



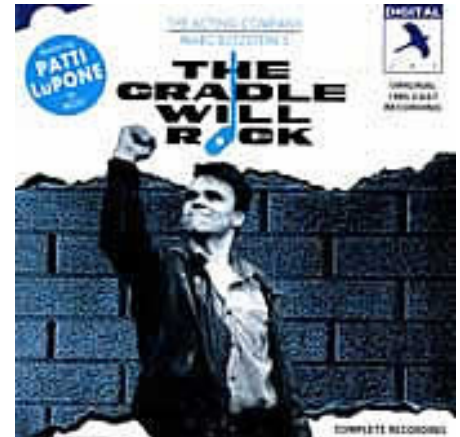
The Guide to Musical Theatre

THE CRADLE WILL ROCK

A Play in Music (Musical Drama) in One Act, 10 Scenes'. Book, music and lyrics by Marc Blitzstein.

Opened Venice Theatre, New York 16 June 1937; closed 1 July 1937(19 perfs)

Re-opened Mercury Theatre, New York 5 December 1937(4 Sunday evening perfs); transferred Windsor Theatre, New York 3 January 1938; moved to Mercury Theatre 28 February 1938; closed 9 April 1938 (108 perfs).



STORY

Setting: Steeltown, U.S.A.

Act I

Moll, a tired and hungry prostitute, is arrested and jailed for refusing her services to a police officer loyal to Mr. Mister, who owns the steel factory and everything else in town. Members of the Liberty Committee, a group of prominent citizens who oppose the union, are also arrested, because a policeman mistook them for union organizers. At night court, Moll meets Harry Druggist, who is continually arrested for vagrancy after having lost his drugstore because of Mr. Mister.

Harry tells Moll that the Liberty Committee are bigger prostitutes than she is; he explains how they, and even himself, have sold out to Mr. Mister. In a series of flashbacks, we see this happen: Reverend Salvation is convinced by Mrs. Mister to make sermons on World War I that are convenient to the profits of the steel industry, Editor Daily of the Steeltown News is bullied into running stories against union organizer Larry Foreman and giving Mr. Mister's feckless son Junior Mister a correspondence job in Honolulu. Harry Druggist is strong-armed by one of Mr. Mister's henchmen into keeping quiet about a bomb planted in a car belonging to Gus Polack, an innocent immigrant steelworker who has joined the union. Harry's son Stevie is killed trying to save Gus and his pregnant wife from the blast.

Act II

More flashbacks show other Liberty Committee members selling out to Mr. Mister. The painter Dauber and the violinist Yasha work for Mrs. Mister, using their art to support her husband's ideals.

In the present, Larry Foreman is beaten by the police and jailed for "inciting to riot". He explains the principle behind unions, and says that the time is coming when "the cradle will rock" and overthrow Mr. Mister and others like him.

In another flashback, Mr. Mister has President Prexy and other faculty at Steeltown University get students to serve in the army. Doctor Specialist, Mr. Mister's personal doctor as well as the one that treated a worker who died in a machine accident, is threatened with the loss of his chairmanship of the Liberty Committee if he does not report that the worker was drunk. Ella Hammer, the worker's sister, knows that he was pushed, and angrily confronts the doctor.

When Mr. Mister arrives at night court to release the Liberty Committee, he offers Foreman a place on the Committee and a hefty bribe if he will give up his union activities. Foreman refuses: though a common man, he stands up to the corrupt forces of Mr. Mister. Mr. Mister feels that his monopoly may be slipping away. He confronts Foreman, but the workers are rising up.

CAST (in order of appearance):

- The Moll
- A Gent
- A Dick
- A Cop
- Members of the Liberty Committee (6): Editor Daily; Prexie; Yasha; Dauber; Doctor Specialist; Reverend Salvation
- Druggist
- Mr. Mister
- Mrs. Mister
- Junior Mister
- Sister Mister
- Maid
- Steve
- Bugs
- Gus
- Sadie
- Larry
- Professor Trixie
- Professor Scoot
- Reporters
- Ella Hammer
- and Chorus

MUSICAL NUMBERS

1. Moll's Song (I'm Checkin' Home Now) - The Moll
2. Moll and Gent - The Moll, A Gent
3. Moll and Dick - The Moll, A Dick
4. Moll and Druggist - The Moll, Druggist
5. Oh, What a Filthy Night Court! - Editor Daily, Prexie, Yasha, Dauber, Doctor Specialist, Reverend Salvation
6. Mrs. Mister and Reverend Salvation - Mrs. Mister, Reverend Salvation
7. Croon Spoon - Junior Mister, Sister Mister
8. The Freedom of the Press Editor Daily, Mr. Mister
9. Let's Do Something Junior Mister, Sister Mister
10. Honolulu - Reverend Salvation, Junior Mister, Mr. Mister, Sister Mister
11. Drugstore Scene - Druggist, Steve, Bugs
12. Gus and Sadie Love Song - A Gent, Sadie
13. The Rich - Yasha, Dauber
14. Ask Us Again - Yasha, Dauber, Mrs. Mister
15. Art for Art's Sake - Yasha, Dauber
16. Nickel Under the Foot - The Moll
17. Leaflets - Larry
18. The Cradle Will Rock - Larry
19. Faculty Room Scene - Mr. Mister, Prexie, Professor Trixie, Professor Scoot
20. Doctor and Ella - Ella Hammer
21. Joe Worker - Ella Hammer
22. Finale/The Cradle Will Rock (reprise) - Larry, Ensemble

SCENES AND SETTINGS:

Steeltown, U.S.A. during a union drive.

Scene 1: Streetcorner.

Scene 2: Nightcourt.

Scene 3: Mission.

Scene 4: Lawn of Mr. Mister's Home.

Scene 5: Drugstore.

Scene 6: Hotellobby.

Scene 7: Nightcourt.

Scene 8: Facultyroom.

Scene 9: Dr. Specialist's Office.

Scene 10: Nightcourt.

DISCOGRAPHY:

Complete Recording featuring Patti Lupone as Moll - JAY - CDJAY2 1300