

Hold your breath because here comes **THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE** in a magical mythical musical set in the roaring twenties when bobbing your hair and rolling your stockings was considered daring. Millie even colors her lips!

## 1. ACT ONE

It's 1922 and Millie has arrived in New York. Millie has guts, pluck, charisma, moxie: a girl with big dreams from a little town. She is scared and excited to be there. She looks at her return ticket and sings, "Burn the bridge, bet the store. Baby's comin' home no more." ("Not For the Life of Me") and she tears up her return ticket. She sings and dances with the "moderns" and tells the world to "beat the drums, 'cause here comes thoroughly...modern Millie now." ("Thoroughly Modern Millie")

Millie is then mugged and loses her scarf, hat, and shoe and after a tug of war for her purse, she loses that, too. When Jimmy Smith (remember him now) a brash city slicker with an irrepressible, buoyant personality, enters, Millie trips him. He tells her to go back to Kansas and, when Millie refuses, suggests she check into the Hotel Priscilla--a rooming house for actresses. The defiant Millie plans on staying and making her mark in the big city.

At the Hotel Priscilla, the girls Lucille, Rita, Alice, Gloria and Ruth bemoan not getting any acting roles but they aren't leaving the excitement of the city. Ethel brings in that day's newspaper that has a headline of "White Slavery" going on to say that many young girls mostly orphans have suddenly disappeared without anyone noticing.

Mrs. Meers who runs the hotel, a former actress-turned-criminal has adopted the disguise of a kindly Chinese proprietress of the hotel to mask her real profession: white slavery. She thinks she is a wonderful actress but her Chinese accent is deplorable and her depiction of a hateful stereotype is held up to ridicule by real Chinese characters that appear later. Mrs. Meers gives Ethel a telegram saying that her great uncle has died and she is now--an orphan. Ethel is offered a cup of green tea that will "calm" her and dropping her accent Mrs. Meers makes a call and sells Ethel to Buddha for four hundred bucks.

Millie enters and is told she is behind in her rent and that she must leave and while she and Meersie are discussing the problem the ingenue--clueless, old-fashioned beauty--Miss Dorothy Brown enters. Millie makes a deal with her to share her room (as long as Dorothy sleeps on the floor). Miss Dorothy is excited to make the acquaintance of her first poor person ("How the Other Half Lives") and Millie says she is not poor just broke. But Millie has a plan. She a new woman, bold and daring, and she plans on marrying her boss. The only hitch is she doesn't have a boss yet. Mrs. Meers offers Miss Dorothy Ethel's room which has just recently become available and is delighted to discover that Miss Dorothy is an orphan.

Millie and Miss Dorothy head upstairs and in order to get the elevator going they must tap dance their way up. They ascend as they chat happily.

In the laundry room of the hotel, Ching Ho and Bun Foo are folding towels when Mrs. Meers enters and tells Bun Foo to take Ethel to Buddha and collect the four hundred bucks C.O.D., A.S.A.P. and Ching Ho is to take a snack to the new arrival, Miss Dorothy. We discover the boys are working here to save money to bring their mother over from Hong Kong while they reprise (in Chinese) the song we heard from Millie ("Not For the Life of Me") when she first arrived in

New York.

We next see Millie trying to get in to see Trevor Graydon the third who needs a stenographer and who is also single. Miss Flannery, the office manager, is clear that she thinks Millie is a "modern", something she doesn't like. Graydon turns out to be movie star handsome and gives Millie "The Speed Test" which she passes with flying colors and is now part of the team.

At the hotel, Ching Ho offers Miss Dorothy a room service apple which Mrs. Meers has injected with a large hypodermic needle. Ching Ho looks up and is instantly smitten with Miss Dorothy. Mrs. Meers is foiled by Millie and Alice's appearance and Miss Dorothy doesn't take the apple. Alone Mrs. Meers sings "They Don't Know" what an artist the theatre has missed when they didn't cast her.

Millie, Miss Dorothy, and the girls are looking for a speakeasy in which to celebrate Millie's job (she sees it as her "engagement"). There is one just under their noses it is pointed out to them by Jimmy who recognizes Millie. Since he is a member, he gets them in and tells them they are on their own. A wild dance ensues ("The Nutty Cracker Suite") and the joint is raided. While mug shots are being taken, Jimmy and Millie make one another's acquaintance and Millie learns that Jimmy makes do by flitting from job to job. Jimmy explains to Millie ("What Do I Need with Love") that he wants loads of gals and lots of yuks and he has a free and easy life. When he discovers that Millie is "in love" with her boss, Jimmy invites her and Miss Dorothy to Long Island to a ball game.

At the Priscilla, Mrs. Meers enters in a laundry cart sporting rubber gloves, surgical mask, scrubs, holding a rag and a bottle. She also chastises Ching Ho for losing his heart to Miss Dorothy but before she can follow through with her dastardly plan, Millie enters in a new dress and questions Mrs. Meers about the bottle. Mrs. Meers explains she was trying to get rid of a nasty spot on the carpet. She claims the bottle contains soy sauce. Millie has been seeing a lot of Jimmy and tonight they are going to a welcome home party for Muzzy Van Hossmere in her glamorous penthouse.

We meet the glamorous Muzzy singing the praises of the city ("Only In New York"). Muzzy is entertaining the elite of New York including George and Ira Gershwin and Dorothy Parker. George is stuck working on his symphony and when Muzzy tells Dorothy Parker she is a rhapsody in blue, George becomes inspired. Jimmy enters with Millie and Miss Dorothy and explains to Millie that his father was the gardener at Muzzy's Long Island estate. Miss Dorothy meets Rodney, an old friend from the orphanage and she, Jimmy and Rodney leave. Muzzy tells Millie her story of marrying for love the very rich and now deceased Mr. Van Hossmere.

During the dancing Millie spills champagne on Dorothy Parker's dress and while Millie goes for the soy sauce, Muzzy tells Jimmy that he is in love with Millie and asks what is going to do about it.

On the terrace, Jimmy calms Millie down after she stained Parker's dress and then the conversation turns to Mr. Graydon. They argue over Millie's plan and they are nose-to-nose when Jimmy grabs Millie and kisses her passionately. She responds and Jimmy exits in a panic. Millie sings that she is in love with Jimmy ("Jimmy") and the scene changes to the Priscilla as Millie catches sight of Jimmy leaving Miss Dorothy's room. Millie is in shock at the first act curtain falls.

**ACT TWO**

Boop-boop-ee-doop and vo-de-oh-doh here we go again seeing if thoroughly modern Millie can heal her broken heart and forget Jimmy and marry Trevor Graydon. At work, Millie will not pick up the phone and talk to Jimmy and she tells herself to "Forget About the Boy". She is joined by the rest of the stenographers including the fanatic Flannery each of who have their own boy to forget.

Millie's flirting with Graydon doesn't work and Jimmy's appearance only makes things worse for our heroine. Miss Dorothy's presence reminds Millie of last night but the two ladies make-up when Millie discovers a pass was made at Miss Dorothy by David Belasco the producer-director. Millie tells Miss Dorothy to callous up: wear high heels, shorten her skirts, and bob her hair. Graydon enters and sees Miss Dorothy. They stare at one another and in a fantasy ("Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life"/"I'm Falling In Love With Someone") are smitten. Graydon asks Miss Dorothy to dinner and begs her not to alter her lovely appearance.

Jimmy has crawled out onto a window ledge in order to avoid Flannery and to get Millie's attention. Millie asks him why he was kissing Miss Dorothy and he tells her he asked for Miss Dorothy's advice about his feelings for Millie. Jimmy realizes that he loves Millie ("I Turned a Corner") and they decide to dine at the swank Cafe Society where Muzzy will be performing that night. In the midst of a quartet of Millie, Jimmy, Graydon, and Miss Dorothy's professing their love ("I'm Falling In Love With Someone"), Ching Ho enters and professes his love (done phonetically from a dictionary) for Miss Dorothy.

Meanwhile, back at the Hotel Priscilla, Mrs. Meers is still stalking Miss Dorothy, this time with pesticide spray guns. When Ching Ho balks, Mrs. Meers reminds him that he is trying to get his mother to New York. The three sing "Muquin" a song that sounds like "Mammy" in Chinese.

That night at the floorshow at Cafe Society, Muzzy sings about being happy "Long As I'm Here With You" entertaining in New York. Millie and Jimmy listen to her sing from the kitchen where they are washing dishes. Swank comes at a price neither of them can afford, it would seem.

Millie visits Muzzy in her dressing room where she tells Muzzy that she is crazy about Jimmy but she doesn't want a lifetime of washing dishes in a restaurant kitchen. Muzzy tells Millie that her plan to marry her boss is flawed because even though she originally thought Mr. Van Hossmere was poor she married him for love and never regretted it. Millie realizes that she must follow her heart ("Gimme Gimme") and that she really wants that thing called love.

In another part of Cafe Society a drunken man is singing about a lost love. Millie discovers that it is Graydon and that Miss Dorothy has stood him up. Jimmy overhears and is convinced that something is very wrong. He cannot believe she would check out without telling anyone and Millie realizes that two orphan girls disappeared without a word to anyone but Mrs. Meers. The three of them decide they need a decoy orphan and Millie knows someone who will help them.

Muzzy enters the Hotel Priscilla disguised as an ingenue, wearing a blond wig, and carry a beat-up suitcase. Although Mrs. Meers thinks the new girl is a little long in the tooth to be an orphan she welcomes her to the hotel and offers her some--green tea!

In the meanwhile, upstairs, Ching Ho vows to help the gagged and tied up Miss Dorothy. Mrs. Meers finally recognizes Muzzy (or Mabel as she was called) and Muzzy tells Daisy Crumple (aka Mrs. Meers) she hasn't seen her since Daisy (aka Mrs. Meers) was kicked out of the chorus. Unknown to all, Millie has been hiding in another laundry cart and has transcribed the entire

conversation between Muzzy and Mrs. Meers which also includes references to white slavery and sending girls to Hong Kong. Mrs. Meers demands proof and Bun Foo says he speaks English and will testify against her. While they search for Miss Dorothy, Mrs. Meers escapes. Miss Dorothy is discovered in an embrace with Ching Ho who has rescued her from an unspeakable fate. The boarders at the hotel armed with pesticide cans of their own find and force Mrs. Meers to follow them to the police station.

Jimmy proposes to Millie and even though he is poor, she accepts only to find out that Jimmy is Muzzy's stepson, Herbert J. Van Hossmere, the Third. Oh, the J is for James. Miss Dorothy turns out to be Jimmy's sister, Dorothy Carnegie Mellon Vanderbilt Van Hossmere. Muzzy, afraid of fortune hunters and James' squandering his money on the wrong kind of women, sent the children out with twenty-five dollars and hopes they'd come back with proper sweet partners, which they did.

Our vision of the twenties ends with the Moderns singing "Thoroughly Modern Millie" while a new young girl in her Sunday best carrying a suitcase surveys her surroundings with awed excitement and strikes Millie's opening pose.