

***A Single Thread* by Tracy Chevalier**

A Single Thread is the story of Violet Speedwell, set in England during the 1930s, a time later to be identified as the years between the two "Great Wars". Violet had planned to marry her fiancé after his return from WWI, but like many, including her older brother, Violet's fiancé lost his life in the war. As the story begins Violet has had time to adjust to a life she did not expect. She works as a typist and lives with her mother. Violet's life is filled with her mother's complaining attitude and ill temper. Violet makes the decision to move out, not a wise financial decision, but one she thinks will help save her sanity. She can continue her work as a typist, and decides to room at a boarding house in the town of Winchester.

Violet has the unhappy label of "Surplus Woman"- a woman unlikely to marry in the years following the war when the number of marrying age men were less, and many women were considered too old to marry. Her job in a new town doesn't bring her much joy, and the fact her finances are so tight brings her much concern. On a visit to the Winchester Cathedral Violet finds herself fascinated by the embroidery that is being created to cover the seats and kneelers. Violet is drawn in by the art, and slowly forms new friendships with the "broderers", learning the art and becoming one of the group.

A Single Thread provides an interesting insight to the challenges many faced during the Post First World War era, specifically the challenges of older single women.