

Radium Girls

Audition material

AUDITION MATERIALS Please pick ONE of the sides below. It is not required to have your side memorized but it is encouraged.

ROEDER (M): Pronounced = REED-er

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

THE WOMEN IN THE FACTORY

SIDE 1 You're just trying to bully me. You will see me. If they have to carry me in there, you'll see me. You and Mr. Roeder both! 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! Ma, all my life, I've done what other people told me to do. I quit school. Because you said I should. I put 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 something 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. My comb. On the dresser. So much light, Ma! So much light. And I never once questioned. I never once asked. Don't you see, Ma? They knew I wouldn't. That's what they were counting on.

SIDE 2 So what? He was in love with her, that's so what. Don't you think so, Grace? 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...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.

SIDE 3 I wanna file another complaint. 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.

THE COMPANY MEN

SIDE 4 Well. (A moment as he regards them) Girls. This paint you've been playing with. It's very expensive. You realize this? 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. By they do this work gladly. You understand why? Why they work so hard? What we are all working for? 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?

SIDE 5 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 we showed him. We showed him! Look at us. We are the world's largest singular 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?

SIDE 6 Miss Fryer! Don't tell me you pay any attention to the papers! Those stories are not scientific. 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.

FAMILY / FRIENDS / ADVOCATES

SIDE 7 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 say their faces.

SIDE 8 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 every copy at every newsstand. Everybody can sympathize with the plight of some poor sick girl facing certain death - with no hope of fulfillment in motherhood. (Beat) 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 non 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?