



**RADIUM
GIRLS**
BY D.W. GREGORY

COUNT BASIE CENTER
ACADEMY OF THE
ARTS

AUDITION PACKET

We are so excited you have signed up to audition for Radium Girls. We cannot wait to see you do what you love in your video audition! This document will give you all of the details you will need to succeed in your upcoming audition! Please submit your audition videos through the google form on the website.

WHAT TO EXPECT ...

The performance of Radium Girls is currently planned to be LIVE on the Vogel stage on February 22nd, 2021. However, we have decided to accept video submissions for the initial round of auditions to make the process easier during this time of year. Each actor will need to prepare TWO monologues from the audition packet. The monologues need to be filmed and uploaded to the google audition form. You will be notified via email if you are needed for callbacks, which will be held via Zoom.

WHAT TO WEAR ...

We want you to feel as comfortable, yet professional, as possible during your audition. Dress like it is picture day at your school to truly put your best foot forward!

HOW TO PREPARE ...

1. Read through all possible audition monologue options, and decide which TWO monologues you connect to most.
2. Once you have chosen your TWO monologues, look at the character descriptions provided to learn more about the characters you have selected. Then, work to memorize your monologues.
3. Once you have memorized your monologues, you will need to film each video SEPARATELY.
4. Before you begin your monologue, we ask that you slate before each performance. For example, "Hi, my name is _____, and I will be performing Flinn's monologue on page 51."
5. After you have filmed each monologue separately, you will upload the audition videos to this audition form.
6. Audition forms and videos are due by FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18th at 5:00 pm

IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER ...

Auditions are always our favorite! The audition team is excited to see your talent and we want you to have fun and be fearless in your audition videos! Don't be nervous, enjoy it, and have a great time! We look forward to seeing your videos! Break-a-leg!



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Radium Girls Character List

ROEDER (M): Pronounced = REED-er.

MONOLOGUE OPTIONS P. 15; P. 50; P. 110

Becomes president of the U.S. Radium Corp. It is when he takes over the company that the switch from dial painting to more medical pursuits is made. He is a husband and a Father, and a good man, believing that what he is doing is the right thing and the greatness of the American Dream.

SOCIETY WOMAN (F)

MONOLOGUE OPTION P.17

Exemplary of a proper lady, Society Woman leads official ceremonies and hosts the crème de la crème of a good society.

KATHRYN SCHAUB (F)

MONOLOGUE OPTIONS P. 23; P. 41

A friend of Grace, she is the dreamiest and most romantic of the three girls, always filled with ideas of love. Kathryn is the first to sense the danger they're all in and becomes truly afraid. As her own illness progresses, she becomes more cynical, believing that people will do and say anything, except what's right.

VON SOCHOCKY(M): Pronounced = VON Sa-SHOCK-y.

MONOLOGUE OPTION P. 24

The founder of the U.S. Radium Corp., and the inventor of the luminous paint. When the girls become ill, he is burdened with guilt, so he offers to testify for them. He gets sick from the radiation; with the girls, it was in their jaws, for him, it's in his hands. He seems to be the most sincere male character of the show.

FLINN (M)

MONOLOGUE OPTION P. 51

An industrial hygienist from Columbia University. Scientists see understanding, regardless of where their findings may lead them... right? Like anything, science can be corrupted by money. Flinn is a paid consultant who provides credible testimony that U.S. Radium is not responsible for the illness and deaths of its employees.

SOB SISTER (F)

MONOLOGUE OPTION P. 68

A tabloid reporter. She follows the story of the "Radium Girls" and gives them publicity, though the presentation of her stories tends to be a little more scandalous and outrageous. An increasingly strong voice of protest against a clearly harmful entity to the public.

GRACE FRYER (F)

MONOLOGUE OPTION P. 97

A deeply sincere woman, she is always concerned with doing what's right. At the start of the play, she believes in the great goodness of science, but through the course of the play, she faces the trials of questioning what goodness is as she suffers through her illness inflicted by the radium paint she worked with.



Act I

RADIUM GIRLS

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START ROEDER. Well. (*A moment as he regards them.*) Girls. This paint you've been playing with. It's very expensive. You realize this? (*Mumbled acknowledgment.*) It takes several tons of ore to produce a single gram of radium. That's a lot of work—hard work, for the men in the extraction plant. But they do this work gladly. You understand why? Why they work so hard? What we are all working for?

~~GRACE. The war?~~

ROEDER. That's right. The war. The dials you paint save lives, girls. Our boys in the field depend on them. To read them in the dark, no mistaking what they see. Otherwise...some of those boys won't be coming home. So, girls. If you play around and don't take the work seriously...well, you're playing into the hands of the Kaiser. And we don't want that, do we? **END**

GIRLS. No sir... Oh, no! Etc.

ROEDER. So let's get back to work now and leave the tomfoolery to home. (*The GIRLS file away, but GRACE lingers.*)

GRACE. Mr. Roeder? I just—I just wanted to say. I—I am sorry. I won't do nothin' like this ever again.

ROEDER. Well, dear. Just keep this in mind: If you do right by us, we'll do right by you.

(*A tableau, then:*)

SCENE 2

(*Enter SOB SISTER and REPORTER as GRACE and ROEDER break.*)



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Act I

RADIUM GIRLS

17

(MADAME CURIE steps up to the podium with VON SOCHOCKY and SOCIETYWOMAN. This is Cora Middleton, a well-heeled, well-spoken woman of dignity. She takes a great interest in science—and any other issue likely to place her at the center of excitement.)

START SOCIETYWOMAN. Welcome all, welcome all! I must ask you, ladies and gentlemen of the press, please limit your questions! Madame Curie is about to embark on an exhaustive tour of the country. And she is under strict doctor's orders to rest—although, in the typical fashion of a scientist who can think only of her research, her life's work—she has refused to rest! *(Approval from the CROWD.)*

SOCIETYWOMAN. No more questions! Madame Curie is on a tight schedule! Mrs. Andrew Carnegie has sent a car—and will escort Dr. Curie personally—as will I—to Washington—where President Harding will present the gift—of one gram of radium! *(Cheers and excitement as MADAME CURIE and CROWD exits leaving ROEDER and LEE.)* **END**



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Act I

RADIUM GIRLS

23

START KATHRYN. So what? He was in love with her, that's so what. Don't you think so, Grace?

~~GRACE. Well I guess he had to be. If he did that.~~

KATHRYN. And can you imagine? Can you imagine? If he loved her and he never told her, never could bring himself to say! Because...because she was *so* beautiful...and...and he was *so* shy. And now it's too late. It's too late, their love is forever thwarted. He didn't tell her, and he'll never get a chance ever again. *(They reflect on this realization somberly.)* **END**

GRACE. Poor Amelia.

KATHRYN. Poor Amelia!

IRENE. Poor kid.

KATHRYN. Her family took it awful bad, Grace. Albina, Quinta, everybody. Everyone of 'em cryin'. Even her father, cryin' so bad. I never saw a man cry before and not like that—just bawlin' like a baby.

IRENE. And y'know why, too.

GRACE. 'Cause their daughter had died.

IRENE. What she died *from*.

KATHRYN. Irene. Don't go spreadin' stories.

IRENE. It's not a story. Albina told us. No reason Grace shouldn't know.

GRACE. Know what? Know what? *(KATHRYN whispers something awful.)* Amelia?

KATHRYN. Ain't it awful? Albina said her father's fit to be tied, too—six girls at home and ain't none of 'em ever goin' to a dance again.

IRENE. All because Amelia upped and died from *sypphilis*!

GRACE. Sh!

IRENE. I can't help it if that's what she died from!

GRACE. You don't know that for sure.



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- VON SOCHOCKY *(cutting him off)*. ...to make with
goodbye. And Mr. Roeder has kindly consented. *(He* **START**
pauses, looking for the words.) Some of you I have
known since you were little girls. Coming here during
the war. Working so hard! Day after day at the bench,
two hundred, three hundred, some of you, five hundred
dials a day! So excited to be part of our work here.
When this company I start, in my own kitchen, mixing
up the paint, I knew I found something miraculous, to
make life better...easier... And now...what do I read?...
(He taps the red book thoughtfully.) ...more and more
uses are there for the radium... More than I dreamed
possible. *(He stops. MRS. MACNEIL dabs her eyes with*
a kerchief.) **END**



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START KATHRYN. I wanna file another complaint.

~~GRACE. I just don't see what good this is gonna do,
Kathryn. To make such a fuss this way.~~

KATHRYN. Grace. Three surgeries and they wanted to cut her again. She finally said no. She knew. What was left of her jaw rotted so bad, the smell was terrible. And, Grace. The worst of it is. I couldn't look at her. Irene was so afraid of being alone—but I left her alone. When she died it was the middle of the night, and nobody was with her. **END**



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Act I

START ROEDER. Scientists! Government men! They have no idea what it takes to run a business. Von Sochocky thought advertising was a dirty word. He laughed at the very idea of promotion. I can't tell you how many times I walked into that man's office and he turned a deaf ear to everything I told him. But, Charlie, we showed him. We showed him! Look at us. We are the world's largest single supplier of radium. The largest in the world. You know what it took for us to get here! Do you think I am going to stand idly by and let our good name be dragged through the mud? *(He holds out the paper to LEE.)* Trust me, Charlie. **END**

(LEE takes the page and leaves. Shaken, ROEDER takes a moment to compose himself as crossfade to:)



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START FLINN. Miss Fryer! Don't tell me you pay any attention to the papers! Those stories are not scientific!

~~GRACE. But~~

FLINN. Reporters are not scientific. They do not follow scientific methods. They write to sell, not to educate. The scientist is not concerned with what sells. He is concerned with the truth. He undertakes years of painstaking study to arrive at an understanding of intricate natural processes that most people could never presume to comprehend! You would do well to listen to science and ignore the nonsense that is printed in the newspapers. Because I can tell you right now—radium has nothing to do with what's ailing you. **END**



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START SOB SISTER. He's right, ya know! Why give your story away when people are crazy to read it? Believe me, you girls could cash in big. The day we ran the feature on you—BANG! Sold out of every copy at every newsstand. Everybody can sympathize with the plight of some poor sick girl facing certain death—with no hope of fulfilment in motherhood. *(Her words are like a slap across the face.)*

SOB SISTER. Sure. Think it over. I understand—you're worried about what people will say. But hey—you gotta think about your own interests here. There's no reason you shouldn't get something out of all of this. Look out for number one, that's the way. Everyone else is out to get what they can. For sure. Why should ya sit back and keep your nose clean when everyone else is up to their elbows in it? **END**



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Act II

RADIUM GIRLS

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MARKLEY. Miss Fryer. This is a very generous offer, under the circumstances. I would advise you to take it. Because it won't be on the table very long.

MRS. FRYER. What do you mean?

MARKLEY. If Miss Fryer does not sign within twenty-four hours, we will be forced to withdraw our offer. Permanently.

MRS. FRYER. Grace.

GRACE. He's lying.

MARKLEY. I beg your pardon, miss!

START GRACE. You're trying to tell me if I don't sign these now—but I came back a week from now and said I changed my mind, you'd still rather go to court? You'd still rather some judge get a look at me...and take your chances I won't win on sympathy alone? Twenty-four hours. You're just trying to bully me.

~~MARKLEY. Very well, then. Miss Fryer. I'll take that for a no. And we'll see you in court. (MARKLEY packs up his briefcase and exits as MRS. FRYER sees him out.)~~

GRACE. Yes you will! You will see me. If they have to carry me in there, you'll see me. You and Mr. Roeder both!

~~MRS. FRYER. You call that man back.~~

~~GRACE. I'm goin' to court, Ma.~~

~~MRS. FRYER. What are you trying to prove? You know you can't win!~~

GRACE. I want those people to look at me! I want them to look at me and explain how it's my fault I got sick working in their factory!

~~MRS. FRYER. And what will that get ya? What?~~

GRACE. Ma. All my life, I've done what other people told me to do. I quit school. Because you said I should. I put



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Act II

that brush in my mouth 'cause Mrs. McNeil said I should. I never said, please can't I finish school? I never said, I don't like the taste of this paint. I never argued. Even though I knew—Ma. I knew somethin' wasn't right. At night, I'd lie in bed, and I'd see my dress. Hanging on the back of the closet door. All aglow. My shoes on the floor. My hairbrush. And comb. On the dresser. So much light, Ma. So much light! And I never once questioned. I never once asked! Don't you see? They knew I wouldn't. *That's* what they were counting on. **END**

(Cross to:)



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Act II

HARRIET (*lights a cigarette*). So what did you say?

ROEDER. I couldn't bring myself to speak.

GRACE. It's as if he's *afraid* to look at me. (*She looks back at him, finding strength in that discovery.*)

ROEDER. I had my chance and I couldn't speak.

GRACE. He's afraid of *me*.

HARRIET. Oh, Papa. That was years ago. Why don't you just forget about it? It's not like it was your fault. Nobody knew about things like that, then—science just wasn't as advanced, the way it is now. (*She takes a drag on the cigarette. As ROEDER speaks, lights fade on HARRIET, leaving ROEDER and GRACE alone.*)

START ROEDER. I think back on those days—and I try to think—how could it have happened? I remember so clearly climbing the stairs to the studio at Alden Street. At the top of the stairs, those wide, high windows, and the slant of light, the way it hit the floor, the way the floor creaked under my feet—the smell of the place, chalky, like an old schoolroom, and all those girls—schoolgirls, really—all bent to the task, in their plain green smocks, their delicate little hands moving so quickly. No man could work the way those girls did. So careful. So fast. Those brushes flying from the dials to the paint to the dials—to their lips. (*Beat.*) Try as I might, Harriet, try as I might—I cannot remember their faces. (*The irony strikes him.*) I never saw their faces. **END**

(Fade to black.)

END OF PLAY