

**THE WOMAN  
WHO WAITS**

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The woman who waits by Frances Donovan

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**FRANCES DONOVAN**

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BY  
FRANCES DONOVAN



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THE WOMAN WHO WAITS

# THE WOMAN WHO WAITS

## CHAPTER I

### THE WOMAN WHO WAITS

ONE Saturday morning between seven and eight o'clock I took an elevated train at the station of one of our large cities in the Middle West, and rode down to the city to do some shopping. The crowds on the train at this early hour attracted me. The tide, which flows to and fro, from the circumference to the center of the city, was now at flood. I was interested particularly in the women. There were great numbers of them who swarmed into the coaches as fast as the gates could be opened and shut. They were working women, but the privileged class, the aristocrats, the women who labored in the "Loop."

There were women of every physical type; there was the blond girl with the pearl earrings and high-topped laced boots, and the brunette with a bewitching nose veil; there was the tall slender girl in a "strictly tailored suit," and the

short, fat girl in a frilly lace collar; there was the middle-aged woman who, with rouge and an extravagantly short skirt, was making a pitiful attempt to cheat the years, and the woman in rusty black, and flat heelless shoes who had given up the struggle for youth and was boldly and admittedly old.

The first thing that interests one woman in another is the success of the other's efforts at personal charm. Most of these women were young, many of them were undeniably pretty, some even beautiful, while one or two of them, without any of the ordinary physical attractiveness, had somehow acquired that elusive charm which we describe as "interesting."

There are all sorts of people in the ranks of the working women in Chicago. After some experience I have got to know them. There is the high-salaried manager of a fashionable tea room, the private secretary of a prominent lawyer, the office executive, the stenographer, the typist, and the little filing clerk; there is the saleslady, the shop girl, and the bundle wrapper; the masseuse, the chiropodist, the manicurist, and the lady barber; the boot and shoe worker, the garment worker, the glove operator, the bindery woman. All are a part of the great army of women workers that every working day pours itself into that