



# The Artificial Silk Girl

*Irmgard Keun*

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## **The Artificial Silk Girl** Irmgard Keun

Before Sex and the City there was Bridget Jones. And before Bridget Jones was The Artificial Silk Girl.

In 1931, a young woman writer living in Germany was inspired by Anita Loos's *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* to describe pre-war Berlin and the age of cinematic glamour through the eyes of a woman. The resulting novel, *The Artificial Silk Girl*, became an acclaimed bestseller and a masterwork of German literature, in the tradition of Christopher Isherwood's *Berlin Stories* and Bertolt Brecht's *Three Penny Opera*. Like Isherwood and Brecht, Keun revealed the dark underside of Berlin's "golden twenties" with empathy and honesty. Unfortunately, a Nazi censorship board banned Keun's work in 1933 and destroyed all existing copies of *The Artificial Silk Girl*. Only one English translation was published, in Great Britain, before the book disappeared in the chaos of the ensuing war. Today, more than seven decades later, the story of this quintessential "material girl" remains as relevant as ever, as an accessible new translation brings this lost classic to light once more. Other Press is pleased to announce the republication of *The Artificial Silk Girl*, elegantly translated by noted Germanist Kathie von Ankum, and with a new introduction by Harvard professor Maria Tatar.

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