

## JOAN THURSDAY

### I

SHE stood on the southeast corner of Broadway at Twenty-second Street, waiting for a northbound car with a vacant seat. She had been on her feet all day and was very tired, so tired that the prospect of being obliged to stand all the way uptown seemed quite intolerable. And so, though quick with impatience to get home and "have it over with," she chose to wait.

Up out of the south, from lower Broadway and the sweatshop purlieus of Union Square defiled an unending procession of surface cars, without intermission dark with massed humanity. Pausing momentarily before the corner where the girl was waiting (as if mockingly submitting themselves to the appraisal of her alert eyes) one after another received the signal of the switchman beyond the northern crossing and ground sluggishly on. Not one but was crowded to the guards, affording the girl no excuse for leaving her position.

She waited on, her growing impatience as imperceptible as her fatigue: neither of them discernible to those many transient stares which she received with a semblance of blank indifference that was, in reality, not devoid of consciousness. Youth will not be overlooked; reinforced by an abounding vitality, such as hers, it becomes imperious. This girl was as pretty as she was poor, and as young.

Judged by her appearance, she might have been anywhere between sixteen and twenty years of age. She was, in fact, something over eighteen, and at heart more nearly a child than this age might be taken to imply — more a