



## Homely Girl, A Life: And Other Stories

By Arthur Miller

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### Homely Girl, A Life: And Other Stories By Arthur Miller

In his long career, Arthur Miller has charted some of the most hidden aspects of the American character, and made us recognize ourselves. With **Homely Girl, A Life**, he turns his attention to a smaller, more intimate, canvas, but one that in its deceptive delicacy still encompasses a vast range of human fears, ambitions, and desires. Janice—the eponymous homely girl—has hated her face ever since she was a child and her mother held up Ivory Snow advertisements to her, saying, "Now that is beauty." Homely she is, but also fiercely herself. Still, it is not until she falls in love with a blind musician that she feels her full nature unfold in this exquisite portrait of a woman finding a language to describe herself.

Flanked by two stories also set in Manhattan, "Fame" and "Fitter's Night," **Homely Girl, A Life** pays homage to a city constantly reinventing itself—and to the classic Miller themes of work, honor, and identity.

"Chekhovian . . . deserves praising to the top of the highest skyscraper for its humanity, wit, depth" —A.N. Wilson

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The second short-fiction collection by the Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright features two novellas and a short story.

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From Library Journal

Although he is one of the most important playwrights of the 20th century, Miller's prose work remains relatively unknown. This collection of three short stories is to be published in conjunction with his 80th birthday (October 17). The stories, two of which have been published previously, explore the same basic themes that permeate his dramatic works-identity, honor, and work. In the title piece a woman whose mother rather disparagingly compared her with a model in an Ivory Soap ad ("Now that's a beauty") struggles to find herself against a backdrop of 1930s Socialist chic conformity. It is not until she meets and marries a blind musician that she begins to blossom. The two remaining stories (both written in 1966) are also gems of characterization. While prose is not what Miller will be remembered for, he exhibits in this collection an adroitness with the medium. Publicity surrounding his birthday should generate renewed interest in his corpus, making purchase of this collection a good choice for public libraries, as well as academic libraries wanting to offer comprehensive coverage of Miller's life's work.

*David W. Henderson, Eckerd Coll. Lib., St. Petersburg, Fla.*

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From Scientific American

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#### **Teresa Burns:**

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