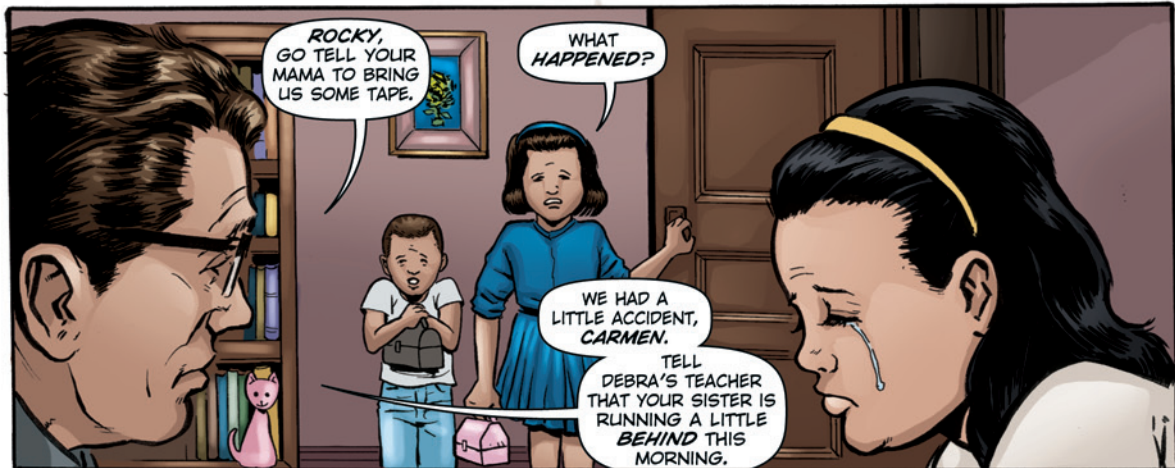
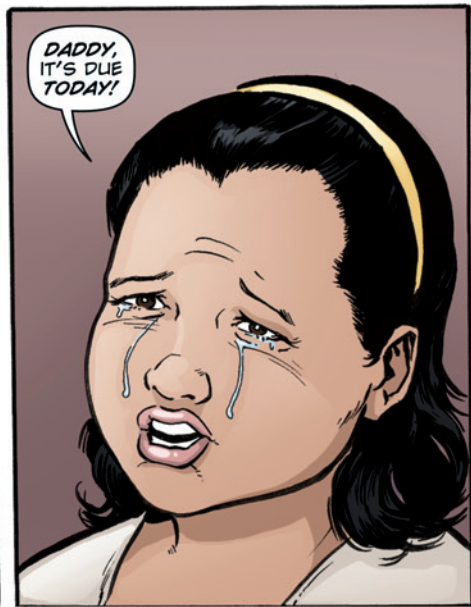
MISS  
HALEY'S GONNA  
GIVE ME AN F!



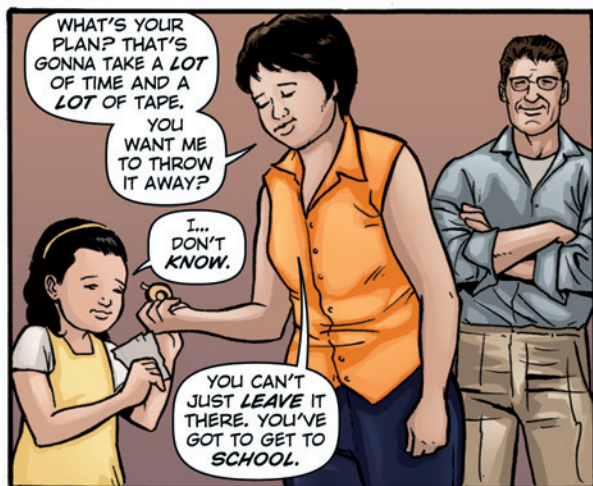
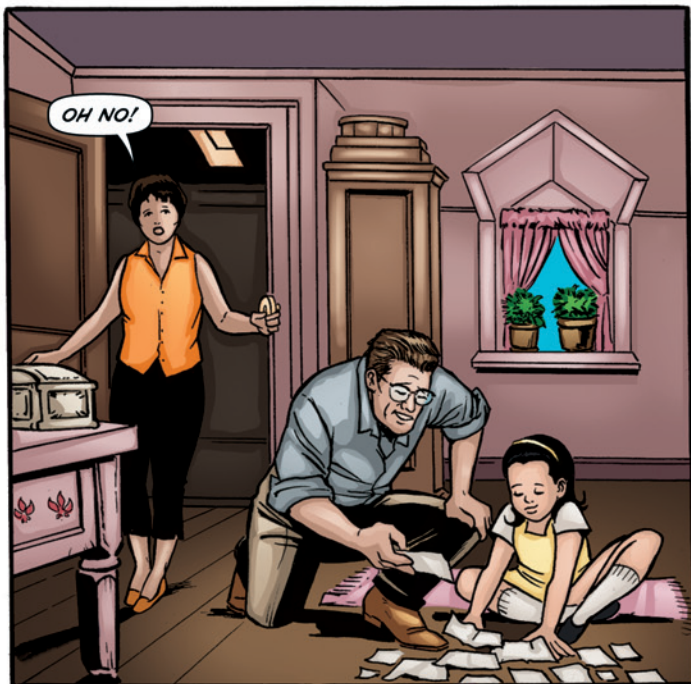
MERCY!  
WHAT HAPPENED,  
BABY GIRL?













My essay is about the person who's made me laugh more than anyone else in the whole world ever could.

It's called *The Life of Lucille Ball*.



She was born Lucille Désirée Ball on August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1911 in Jamestown, New York to Henry Durrell Ball and Désirée "DeDe" Evelyn Hunt.

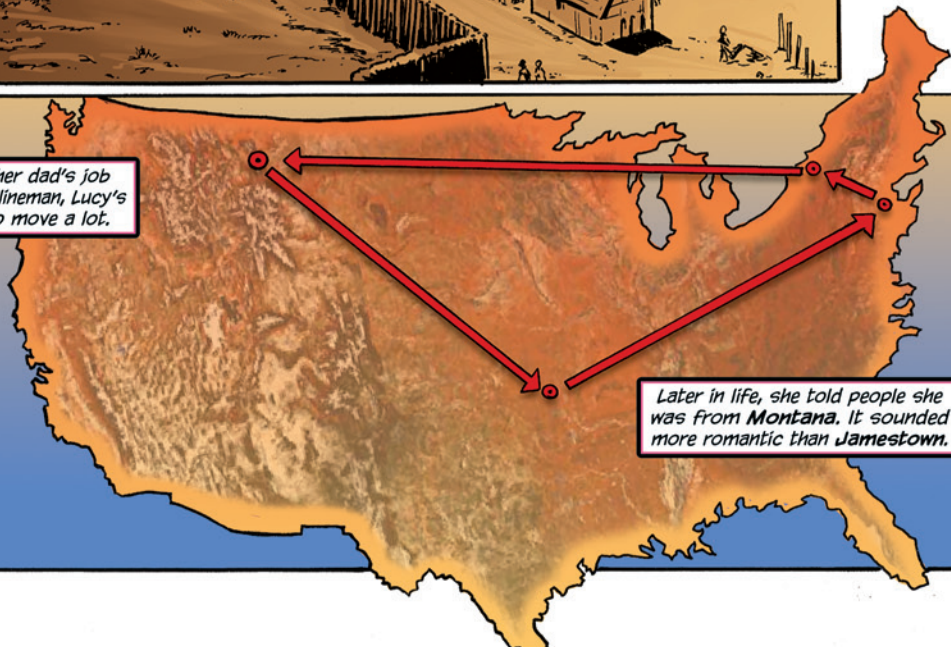


Lucy's entire ancestry can be traced all the way back to colonial days!



One relative can even be traced back to George Washington!

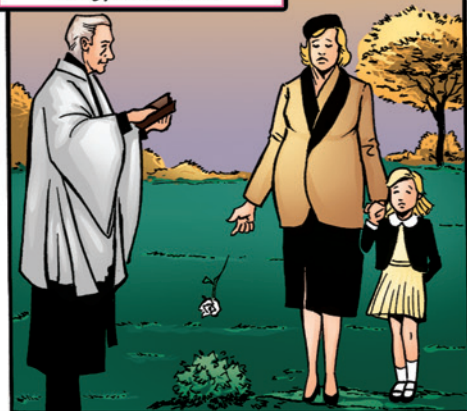
Because of her dad's job as a telephone lineman, Lucy's family had to move a lot.



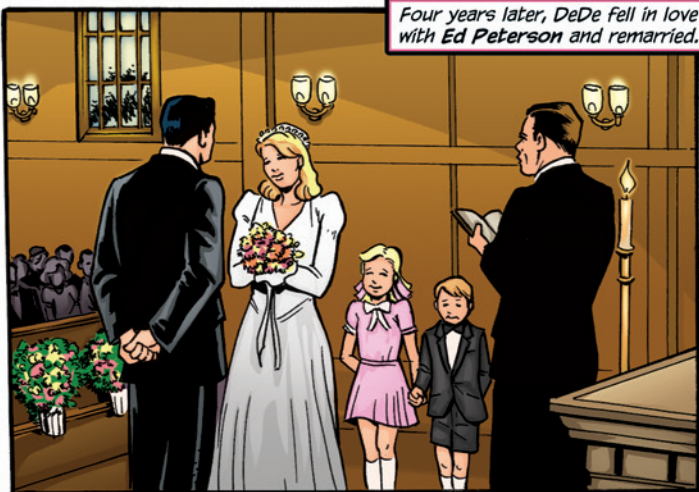
Later in life, she told people she was from Montana. It sounded more romantic than Jamestown.



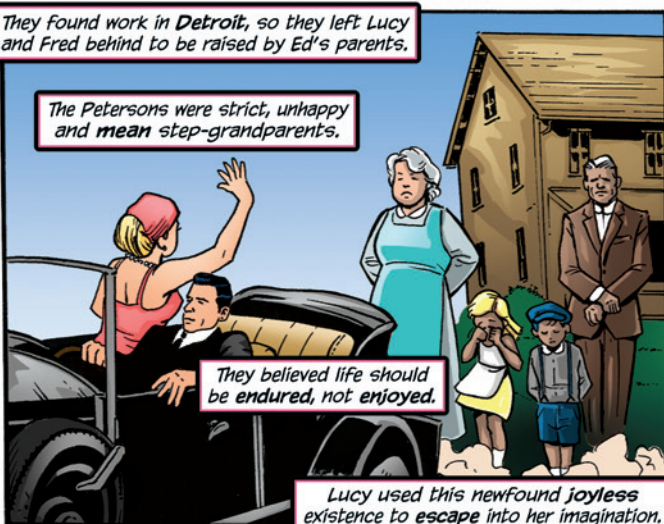
In February of 1915, DeDe was pregnant with Lucy's brother, Fred, when her husband died of typhoid fever.



Four years later, DeDe fell in love with Ed Peterson and remarried.



They found work in Detroit, so they left Lucy and Fred behind to be raised by Ed's parents.

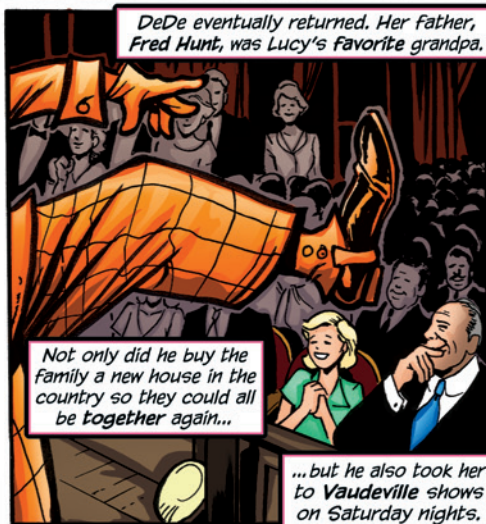


The Petersons were strict, unhappy and mean step-grandparents.

They believed life should be endured, not enjoyed.

Lucy used this newfound joyless existence to escape into her imagination.

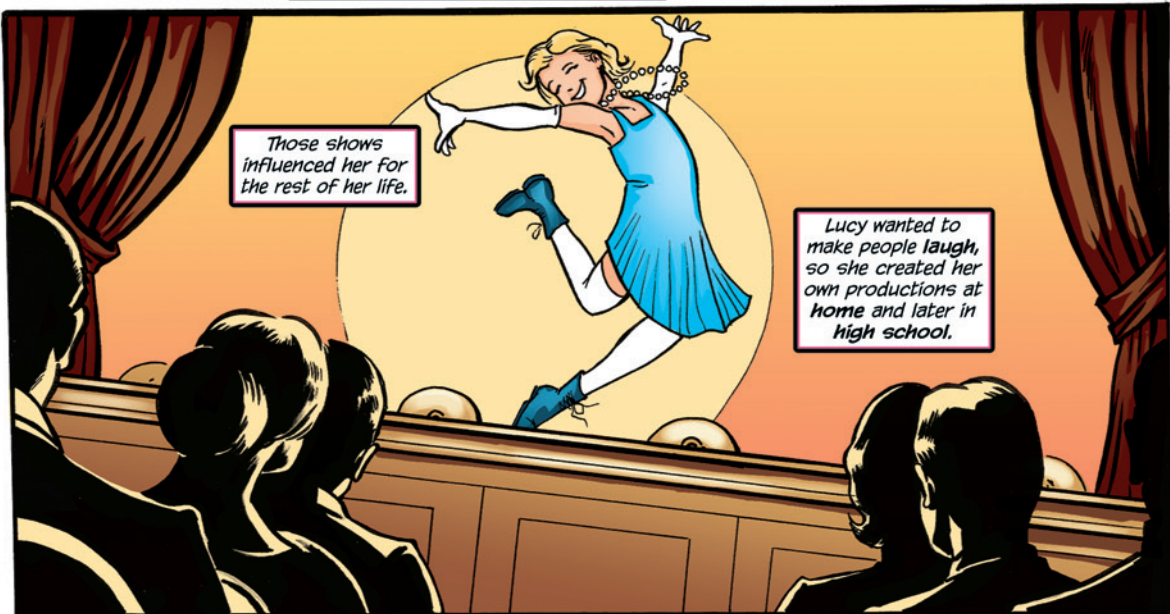
DeDe eventually returned. Her father, Fred Hunt, was Lucy's favorite grandpa.



Not only did he buy the family a new house in the country so they could all be together again...

...but he also took her to Vaudeville shows on Saturday nights.

Those shows influenced her for the rest of her life.



Lucy wanted to make people laugh, so she created her own productions at home and later in high school.

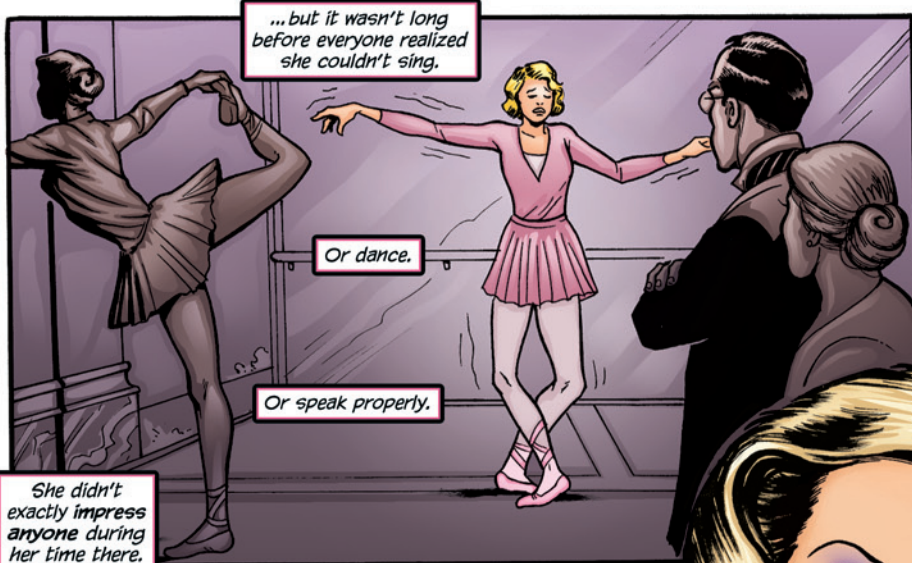


In 1927, Lucy dated a boy named **Johnny DeVita**.

Her mother was **not** pleased, mainly because Johnny's dad was a **gangster**!

Rather than allow Lucy to run with the wrong crowd, DeDe encouraged Lucy's love for the **theater**.

She let Lucy quit school and enrolled her at the **John Murray-Robert Anderson Dramatic School** in New York...

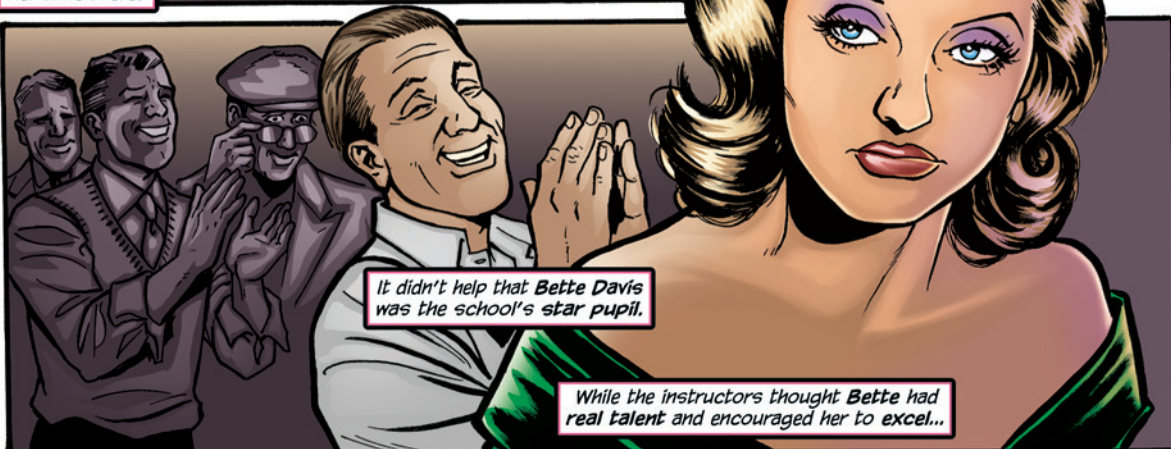


...but it wasn't long before everyone realized she couldn't sing.

Or dance.

Or speak properly.

She didn't exactly **impress anyone** during her time there.



It didn't help that **Bette Davis** was the school's **star pupil**.

While the instructors thought **Bette** had real talent and encouraged her to excel...



...they all agreed that Lucy had no talent and encouraged her to quit.

Driven to prove the school wrong, Lucy found work as a showgirl in various musicals.

Most of the girls worried about looking beautiful, but Lucy's beauty was enhanced by her ability to shout and act silly.

When the money ran out, Lucy returned to Jamestown.

She had many jobs there, from dress shop clerk to soda jerk.

She also lost many jobs in Jamestown. In fact, she was once fired for forgetting to put bananas on banana splits!

BANANA SPLITS?! MEH!

I GOTTA TRY THIS AGAIN.



Lucy returned to New York and became a beautiful, platinum blonde model who went by the name of *Diane Belmont*.

She acquired a top job with an internationally-famous dress shop on E. 49<sup>th</sup> Street called *Hattie Carnegie's*.

She learned all about fashion, and watched how high society walked and talked. Those keen observations would serve her well in later years.

During this time, she received many marriage proposals. But at just 18 years old, she knew better. It wasn't the time.

Apparently, it wasn't the time to take care of herself, either. She wasn't eating well.

She was working herself very hard, but was still broke.

Even a bout of *pneumonia* didn't stop her from working!

One day while being fitted for a dress at Hattie's, Lucy felt terrible pain in her legs.

She was diagnosed with *rheumatoid arthritis* and was unable to work.

She returned home once more to Jamestown where she spent two years learning how to walk again.





Lucy was later asked to join the Jamestown Players in a production of *Within the Law*.

They loved her. It was enough to convince Lucy that a third time just might be the charm.



In 1930, Lucy returned to modeling in New York City, this time for Jackson's on 39th & 7th Avenues.

While Jackson's was a first class clothing house, Lucy's customers were very down to Earth people.

Her ability to joke with them gained her some good comedy practice.

And helped her sales!



As a struggling model during the Great Depression, Lucy did a lot of odd jobs for extra money.

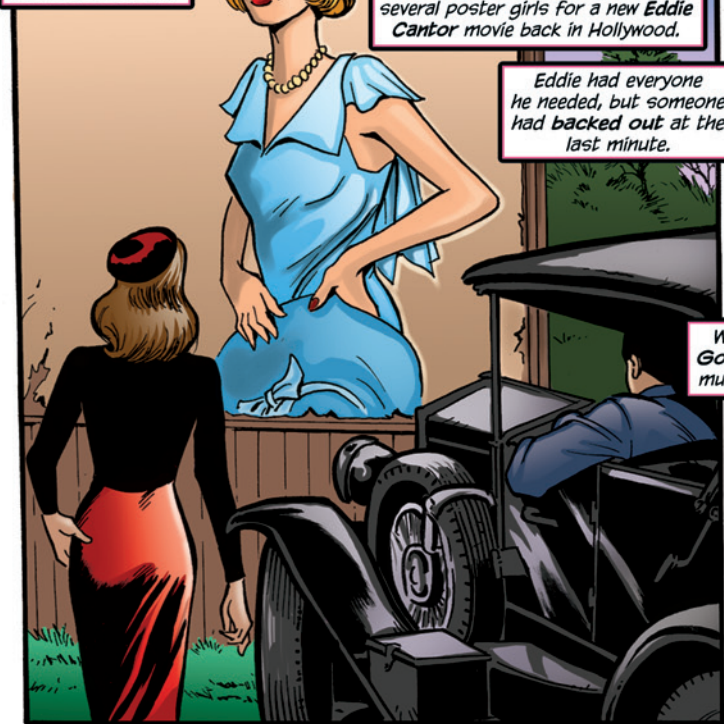


In 1933, she posed for an illustrator named Walter G. Ratterman, who sold the work to the Chesterfield Company.

It wasn't long before a theatrical agent named Sylvia Hahlo noticed her.

She found Lucy and let her know that Sam Goldwyn needed several poster girls for a new Eddie Cantor movie back in Hollywood.

Eddie had everyone he needed, but someone had backed out at the last minute.



Within days, Lucy was in Hollywood as a Goldwyn Girl starring in one of the biggest musical pictures of 1933: *Roman Scandals*.

She played a slave girl and had no lines, but a movie is a movie.



Lucy would follow up her minor success with many, many bit parts, including *Broadway Through a Keyhole* and *Moulin Rouge*.

Non-speaking roles were her bread and butter, but Lucy wanted real acting. But first...

...she signed a stock contract at *Columbia Pictures*. Most actresses scoffed at comedic, slapstick roles. Not Lucy.

She would appear with the *Three Stooges* in *Three Little Pigskins* in 1934.

Lucy eventually got her first major break in RKO's *Roberta*.

While filming *Roberta*, Lucy met Lela Rogers, the mother of Ginger Rogers.

Lela offered to mentor Lucy, convincing her she could become a great comedian and showed her how to look the part and handle her managers.

Lucy starred in her first noticeable role in 1937's *Stage Door*.

She earned her first speaking role in *Top Hat*, and then starred in *Follow the Fleet*.

It was on the set of her second starring role in *That Girl From Paris* where she met Edward Sedgewick, a famous comedy director who coached *Buster Keaton* and *Jack Haley*.

She learned a lot from him, and excelled at prop comedy.

This film would catapult her career at RKO, earning her the title *Queen of the Bs*.