

# RADIUM GIRLS

Audition Monologues - Choose ONE to perform

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## WOMEN'S MONOLOGUES

### GRACE FRYER

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 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.

### KATHRYN SCHAUB

That's how it started with Irene. Just a toothache. You wait, Grace. You wait. You'll wake up one morning, your gums hurting so bad you won't be able to open your mouth. So weak and sick ya won't be able to stand up. The pain so bad you won't be able to sleep. And your face so swollen you won't be able to stand the sight of yourself... Three surgeries, Grace, and they wanted to cut her again. She finally said no. She knew. What was left of her jaw rotted so bad... and the worst of it is, I couldn't look at her. Irene was so afraid of being alone- but I left her alone. She died in the middle of the night, and nobody was with her.

### KATHRINE WILEY

Miss Fryer, if you would be willing to put aside your own need- just for the moment, we can put a stop to that company. We can stop them dead in their tracks. This company has already shown it is willing to go to extremes to protect itself. No, I'm afraid the only way we'll get to them is to hit them where it matters most. Their public image. When every newspaper in America tells your story, how you were sorely treated. How you suffered. How the company denied all responsibility! Believe me, Miss Fryer, when that happens, Arthur Roeder will come to the table with his hat in his hands.

### SOB SISTER

Evenin' girls! How about a picture? We need some pictures for the Graphic's exclusive on the girls. We are willing to give you five thousand dollars, whadda ya say, Grace? That sound good to you? Think you could use five thousand dollars? Perhaps you're familiar with Benarr McFadden, the herbalist? His patented herbal therapy is just the thing to get the girls back on their feet! And the Graphic will pay for it! All we ask is the exclusive rights to their story from here on out. Of course, we'll have to get our money's worth- a regular series of features with pictures following the course of your treatment, your illness, recovery- or otherwise- depending on how it goes.

### **MRS. ROEDER**

Mrs. Mitchell from across the street. She walked right past me this morning, didn't say a word to me. I know she saw me. And the woman at the market. And the green grocer... the way they glanced at each other... and at the club, Mrs. Middleton and the other ladies. The whispers... at the club today, someone actually had the nerve to say to me: is it true? Is it true, she said? Did your husband poison those women? I said: "Mrs. Cowles. If you think it's true, then why would you speak to me at all?"

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## **MEN'S MONOLOGUES**

### **ARTHUR 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.

### **FLINN**

Reporters are not scientific. They do not follow scientific methods. They write to sell, not 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... raw meat. That will help with the anemia. Cook it if you must, but eat it twice a week. That will help you.

### **DOCTOR KNEF**

This was an expensive case to treat and I never did get no compensation. The girl died. Her family never paid... so here it is straight- There's going to be a lot more girls coming out and saying they got sick here. So maybe we can do business. I scratch your back, you scratch mine, that sort of thing. I'd examine them for radium necrosis, and then I would come up with a favorable diagnosis for you- pyorrhea, say, or something else. Quite a few cases will just die a natural death anyway- and the rest we can put off for a while until the statute of limitations kicks in and it's too late to sue.

### **RAYMOND BERRY**

Three months! Three months to study an x-ray. It's outrageous! And the girls! Did you see the girls? Their eyes were like saucers, looking at me. Terrified. How are they going to hold out three more months? Kathryn Schaub could barely make it into the courtroom today! And Grace. She was trying so hard not to cry. And of course, I had all the answers. "Go home, girls, get some rest." That's the best I can do. "Get some rest". I don't understand these people. How can they play this kind of game? With those poor girls sitting right there!