

IRRADIATED

ACT ONE

INT. COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM - DAY

News reporters, bystanders, and several FRAIL WOMEN fill the room. Judge GEORGE MARVEL, 67, average build, peers down the bench.

Lawyer LEONARD GROSSMAN, 47, florid, presses his hand over his heart.

Grossman and Marvel turn their heads to the witness stand, where CATHERINE DONAHUE, 35, emaciated, sways.

GROSSMAN

Can you please share with the court  
the exhibit you brought as evidence  
of your own sufferings?

ARTHUR MAGID, 40s, slender, shoots to his feet.

MAGID

Objection!

MARVEL

I'll allow it.

Magid sinks down. Marvel looks down at Catherine.

MARVEL (CONT'D)

Go ahead, Mrs. Donahue.

Catherine nods. She reaches into her lap and picks up a pill box. Everyone in the court leans forward.

Her hands shake as she opens the box. She stares inside for a moment. She reaches in and pulls out two small white objects. She flattens her hand.

CATHERINE

These are pieces of me. My jawbone.  
They fell out into my mouth.

The court erupts into noise. Tears gather in Catherine's eyes as she meets the gaze of TOM DONAHUE, 43, slim, who wipes his brow. His lips quiver.

Catherine turns her head once more and meets the gaze of CHARLOTTE PURCELL, 32, slender, who tightens her hand around AL PURCELL, 29, burly, who squeezes her shoulder.

Charlotte's other sleeve reveals a missing arm, shirt sleeve pinned at her shoulder. Charlotte lowers her hand and rubs at the empty socket.

Catherine looks down at the pieces of her jaw. They begin to glow.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "IRRADIATED"

INSERT TITLE CARD: "Ottawa, Illinois, 1923"

EXT. MAIN STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

A large wide avenue lined with stores. Women laugh and point at several large posters. Various adverts display products made with radium.

The posters read: "Liquid Sunshine Here!", "Radium Toothpaste: Brighter Smile Guaranteed", "The Radium Eclipse Sprayer - Quickly Kills Mosquitos, Flies, & Roaches".

One elderly woman mutters to herself as she stares at another set of posters. They read: "Make Old Men Feel Young Again", "Get Your Radium-Lined Jar: Make Every Drink Radioactive!".

One woman steps to another window and fans her face. She points. The posters read: "Radium Jockstraps Sold Here", "Radium Lingerie to Make Your Marriage Shine", and "Radium Cosmetics - Make Your Beauty Glow."

Nearby, PEG LOONEY, 15, rushes down the side walk. She glances at a poster on the door of a grocery store. It reads: "Radium Milk and Butter Sold Here!".

Peg smiles and runs around the corner.

EXT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - FRONT LAWN - DAY

Peg faces a large school building. A sign over it reads: "RADIUM DIAL COMPANY".

EXT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - ENTRANCE - DAY

Peg approaches the door. She notices a sign.

PEG  
(reads)  
Dial-painters needed for luminous  
watches.

Peg squares her shoulders and marches inside.

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - ENTRANCE - DAY

Peg hesitates. She squints. MR. REED, 30s, walks towards her.

REED

Good morning, young lady. I'm Mr. Reed, the boss here. Can I help you?

PEG

I'm here to interview for a dial painting position.

He beams.

REED

Right this way.

He gestures down the hall.

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - REED'S OFFICE - DAY

Mr. Reed sits behind his desk. He pulls out a paper.

REED

Right, then. Your name and age.

PEG

Margaret Looney. But I go by Peg. I'm 17.

Mr. Reed scribbles on the paper then looks up.

REED

Right. For this job, speed is essential, as you're paid per dial you paint. You'll be responsible for mixing your own supplies and cleaning up your station.

PEG

That sounds very nice, Mr. Reed.

REED

Excellent. Come with me.

They both stand.

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - WORKROOM - DAY

Mr. Reed and Peg enter a large sunny room filled with tables. Teenage girls of various ages sit at stations. They bend over small trays.

Mr. Reed approaches a table with a single occupant.

REED

Miss Looney, Miss Wolfe will show you how it's done. I will get your materials.

Mr. Reed turns away. CATHERINE, 16, looks up and smiles. She holds out her hand. Peg takes it.

CATHERINE

Hi. My name is Catherine.

PEG

I'm Peg.

Peg sits next to Catherine. Catherine pushes a tray closer.

CATHERINE

This is radium powder. You pour it into this dish and add just a dash of water and some of this gum.

Catherine mixes the elements.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

See how it's greenish-white? That's how you know you got the color right.

PEG

What's that color called?

CATHERINE

Undark.

PEG

Hah. No surprise there.

Catherine picks up a dial.

CATHERINE

Now, you see the numbers on here? We have to paint over them. Like this.

Catherine picks up a brush.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)  
Dip. Lip. Paint.

Catherine dips the brush, then points the end with her lips. She paints over a number "1" on the dial.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)  
And that's it.

PEG  
Why, that's not so bad.

Mr. Reed arrives. He presents a board and tools for Peg.

REED  
All right, Miss Looney. These are yours. Get started.

Peg mixes paint. She picks up a brush. She dips it and lifts it to her lips. She pauses.

REED (CONT'D)  
It's perfectly safe.

CATHERINE  
That's right. I'm in the best health of my life.

Peg points the brush in her mouth. Mr. Reed smiles and leaves.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1938"

INT. COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM - DAY

Judge Marvel settles his robe. He looks around the room.

MARVEL  
Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. We are calling the case of Catherine Donahue vs. Radium Dial Company. Are both sides ready?

GROSSMAN  
Ready for Catherine Donahue, Your Honor.

MAGID  
Ready for defense, Your Honor.

Marvel nods.

MARVEL

You may begin with your opening statement.

Grossman squares his shoulders and inhales.

GROSSMAN

We do not belong to that resigned class of victims who stretch forth unsuspecting throats to the sharpened sword of even so distinguished an adversary as the law firms of record for respondent in this case...

Catherine crosses herself. Tom follows suit.

GROSSMAN (CONT'D)

Under the intrepid Illinois Industrial Commission, larger and larger grows the brightening rainbow of our hopes for the right against the wrong, and the weak against the strong.

Grossman turns and stares at Catherine. She attempts to straighten her spine.

GROSSMAN (CONT'D)

Human lives were saved among our country's army of defense, because Catherine Donahue painted luminous dials on instruments for our forces.

Grossman sweeps his hand across the women sitting in the audience.

GROSSMAN (CONT'D)

To make life safe, she and her coworkers are among the living dead. They have sacrificed their own lives. Truly an unsung heroine, our state and country owe her a debt.

Grossman returns to his table and shuffles papers. He places them down.

MARVEL

Prosecution may begin.

Grossman looks across the table.

GROSSMAN

I'd like to call Catherine Donahue  
to the witness stand.

Catherine pushes herself up. She wavers. Tom places his arms  
around her waist and helps her cross to the witness stand.  
The room remains silent. Catherine wheezes.

Tom helps Catherine up the steps. He places her on the seat  
and withdraws. Catherine draws a shaky breath.

The BAILIFF sidles up to Catherine and presents a Bible.

BAILIFF

Will you please raise your right  
hand?

Catherine places one hand on the Bible and the other rises  
partway in the air. Her arm trembles.

BAILIFF (CONT'D)

Do you swear to tell the whole  
truth and nothing but the truth, so  
help you, God?

CATHERINE

I do.

The Bailiff withdraws. Catherine crosses herself. She  
clutches her rosary. Grossman rises and approaches the  
witness stand.

GROSSMAN

Mrs. Donahue, it's easy to see that  
you are in no physical shape to be  
in this courthouse, yet you are.

CATHERINE

I feel... it is... my duty... for  
my family. For the other women.

GROSSMAN

Can you tell us what kind of work  
you did for Radium Dial Company?

CATHERINE

I was a dial painter. I mixed a  
radium powder with water and used  
that to paint dials.

GROSSMAN

What kind of powder?



CATHERINE

It was what the company provided.  
They told us to be careful with it,  
but the dust was always everywhere.

GROSSMAN

Everywhere?

CATHERINE

The table, our tools, our hair, our  
clothes. Everything.

GROSSMAN

Did this ever alarm you?

CATHERINE

The company assured us we were  
safe, so it did not.

GROSSMAN

So. Radium dust. Everywhere.

Catherine nods and clutches her fists together.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1923"

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - WORKROOM - DAY

Catherine, Peg, and Charlotte, 18, giggle. MARIE BECKER, 17,  
athletic, and PEARL PAYNE, 23, curvy, whisper along with  
several other girls.

Everyone dips their fingers into a container labeled "Radium  
powder."

PEG

Try this.

Peg spreads dust on her eyes and cheeks. Laughing, Charlotte  
and Catherine follow suit. They run their hands through their  
hair. Dust flies everywhere.

PEARL

Are you certain we should be doing  
this?

MARIE

Aww, the bosses don't mind. You  
shouldn't worry so much.

PEARL

I think someone around here has to.

CATHERINE

Oh Pearl. You're only a few years older. Surely your husband doesn't mind you having a little fun?

PEARL

He's quite fun himself, you know.

Peg leans forward and draws a mustache on Pearl.

PEARL (CONT'D)

What--

PEG

And so are you. Now. Are we ready girls?

CHARLOTTE

I'd say about time!

PEG

Then on we go.

They link arms and skip out. Catherine and Marie follow. Pearl stops and wipes her face.

EXT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - FRONT LAWN - DAY

A large swatch of green next to a stream. Several blankets cover the ground. A table sits to one side set with food, plates, and drinks.

Peg, Catherine, Charlotte, and Marie cross the grass. Mr. Reed waves.

CHARLOTTE

Isn't it great that the factory lets us have picnics?

PEG

Do they do this often?

CATHERINE

Company is good to us. Good to the whole town. Now come on. Let's eat.

MARIE

I think Pearl stayed upstairs. She worries too much.

CATHERINE

Should we get her?

MARIE

I'll go. Be right back.

PEG

We'll save you a seat.

Marie turns. Peg, Charlotte, and Catherine hurry to the table.

On the other side of the lawn, Mr. Reed sits next to MR. KELLY, 40s, slender, and MR. FORDYCE, 40s, stout. Mr. Kelly closes a paper and shakes his head.

KELLY

It's not right, what they're doing over in Jersey.

FORDYCE

Just because it's in the papers doesn't mean anything for us.

KELLY

What about you, Mr. Reed? Do you think this will be a problem?

REED

They're good Catholic girls. They respect their elders and obey what they're taught. It'll be fine.

FORDYCE

We're counting on you to make sure of it. Now, one other thing.

REED

Yes?

FORDYCE

Let's get a few posters made and post them around town. Be good to remind people how much we do.

KELLY

A little nod to our contribution to the many families we help support.

REED

Perhaps a picnic scene, much like this one?

KELLY

Exactly. We'll get them all together and take a picture.

FORDYCE

Let them eat first. Enjoy  
themselves. Might as well. We paid  
for it.

The men settle back. Mr. Kelly rolls up the paper and stuffs  
it out of sight. Mr. Reed smiles.

At the tables, Catherine sits between Peg and Charlotte. She  
looks across the lawn.

CATHERINE

What do you suppose they're talking  
about? They look worried.

Charlotte shrugs.

CHARLOTTE

I haven't the faintest idea.

Peg grabs Charlotte's head and twists it.

PEG

Why pay attention to those old  
coots when you can enjoy this view  
instead?

They stare as several men exit Radium Dial Company and cross  
the lawn. Peg grins and waves. CHUCK HACKENSMITH, 20, smiles  
back.

CATHERINE

And who might that be?

PEG

That's Chuck. Visiting from  
college. I think I'll just pop over  
and say hi.

Peg puts her plate down and hurries off. Catherine turns to  
Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE

Some of the girls mentioned going  
dancing later. Should we?

CATHERINE

We are rather dressed for it. Why  
not?

Catherine smiles and pats her head. Dust flies everywhere.

EXT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - FRONT LAWN - NIGHT

The sun begins to set.

PEG

Look! It's started.

She stands and whirls.

CATHERINE

And you want to show off?

PEG

Why not? Everyone wants to be us.

CHARLOTTE

That's hardly fair.

PEG

We work hard for it, don't we?

Peg and Catherine grin. They jump to their feet and whirl. The sky grows darker. Their hair and clothes glow.

EXT. MAIN STREET - SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Catherine and Charlotte stroll down the sidewalk. Ahead of them, Peg and Chuck hurry.

CATHERINE

Why are you going so fast?

Peg looks over her shoulder.

PEG

I don't want to miss my favorite dance.

Peg and Chuck turn a corner.

CHARLOTTE

Those two. Mark my words, she's going to get married soon.

CATHERINE

Lots of girls are, you know. It's hard not to be noticed. Like this, I mean.

She lifts her arms. Her skin glows with swirling designs.

CHARLOTTE

I suppose you're right. You have your eye on anyone special?

Catherine ducks her head.

CATHERINE

No. You?

CHARLOTTE

Not yet. But the night is young.

They laugh.

INT. DANCE HALL - DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

A narrow, dimly-lit room with a small bar in one corner. Stools dot the walls. On the opposite end, a band plays in front of a small dance floor.

Catherine and Charlotte enter. A few girls wave at them across the room. They wave back.

CHARLOTTE

Shall we?

CATHERINE

There's a lot of people here, aren't there?

CHARLOTTE

That's what's supposed to happen.

The music changes to the "Charleston". Charlotte grabs Catherine's hand.

CATHERINE

I don't think I'm ready.

CHARLOTTE

Come on. It'll be good for you.

Catherine shakes her head and follows Charlotte onto the dance floor. Peg waves at them. She turns to Chuck. They grin and dance.

Charlotte and Catherine laugh and dance. Charlotte turns her head and sees ALBERT PURCELL, 20. He stares at Charlotte. Charlotte turns away and smiles.

INT. DANCE HALL - BAR - NIGHT

Catherine and Charlotte lean against the counter. They gasp.

CATHERINE

Not used... to so much... vigorous  
movement.

CHARLOTTE

Too much... sitting... painting.

The bartender sets glasses of water in front of them. They grab them. Peg and Chuck arrive.

PEG

You two look tired already.

CATHERINE

It has been a long day.

PEG

But we only just got here.

CATHERINE

I'm not leaving yet.

Peg squeals and leans over the bar.

PEG

Can I get some pop?

The bartender nods. Peg turns to Chuck.

PEG (CONT'D)

Same?

CHUCK

That sounds good.

Peg turns. Charlotte leans in to Catherine. She whispers.

CHARLOTTE

I think he'd agree to pretty much  
anything she asked.

They giggle. Al sidles up next to Charlotte. She looks up. She blushes and turns away.

Al wipes his hands on his coat. He taps Charlotte on the shoulder. She turns.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Can I help you?

AL  
What's that?

He points to her hair.

CHARLOTTE  
My hair?

AL  
Oh, I beg your pardon, ma'am. I meant, your... your glow. How'd you manage that?

CHARLOTTE  
Oh. That. It's just leftover powder from painting dials at the school.

AL  
School?

CHARLOTTE  
Well, it's a factory now. Radium Dial. We paint numbers on the watches.

AL  
That's right. How about that?

CHARLOTTE  
There's always some left and we...

She trails off and looks at Catherine.

CATHERINE  
We had a work picnic today and wanted to look extra nice.

AL  
(to Charlotte)  
That you do.

Peg turns, glass in hand.

PEG  
All the other girls in town want to work at Radium Dial. It's the best gig there is.

Peg places her glass on the counter.

PEG (CONT'D)  
Ready, Chuck?

He places his half-empty glass besides hers.



CHUCK

After you.

They leave.

CATHERINE

I suppose there's time for one more dance. You coming?

Charlotte nods.

CHARLOTTE

Be right there.

Catherine steps away. Charlotte turns to Al.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

I guess I better join my friends.

AL

You think I might be able to see you again sometime?

CHARLOTTE

I think that would be just fine.

The music swells. Charlotte strides onto the dance floor. Al grins and nods.

INT. CATHERINE'S HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Catherine enters and slides into a seat. Her outline glows in the darkened room.

AUNT WOLFE (O.S.)

Is that you, dear?

CATHERINE

Yes, Aunt. I'm in here.

AUNT WOLFE, 60s, stout, bustles through the door. She stops and jumps in fright.

AUNT WOLFE

Oh! Oh no! What is that? You're glowing.

CATHERINE

It's just my clothes. And it's fine. We dusted ourselves for the company picnic.

Aunt Wolf lights a lamp.

AUNT WOLFE

Well, it's... unseemly. There's something off about the color, as if you're wearing a ghost.

CATHERINE

It's all the rage, Auntie. All the other girls in town are dying of envy.

AUNT WOLFE

Because you glow?

CATHERINE

Because you only glow if you work at the factory.

AUNT WOLFE

Well, at least they pay you well for it. Fancy clothes and face paint, is it?

CATHERINE

All the girls--

AUNT WOLFE

Yes, yes. Well, it's the 20s. No telling what you girls will be up to next.

Catherine rises.

CATHERINE

No telling. Now, I'm heading to bed. Long day tomorrow.

She kisses Aunt Wolfe on the cheek. Aunt Wolfe hugs her back. She switches off the light and exits.

Catherine passes a mirror. She stops and turns. A glowing mustache and pointed eyebrows appear on her face.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1938"

INT. COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM - DAY

Grossman rifles through papers. Reporters scribble notes. Catherine glances at Tom. He smiles and nods.

GROSSMAN

Ah, here we have it. A sworn affidavit about your usual work day at Radium Dial Company.

(MORE)

GROSSMAN (CONT'D)

Can you give the court a basic description of what you did?

CATHERINE

Yes. I went in six days a week. Hours changed because they always needed a few extra dials painted.

GROSSMAN

And you were paid per dial?

CATHERINE

Yes.

GROSSMAN

How many would you say you painted in a day?

CATHERINE

Oh, dozens at least.

GROSSMAN

All using the radium-infused powder prescribed by the company?

MAGID

Objection.

MARVEL

Overruled. You may answer, Mrs. Donahue.

CATHERINE

Yes. We were responsible for our own supplies because we mixed our own paint.

GROSSMAN

And your boss allowed this?

CATHERINE

Mr. Reed always encouraged us to use as much paint as we needed to get the dials right.

GROSSMAN

Did your work affect you outside of the company?

CATHERINE

Oh yes. We used to use the leftover radium powder for cosmetics. We walked the streets, glowing.

GROSSMAN

Did you ever worry about the paint?

CATHERINE

No, sir. They told us it was safe. Why wouldn't we believe them? The money was good. All of the others girls in town wanted our jobs.

GROSSMAN

Because it paid well?

CATHERINE

It did. We were happy. All of us girls grew quite close.

GROSSMAN

How close?

CATHERINE

We shared our lives. We were so young. We thought it was never going to end.

Grossman nods. Magid narrows his gaze. Marvel takes notes.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1926"

EXT. COLUMBA CHURCH - FRONT STEPS - DAY

Bells peal on a bright, sunny day. A crowd waits on the corner steps in front of a red-brick archway.

Charlotte and Al emerge. She wears a white dress and veil. Catherine and Peg throw rice. Chuck claps. Everyone cheers.

INT. COLUMBA CHURCH - RECEPTION HALL - DAY

A low-ceilinged space with tables along the sides. A band plays on a small stage set in one corner.

Charlotte and Al sit at the center table. They smile as Catherine approaches.

CATHERINE

Congratulations! I'm so happy for you two.

CHARLOTTE

Thank you, darling. It's simply marvelous all around.

CATHERINE

We'll miss you at work, won't we,  
Peg?

Peg pops next to Catherine.

PEG

We sure will. But I bet you'll have  
all sorts of other things to occupy  
your time.

CHARLOTTE

Peg Looney! Besides, I'll be back.  
At least now and then to help out.

Peg giggles.

CATHERINE

We'll go grab a drink.

Catherine tugs Peg to a long table set with food and drink.  
TOM DONAHUE, 31, stands in line. He turns and meet  
Catherine's gaze.

TOM

Oh. Ladies, please go first.

CATHERINE

It's quite all right.

TOM

I insist.

Peg sticks her head forward. She glances between Tom and  
Catherine.

PEG

Tell you what. I'll go ahead. You  
two stay right here.

She giggles and skips around Tom. He steps back and gestures  
Catherine forward.

CATHERINE

Well, thank you, Mister...

TOM

Oh. It's Tom. Tom Donahue.

CATHERINE

Mr. Donahue.

TOM

You make me sound like my father.  
Please. Just Tom.

CATHERINE

Right. I'm Catherine.

TOM

Nice to meet you, then, Catherine.

CATHERINE

You a friend of Al's?

TOM

That's right. We work together.  
Same for you and Charlotte?

CATHERINE

Yes. Well, no. She's not working  
with the company anymore.

TOM

Good for her. She makes Al real  
happy.

CATHERINE

I'd say the same about him.

Peg swings around.

PEG

Chuck's giving me the signal. Time  
to dance. Come on!

CATHERINE

Right. Coming.  
(to Tom)  
Be seeing you, then.

TOM

See you.

Catherine smiles and waves. Tom smiles and waves back.

Catherine rushes after Peg. Peg whirls into Chuck. Catherine  
joins. They dance.

Peg hops back and runs to Charlotte and Al. She pulls them  
over. Everyone grins.

Tom walks to the edge of the dance floor. He stares at  
Catherine as she laughs. She catches his gaze. She waves him  
over. He chuckles and joins her.

Peg grabs Chuck and they whirl around.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1938"

INT. COURTROOM - WITNESS STAND - DAY

Grossman unrolls a chart and tacks it on a stand. He turns and faces the judge.

GROSSMAN

I'd like to bring in Exhibit A.  
Techniques for lip dipping.

MAGID

Objection!

MARVEL

Overruled. Continue.

GROSSMAN

This chart gives us a visual guide  
on how the dial-painters mixed  
their materials. Mrs. Donahue, can  
you tell us about the technique you  
were instructed to use.

CATHERINE

We had to keep the point very fine,  
you see, so the numbers wouldn't  
smudge. They told us it was okay.

Charlotte and Pearl nod their heads. Reporters nudge each other and scribble on their notepads.

GROSSMAN

Radium Dial Company told you no  
harm would come to you?

MAGID

Objection!

MARVEL

Overruled.

GROSSMAN

Did the company directly say that  
the radium paint wasn't harmful in  
any way?

CATHERINE

Yes. All the time. Radium wouldn't  
hurt us, it would keep us healthy.  
Lip. Dip. Paint.

GROSSMAN

And how often did you employ this technique?

CATHERINE

Oh, you had to several times a dial to keep the brush tip very fine.

GROSSMAN

Would you say four to five times a dial?

CATHERINE

Yes.

GROSSMAN

And you were paid by the dial?

MAGID

Objection! This is misleading.

MARVEL

I think it's very much in line with Mr. Grossman's questioning.

(to Catherine)

Answer the question.

CATHERINE

Yes. The more dials we did, the more we were paid. I painted dozens of dials in a single day.

GROSSMAN

And you worked six days a week?

CATHERINE

Yes.

GROSSMAN

For eight years?

CATHERINE

Yes.

Grossman turns to face both Marvel and the reporters.

GROSSMAN

That equals thousands of times Mrs. Donahue ingested this deadly substance--

MAGID

Objection! Judge--



GROSSMAN  
All in the name of profit!

MARVEL  
Overruled.

GROSSMAN  
You worked nonstop for Radium Dial,  
sacrificing your health so that the  
company could make more money off  
of your work. Is this true?

Magid sits down. Grossman and Marvel turn and look at  
Catherine.

CATHERINE  
Yes.

Murmurs erupt. Catherine sways.

GROSSMAN  
Was there ever any time you felt  
that the substance you ingested  
might be dangerous?

CATHERINE  
Why, yes. When the papers talked  
about the girls in that other  
plant. The one in Jersey.

GROSSMAN  
What did you do?

CATHERINE  
I tried to discover what was true.

Grossman nods. Catherine exchanges glances with Charlotte and  
Pearl. Charlotte taps her jaw.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)  
But the company wasn't having it.

Catherine shifts her gaze to Tom. He nods. Catherine coughs.  
Grossman turns and hands her a handkerchief. She takes it.  
Catherine pulls the handkerchief away. Blood spots it.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1928"

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - WORKROOM - DAY

Catherine, Charlotte, and Peg huddle together on one side of  
the work room. Catherine holds a newspaper. The headline  
reads: "More Deaths Raise Radium Paint Toll to 17!"

Charlotte flips over another paper.

CHARLOTTE

(reads)

A Startling Jump in the Toll of  
Radium-Poison Victims.

PEG

It's real, isn't it? Ella Cruse  
just died last summer.

CATHERINE

And Mary Robinson and Inez Vallat  
are both sick.

PEG

What's yours say?

Catherine opens the paper and flattens it.

CATHERINE

(reads)

The first manifestation of radium  
poisoning due to use of lip-  
painting is gum and tooth decay.

Peg rubs her hand along her jaw. She swallows and pales.

CHARLOTTE

No, Peg. You had your tooth pulled  
is all.

PEG

But it ain't healed. Just thinking  
about it makes me sick to my  
stomach.

Mr. Reed enters. He stops and stares.

REED

Come now. Why aren't any of you  
working?

All of the women turn and stare back. Peg rises.

PEG

We can't touch that paint. No sir.

REED

What in the world has gotten in to  
you?

Charlotte rises.

CHARLOTTE

Have you seen the papers, Mr. Reed?

She holds out the newspaper. Reed stalks forward and grabs it. His eyes widen. He lifts his head and crumples it.

REED

Radium Dial takes the health of its workers seriously.

CATHERINE

How do we know that?

REED

While there are no signs of illness from anyone here, the company plans to call in medical experts to examine each of you.

PEG

We're not working again until we know we're okay.

The other girls nod and mutter. Reed looks around, groans, and turns. He marches out.

Charlotte and Peg sink down. Marie jumps up and joins them.

MARIE

Did you hear what he said? No signs of illness, as if he didn't know how many of the girls have been sick.

PEG

Or had teeth problems. It ain't right.

CATHERINE

No, it's not. But I'm sure the company will get to the bottom of it.

MARIE

Pearl had it right, leaving when she did.

PEG

Come on. Let's get out of here.

Peg stands. Catherine, Charlotte, and Marie rise.

EXT. MAIN STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

Catherine strolls down the avenue. She glances to one side. She stops.

A large poster hangs from inside a window. It shows a photo of Catherine, Peg, Charlotte, and the other girls at the picnic.

It reads: "Radium Dial Taking Care of Ottawa, Illinois"

Catherine frowns.

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - ENTRANCE - DAY

Catherine stares up at the door. She hesitates. She pulls out her crucifix and kisses it. She tucks it away, pats her hair, and strides through.

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - WORKROOM - DAY

Girls clump together near the hall door. Catherine enters. Marie pushes her chair in.

REED (O.S.)

You're right here, Miss Becker.

Marie joins the line. Reed strides forward.

REED (CONT'D)

Ah, Miss Wolfe.

He waves Catherine to the left.

REED (CONT'D)

You're over here.

He counts.

REED (CONT'D)

Right. Follow me.

He pivots and exits.

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - HALLWAY - DAY

A line of girls stretches against both walls. Catherine looks back and forth.

CATHERINE

Why are we in line?

Marie shrugs.

MARIE

I heard there were some doctors  
here. Maybe for that.

Catherine frowns and leans against the wall. She massages her leg.

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - EXAM ROOM - DAY

A rectangular room with a single portable medical bed.  
Catherine enters and looks around.

CATHERINE

What is this?

A NURSE and COMPANY DOCTOR enter behind her.

NURSE

Catherine Wolfe, right?

CATHERINE

Yes, ma'am.

Nurse writes a note on her chart. The Company Doctor smiles.

COMPANY DOCTOR

Nothing to be afraid of. We've got  
a special machine we brought for  
you to breathe in. It helps us find  
out if you have radioactive breath.  
Once we finish there, we're going  
to take some X-rays and some blood.

CATHERINE

But... shouldn't my doctor be here?

COMPANY DOCTOR

I'm afraid some of this is so new,  
they don't have the equipment. But  
Radium Dial cares greatly about its  
workers, so it's spending all this  
money just to make sure you're  
okay.

The Company Doctor leans forward and pats Catherine's shoulder.

COMPANY DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Awfully kind of them, isn't it?

CATHERINE

I- I suppose it is.

COMPANY DOCTOR

That's what I thought. Now you'll  
need to change before we start.  
Nurse here will get you going.

He stands and exits.

MONTAGE

-Catherine stands before a metal cylinder. She places her  
forehead against a metal stands and her mouth around a tube.  
She blows. Company Doctor takes notes.

-Catherine stands alone in an empty room. She lifts her arms.  
The lights flash off and on. On the other side of the wall,  
Nurse pulls out an X-ray frame.

-Catherine sits on the medical bed. Nurse pulls blood.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - WORKROOM - DAY

Several girls sit and whisper to each other. Catherine  
enters. She sees Marie, Peg, and Charlotte in one corner. She  
approaches.

PEG

They finish poking at you?

Catherine nods and sits.

CHARLOTTE

We were just wondering when they'll  
give us our results.

Peg rubs her jaw.

PEG

I hope it's not too long.

CHARLOTTE

I don't think I should've come back  
to work after all.

Mr. Reed enters. He surveys the room.

REED

Girls. The tests are done. It's  
time to get back to work.

PEG

Mr. Reed?

He turns and strides to their corner.

REED

Yes, Miss Looney?

PEG

Do you know when we'll receive our results? From the exam?

REED

You won't. Why, if we were to give the medical reports to you girls, there would be a riot!

MARIE

But oughtn't we know if we're sick--

REED

There's no such thing as radium poisoning. This paint is no danger to any of you.

CHARLOTTE

But the papers said--

REED

You believe everything you read, don't you? Very well. Trust me when I say you're fine. Now. Paint.

He pivots and exits. The girls exchange glances. As one, they turn and stare at their trays.

EXT. MAIN STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

Catherine strides along a busy walkway. She waves at a few people. A newspaper stand sits on the corner. She glances at it. She stops and double-takes. She approaches the vendor.

CATHERINE

One, please.

He hands her a paper. She slides him change. She turns the corner and opens it up.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

(reads)

It's time to call attention to an important fact that has as yet received only occasional mention...

Catherine's eyes widens. She turns and runs.

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - WORKROOM - DAY

Peg and Charlotte sit at a table. Catherine runs through the door. She stops and pants. Peg waves.

CATHERINE  
Have you seen this?

CHARLOTTE  
The paper. We were just talking.  
Marie told us she saw a headline.

Catherine sits and spreads the paper across the table.

CATHERINE  
Look. Radium Dial printed an entire  
page about the paint. Look right  
here.

She points. Charlotte leans forward.

CHARLOTTE  
(reads)  
All the distressing cases of so-  
called 'radium' poisoning reported  
from the east have occurred in  
establishments that have used  
luminous paint made from  
mesothorium.

PEG  
Mesothorium?

CATHERINE  
But look here.  
(reads)  
Radium Dial uses pure radium only.

PEG  
So it's... meso- whatever that hurt  
them girls in Jersey?

REED (O.S.)  
Ladies.

The three of them look up. Mr. Reed stands at the front of the room.



REED (CONT'D)

By now, you will have heard that the paint Radium Dial uses is completely safe. There was never any need to worry.

Reed smiles and opens his arms.

REED (CONT'D)

Radium will put rosy cheeks on you. It will make you girls good-looking. Which means you should all get back to your painting. Supplies are waiting. We've got orders to fill.

The girls look at each other.

CHARLOTTE

So we're okay. It's not our paint that's bad.

CATHERINE

The company swears it's safe. Why else would they put such a big ad in the paper?

Catherine and Charlotte rise.

CHARLOTTE

Guess we better get back to work. You coming?

PEG

Oh. Yes.

Catherine and Charlotte stride away. Peg rises. She rubs her jaw.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1938"

INT. COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM - DAY

Grossman stands. He adjusts his glasses.

GROSSMAN

How many doctors did you see in here in Ottawa?

CATHERINE

Oh, I don't know. Felt like all of them.

GROSSMAN

Why did you go to so many?

CATHERINE

Because no one would give me answers. They insisted it wasn't radium poisoning.

GROSSMAN

Ottawa is a decently-sized midwestern town. Surely some doctor offered you hope.

CATHERINE

They all said it was one ailment or another, or that I was suffering from my pregnancies.

GROSSMAN

Did any doctor tell you the cause of your hip pain?

CATHERINE

Yes. From Chicago. That's why I went there. Why my husband and I spent so much money to get help.

GROSSMAN

And what was it you were told?

CATHERINE

What I feared. What I hoped wasn't true.

GROSSMAN

And that is?

CATHERINE

That I was suffering from radium poisoning.

MAGID

Objection. This is hearsay.

GROSSMAN

That's fine. I have another question. Can you tell us about Margaret Looney?

Catherine's eyes tear up. She glances at Charlotte. Charlotte places her hand over her mouth. Catherine's chin hardens.

CATHERINE

The company lied. About everything.

She balls her hand into a fist. A tear slides down her face.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1929"

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - WORKROOM - DAY

Catherine stands at the window of the workroom and looks down. Peg limps to the front door.

Catherine turns to Charlotte.

CATHERINE

She's here.

CHARLOTTE

I just didn't think she'd come in.  
She felt so awful yesterday.

CATHERINE

Tired, maybe?

CHARLOTTE

I don't know. I think she looks a  
little worse every day now.

CATHERINE

Well, we'll just have to help her  
where we can until she sees reason  
and stays home.

CHARLOTTE

If she can afford to. You know how  
much her family struggles.

Catherine sighs and crosses herself.

Peg appears. Charlotte springs up. She grabs Peg's arm. Peg  
twists her mouth up. A pimple sprouts from her jaw.

PEG

Thanks, Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE

Are you all right?

PEG

Face is just a bit swollen, but  
I'll make it through.

Charlotte guides Peg to a seat next to Catherine then sits on  
the other side.

PEG (CONT'D)  
Good morning.

CATHERINE  
Hi there, Peg.

CHARLOTTE  
Are you sure you're doing okay?

PEG  
Sure. Just... feeling a little  
tired.

Peg prepares her tray. She dips her brush, then places it between her lips. She winces and stops. She rubs her jaw around the pimple.

Peg shakes her head and picks up her brush. She points it with her lips and paints. She stops and sways.

CHARLOTTE  
Peg?

PEG  
I- I need a new brush.

CATHERINE  
I'll get it.

PEG  
No, no. Let me.

Peg pushes herself up. Catherine and Charlotte stop their mixing. They turn their heads.

Peg takes a few steps. She collapses.

CHARLOTTE  
Peg!

Charlotte and Catherine rush to Peg's side. Marie and the other girls gather around.

CATHERINE  
Mr. Reed!

Mr. Reed pushes through the crowd. His gaze falls on Peg. He frowns.

REED  
Everyone, move away. Give Miss  
Looney some air.

Catherine stands and backs away.

EXT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - FRONT LAWN - DAY

Catherine, Charlotte, and Marie huddle together. The other girls watch as medics load Peg into an ambulance.

Mr. Reed turns and faces the crowd.

REED

Come on, girls. Back to work.

Mr. Reed waves the girls forward. Marie turns and heads for the door. Catherine and Charlotte remain in place.

REED (CONT'D)

You two should be heading up.

CATHERINE

Where is she going, Mr. Reed?

REED

She's quite lucky, actually. The company is paying to take her to their hospital.

CATHERINE

Does Peg's family know?

REED

They don't have much choice. They're rather poor, you know. There's no money to take her someplace else.

Mr. Reed walks away. Charlotte drops her face into her hands. Catherine frowns.

EXT. COMPANY HOSPITAL - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

A square building two stories high. Catherine and Charlotte march towards the entrance. A figure moves.

CHUCK (O.S.)

Charlotte?

CHARLOTTE

Is that Chuck?

CHUCK

Yeah, I'm here.

Catherine and Charlotte approach Chuck. They stop and glance at each other.

CATHERINE

Chuck, have you been home? Got any sleep lately?

Chuck shrugs and wipes his eyes.

CHUCK

Docs won't let me see Peg. They say it's on account of her having that pneumonia and...

CHARLOTTE

What is it?

CHUCK

Docs say she got diphtheria on account of her jaw getting all swollen and discolored.

CHARLOTTE

But hasn't her own doctor--

CHUCK

Won't let him in. Company policy. They look at me sideways, as if I had something to do with it.

Catherine sits next to Chuck.

CATHERINE

Has anyone mentioned radium poisoning?

Chuck shakes his head.

CHUCK

There's something wrong here. It's not right, them doing this. My Peg has been sick for a while.

CHARLOTTE

You've been so good to her.

CHUCK

Thanks, Charlotte. Almost time for our wedding, but I just... I can't lose her.

CHARLOTTE

I'm so sorry.

CHUCK

I think the company is trying to hide something.

CATHERINE

Why don't we go inside and speak to her parents? We'll be right back.

CHUCK

Naw. Better go see for myself, right?

Chuck rises. He pulls open the door and steps aside. Charlotte and Catherine enter.

INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - DAY

A small, sterile space with a single row of chairs around the walls. MRS. LOONEY, 40s, spare, and MR. LOONEY, 40s, wiry, huddle together. JACK WHITE, 20s, muscular, paces.

Chuck, Catherine, and Charlotte enter. Jack waves.

CHUCK

You remember Peg's brother-in-law, right?

JACK

Hi. Everyone else went to grab some lunch real quick. Decided to stay here with Chuck.

The door swings open and the HOSPITAL DOCTOR enters. He glances at the group standing in the middle before his gaze lands on Mr. and Mrs. Looney. He links his fingers together.

HOSPITAL DOCTOR

Mr. and Mrs. Looney. Everyone. I'm sorry, but Peg has finally gone to be with the Lord.

Mrs. Looney cries out and sobs. Mr. Looney embraces her. Chuck sags into a chair. Jack covers his eyes. Catherine and Charlotte hug each other. Tears fall from their eyes.

EXT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Charlotte stands at Catherine's front door. She knocks. Tears streak her face. Catherine opens the door.

CATHERINE

Charlotte. I didn't expect you.

CHARLOTTE

They tried to take Peg.



CATHERINE  
What? Who?

CHARLOTTE  
The company.

CATHERINE  
You better come in.

She steps back and Charlotte enters.

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Charlotte enters. Catherine takes her coat and hat.

CATHERINE  
Please, sit.

Charlotte perches on the couch. Catherine sits opposite.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)  
Now tell me everything.

CHARLOTTE  
Catherine, Radium Dial tried to  
take Peg's body in the middle of  
the night.

CATHERINE  
But... why?

CHARLOTTE  
I don't know. And they would have,  
too, except Jack was there and he  
wouldn't let them.

CATHERINE  
What did the company do?

CHARLOTTE  
They finally agreed to let Peg's  
doctor be there for the autopsy  
today.

CATHERINE  
Jack let them take her then?

CHARLOTTE  
I know it got real close to a  
fight. But you know how big he is.

CATHERINE  
Should we go over?

CHARLOTTE  
Can your leg handle it?

CATHERINE  
Oh, I'm barely limping today. It'll  
be fine.

CHARLOTTE  
Then yes. I just... need to hear  
for my own peace of mind.

They stand and shrug on their coats.

EXT. PEG'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

A dilapidated house near the railroad tracks. Plants cover  
the front lawn.

Chuck paces along the edge of the porch. He clenches his jaw  
and fists.

Catherine and Charlotte come into view. They wave. Chuck nods  
and walks down the path.

CHARLOTTE  
I hope we're not interrupting.

CHUCK  
They lied, Charlotte.

CATHERINE  
What do you mean? I thought they  
agreed--

CHUCK  
Oh, they did. Told the doctor 9 AM  
sharp. And he was there.

CHARLOTTE  
So what's wrong?

CHUCK  
They finished the autopsy before he  
arrived. Cause of death:  
diphtheria. No sign of anything  
else wrong with her body.

Chuck kicks a bush.

CHARLOTTE  
But she's been sick for a long  
time. In her jaw, like those New  
Jersey girls.

CHUCK

Her family don't got no money to  
fight Radium Dial. But we know it  
was them that did it.

A sob catches at his throat.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

(rasps)

They killed my Peg.

He pivots and stomps away. Catherine and Charlotte cry.

EXT. MAIN STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

Catherine and Charlotte pace along store fronts. They reach a newspaper stand. Catherine stops to rub her leg. She picks up the paper. She leafs through it. Her eyes widen.

CATHERINE

Look! There's an obituary already.  
For Peg.

CHARLOTTE

How? Her parents haven't written  
one.

CATHERINE

I think... I think the company did.

CHARLOTTE

That can't be good. What does it  
say?

Catherine flips open the paper and reveals a list that reads  
"Obituaries".

CATHERINE

(reads)

The young woman's physical  
condition for a time was puzzling.

CHARLOTTE

Not puzzling at all. The company  
knows why she was sick.

CATHERINE

It says there were rumors about her  
condition...

(reads)

No doubt that death was caused by  
diphtheria... No visible indication  
of radium poisoning.

Catherine drops her hands and looks up.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)  
No visible explanation. All you had  
to do was look at her to know  
something was wrong.

Charlotte reaches for the paper. She opens it up and scans  
the page.

CHARLOTTE  
(reads)  
Miss Looney's parents appeared well-  
pleased with the results of the  
autopsy.

CATHERINE  
We just left there. They don't even  
know about this.

CHARLOTTE  
And the autopsy was this morning.  
How did this obituary come out so  
fast?

Charlotte shakes her head.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
They want to bury this. Like it was  
all a mistake and there's nothing  
to worry about. I'm glad I left.

Charlotte grabs Catherine's arm.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
You should leave, too. Before  
something happens to you.

CATHERINE  
Mr. Reed says we're safe. Why would  
he lie? They're still doing the  
tests on us. Plus, I need the pay.

CHARLOTTE  
I understand. I do. Just don't  
forget. Peg didn't die from  
diphtheria.

Charlotte replaces the paper.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
I'm leave the company. For good  
this time. I have to.

Catherine frowns and rubs her leg.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1938"

INT. COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM - DAY

Catherine drinks a sip of water. Grossman watches.

GROSSMAN

Thank you for that moving  
testimony.

Grossman turns and picks up a folder. He flips it open.

GROSSMAN (CONT'D)

This is a report on the results  
from exhuming Miss Looney's body.  
It reveals that her bones were  
coated in radiation. That's what  
killed her.

MAGID

Objection!

GROSSMAN

Moreover, reports show the company  
knew and did nothing!

MARVEL

Overruled, Mr. Magid. And Mr.  
Grossman, this is a warning. Don't  
talk over the opposing council  
until I give my ruling. Understood?

GROSSMAN

Perfectly, Your Honor. My apologies  
to you both. It appears that my  
passion for justice overwhelmed me.

MARVEL

Fine. Continue, please.

GROSSMAN

This report is but one example of  
how willing the company was to bury  
any knowledge of its wrongdoing.  
Ignore the facts, hide them, or  
fire anyone too ill to serve.

Grossman hands the report to the Bailiff.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1931"

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - WORKROOM

Catherine limps through the door. She waves hello to the other girls. They wave back. As she passes, a few turn and push their heads together.

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - PREP ROOM - DAY

A small alcove. A large desk stands in the middle. Numerous dishes cover it. A large canister sits to one side. A label reads, "RADIUM POWDER".

Catherine enters. She picks up the canister and sighs. She reaches out and picks up a scale. She places it on the desk. She opens the canister.

She picks up a spoon and scoops up a pile of powder. She pours it onto the scale. She adds more. She grabs a brush and pours the powder into a dish. She sets it aside.

She cracks her neck. She brushes her hands through her hair. Dust flies everywhere.

REED (O.S.)

Today is checkup day, girls. Line up.

Catherine nods and stands. She exits.

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - WORKROOM - DAY

Mr. Reed stands at the door. He sorts the girls into two lines. Catherine approaches.

CATHERINE

Mr. Reed?

He turns. He narrows his gaze.

REED

I'm busy right now, as you can see.

CATHERINE

I'm sorry, sir. I just wanted to know if I can get an exam, too.

REED

And why would you need one? You're in perfect health.

CATHERINE

Oh. I just thought, on account of some disease I must have got--

REED

Miss Wolfe, if you're needed, I will call for you. Otherwise, please get back to work.

Catherine bobs her head and turns. She limps. Her shoulders slump. She rubs her leg.

EXT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - FRONT LAWN - DAY

Catherine opens the gate. She limps down the path.

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Catherine pats her hair in place. A knock sounds.

EXT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Catherine opens the door. Tom beams.

TOM

Well hello, lovely.

CATHERINE

Tom! You're early.

He leans down and embraces her. Dust flies everywhere. Catherine leans back and swipes the air.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

I think there's more dust on me than before on account of this new position.

TOM

Oh, it's fine. I'm covered in dust all day.

CATHERINE

Not radium dust.

Tom shrugs.

TOM

Only thing that matters to me is dinner with you.

Catherine blushes.

CATHERINE

Let me run to the ladies room. I'll  
just be right back, then we can go.

Tom nods and takes off his hat.

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Catherine enters and closes the door behind her. She turns and faces the mirror. In the darkened bathroom, her entire body glows.

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - PREP ROOM - DAY

Catherine sits and leans over a dish. She scrapes out hardened paint. She pulls out a piece and drops it in a bowl.

She leans back and examines her nails. Radium paint coats them.

CATHERINE

Not only cracked, but they might as  
well be painted, too.

She sighs and runs her hands through her hair. Dust flies out. She picks up the scraper. She examines it. She shakes her head. She sighs and pushes herself upright.

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - WORKROOM - DAY

Catherine limps across the room. Mutttered voices catch her attention. She looks over her shoulder.

Mr. Reed enters, trailed by Mr. Kelly and Mr. Fordyce.

She turns away and limps. She reaches a door. A sign on it reads: "Stockroom". She looks over her shoulder. The three men stare at her. She ducks her head. She enters.

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - STOCKROOM - DAY

Catherine scans the room. She grabs a scraper. She turns. She approaches the door. She stops. She straightens her spine. She exits.



INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - PREP ROOM - DAY

Catherine leans over a dish. She scrapes. Footsteps sound. She looks up. Mr. Reed enters.

CATHERINE  
Mr. Reed?

REED  
Could you please come to my office.

CATHERINE  
Oh. Is something wrong?

REED  
Just come, Miss Wolfe.

CATHERINE  
Of course. Let me wash my hands.

He nods and exits. She frowns.

INT. MR. REED'S OFFICE - DAY

Mr. Reed sits at his desk. He arranges his pencils. Mr. Kelly and Mr. Fordyce stand together in one corner. A KNOCK sounds.

REED  
Enter.

The door opens. Catherine limps inside. Mr. Reed frowns.

REED (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry, Miss Wolfe.

Catherine glances between Mr. Reed and the other men.

REED (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry, but we have to let you go.

Catherine's mouth drops open. Her eyes widen.

REED (CONT'D)  
Your work is satisfactory, please understand. It's your being here in a... a limping condition.

CATHERINE  
My... walk?

REED  
This... condition is causing talk.

CATHERINE

By who?

REED

Everyone. And given our recent press, it's not giving a good impression of the company.

Catherine hangs her head. She balls her fists.

REED (CONT'D)

We feel - that is, Mr. Kelly and Mr. Fordyce agree - that it is our duty to let you go.

Mr. Reed stands.

REED (CONT'D)

So please. Leave the premises now.

Catherine snaps her mouth shut. She glances between the three men. She backs up, turns, and exits. Mr. Reed glances back. Mr. Kelly and Mr. Fordyce nod.

EXT. MAIN STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

Catherine stumbles down the street. She wipes tears from her eyes.

TOM (O.S.)

Catherine?

Catherine whirls. Tom runs up to her. They embrace.

TOM (CONT'D)

Thought you were at work.

CATHERINE

Oh, yes, I- I was. B-but... oh Tom, it's awful. They just fired me. Said my limp was- was causing talk.

TOM

Good riddance.

Catherine looks up.

CATHERINE

But Tom, how I am to survive?

TOM  
We're getting married in six  
months. I'll take care of you.  
Trust me, okay?

They kiss. She pulls back.

CATHERINE  
Will you walk me home? I'm afraid  
my leg is paining me.

TOM  
It would be my pleasure.

Tom loops his arm in hers.

TOM (CONT'D)  
What's your doctor say about your  
leg? Any idea what's causing the  
pain?

CATHERINE  
I think- I think I'm ready to see  
another doctor.

TOM  
I think that's a good idea.

He hugs her close. She snuggles into his arm.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1932"

EXT. COLUMBA CHURCH - FRONT STEPS - DAY

Bells peal. Catherine and Tom exit a church. They smile and  
wave as they enter a car.

INT. TOM'S CAR - DAY

Tom clasps Catherine's hand.

TOM  
Been waitin' too many years for  
today.

CATHERINE  
I know your parents are worried  
because of my... my troubles.

TOM  
Aww, they'll get over it. They have  
to, now, 'cause you're family.

CATHERINE  
Family. Mrs. Donahue.

TOM  
That's right. And pretty soon,  
we'll have a whole bunch of kids  
running around.

CATHERINE  
Do you think I can?

TOM  
You and I have a wonderful life to  
look forward to. That's why I was  
willing to wait. You're worth it.

CATHERINE  
But what if I keep getting worse? I  
could disguise my limp today, but I  
can't always.

Tom pats her knee.

TOM  
Don't you worry. I'll take you to  
all the best doctors and get you  
fixed right up.

CATHERINE  
That sounds lovely.

TOM  
You've made me the happiest man.  
Only right I can try and do the  
same for you.

He leans over and kisses her. She snuggles into his shoulder.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - PATIENT ROOM - DAY

A sterile room with a metal bed, desk, and wooden chair.  
Catherine sits on the bed. She massages her hip.

The door opens. DR. PETITT, 40s, slim, strides in and smiles.  
Catherine straightens.

PETITT  
Mrs. Donahue. I have excellent  
news. There's no sign of radium  
poisoning.

CATHERINE

But... how can you be so sure? The papers say--

PETITT

That's not important.

CATHERINE

How can that not be important? I'm feeling sicker every day.

PETITT

There's a far more reasonable explanation for that.

The doctor crosses his hands and beams.

PETITT (CONT'D)

You, my dear, are pregnant.

CATHERINE

I'm... what?

PETITT

I know it must be a shock to hear, but those results are conclusive.

CATHERINE

I'm... pregnant.

Her hands drift to her abdomen. She grins.

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Catherine flings the door open. She shuts it and whirls.

CATHERINE

Tom! Tom!

Tom runs into the living room.

TOM

What did you find out?

CATHERINE

I have the most marvelous news!

TOM

You're cured?

CATHERINE

Dr. Petitt says I don't have radium poisoning. But that's not what's so wonderful. Tom...

She grabs his hands and places them on her belly. His eyes widen. He whoops and picks her up. He carries her to the couch.

TOM

See? Like I said. The beginning of a great big family.

CATHERINE

Yes. Tom, I'm not going to think about being sick. I want to focus on happiness. For him.

She looks at her stomach.

TOM

Him? Not a her?

CATHERINE

Him or her. It doesn't matter. I want to give our child the best life I can.

Tom hugs her.

TOM

We will, Catherine. The Lord as my witness.

She crosses herself then lays her head on his chest. He stares out the window.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1933"

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Catherine bustles around the room. She sets out teacups. She exits then reenters with a teapot. She smiles.

Her leg shakes. She collapses to one side and catches herself on the table.

A KNOCK sounds.

Catherine pushes herself upright and limps to the front door. She opens it. Charlotte smiles.

CHARLOTTE

Good morning. I hope I'm not too early.

CATHERINE

You're just on time. Please, come in. I've just set out some tea.

Charlotte enters. Catherine closes the door. They walk to the table and sit. Charlotte opens her purse and pulls out several newspapers.

CHARLOTTE

Well, I've gotten everything I can. Not that it looks good.

Catherine pours tea. She hands a cup and saucer to Charlotte. Charlotte reaches for the cup. She winces.

CATHERINE

What's wrong?

Charlotte sets down the cup and rubs her left elbow.

CHARLOTTE

As before. Nothing to worry about.

CATHERINE

You should still see a doctor.

CHARLOTTE

I know, but we simply can't afford it. Not with this - how do they say - great depression upon us.

CATHERINE

At least Albert and Tom still have their jobs. Praise God for that.

They cross themselves.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

Still, when you can, you should go.

Baby Tommy coos from his cradle. Charlotte looks over.

CHARLOTTE

Little Tommy looks quite healthy.

CATHERINE

He is. Much stronger than his mother.

CHARLOTTE

I don't know about that.

CATHERINE

Well, as long as he doesn't have whatever illness has befallen me--

CHARLOTTE

You can say it. You're not the only one. Inez. Marie. Poor Helen divorced because of her health.

Catherine frowns and rubs her hip.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

We all worked at Radium Dial. It's not a coincidence our bodies are getting sick.

CATHERINE

My doctor told me it definitely wasn't radium poisoning when I asked him again. Why would he lie?

CHARLOTTE

Maybe we should talk to some of these other ladies. Give them a call. That's a start.

CATHERINE

Well, yes, I suppose I can help you with that. But what good would it do?

CHARLOTTE

Surely it's a sign that so many of us are sick. Some of us are getting sicker.

CATHERINE

My limp has gotten no worse.

CHARLOTTE

It's not just that and you know it.

CATHERINE

I... I do know it. Maybe it's just easier to believe everything will stay the way it is.

CHARLOTTE

But nothing in life is like that.



CATHERINE

No, you're quite right. And what a relief. Otherwise, there would be no Tom or baby Tommy.

Catherine reaches over and squeezes Charlotte's hand. Charlotte winces.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I thought--

CHARLOTTE

It's getting worse. I just... want to keep doing what I did before, but I can't, can I?

CATHERINE

It's as you said. Nothing stays the same. But you're not alone.

Charlotte rubs her left arm. She looks up and nods. Catherine smiles back.

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Catherine sits on the sofa. She hums and rocks Baby Tommy. The doors open.

CATHERINE

Tom! You're finally home.

TOM

Sorry. Ran a bit late at work.

Catherine leans over the crib.

CATHERINE

Let me put Tommy up and I'll set dinner on the table.

TOM

I can take him.

Tom picks up Baby Tommy. Catherine pushes the sofa seat. Her face contorts.

CATHERINE

Oh, come on.

TOM

It's happening again?

CATHERINE

I can do it. Just give me a moment.

She pushes herself up. Her legs collapse.

TOM

Catherine!

He places Baby Tommy in the crib. Baby Tommy cries. Tom squats down and lifts Catherine. He sets her on the sofa.

CATHERINE

I just don't... understand...  
Tommy?

TOM

He can wait. Listen. It's time to  
get another doctor.

CATHERINE

You know what he'll say. He'll be  
just like Dr. Pettitt--

TOM

I'm not talking about from here.  
None of these doctors have a clue.  
We should go to Chicago.

CATHERINE

We don't have the money. We can  
barely go on as it is.

TOM

We need to know. We can't keep  
ignoring this. If you won't do it  
for you, then do it for Tommy.

Catherine lifts a hand to Tom's cheek.

CATHERINE

And for you.

TOM

For us.

CATHERINE

So how exactly are we going to pay  
to see some Chicago doctor?

TOM

You own this house outright, thanks  
to your aunt and uncle. We can  
mortgage it.

CATHERINE  
(sighs)  
I suppose we can.

Tom hugs Catherine. He stands and picks up Baby Tommy.

INSERT TITLE CARD: A FEW MONTHS LATER...

EXT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - FRONT LAWN - DAY

Tom walks to his mailbox. He opens it and pulls out a letter. He stares at it.

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Catherine sits holding Baby Tommy. The door opens. Tom enters. He closes the door. He stares down.

CATHERINE  
Tom? What's wrong?

Tom turns and presents the letter.

TOM  
It's arrived.

He sits across from her.

CATHERINE  
Oh. I thought it would look...  
different somehow. Should we...  
open it?

Tom nods. He turns the letter over in his hands.

TOM  
You'd think, after all this time, I  
would just tear it open. But now,  
I'm not sure I want to know.

CATHERINE  
You're the one who insisted on a  
new doctor, dear. And Dr. Loffler  
is quite good, as you know.

TOM  
What if... it's what we fear?

CATHERINE  
Then we'll face it together. God  
has been so good to us.

She looks down at her belly and cups it. Tom smiles. He slides his finger under the flap of the envelope. He pulls out a single white sheet and opens it. He reads.

TOM

Dear Mr. Donahue, after examining the results of the many tests we ran on Mrs. Donahue's jaw, including x-rays, I can now conclusively confirm that Catherine Donahue suffers from radium poisoning.

Catherine's breath hitches. Tom looks up. Tears glimmer in his eyes. His hands shake.

TOM (CONT'D)

It's not right.

CATHERINE

Dr. Loffler... he says--

TOM

No. It's not right what that company did to you. They have to pay for your treatment.

CATHERINE

Tom--

TOM

They simply have to!

Tom shoots from the couch. He paces, one hand against his forehead. His hand slides down to his jaw.

CATHERINE

Tom. Please listen.

Tom turns around.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

We need to pray. Have faith.

Tom kneels in front of Catherine. Tears stream down his face.

TOM

We'll go to church tomorrow evening when I get home from work.

They embrace.

INT. COLUMBA CHURCH - SANCTUARY - NIGHT

Tom and Catherine enter. Tom holds Catherine upright as she limps forward. They reach a pew. Tom guides Catherine as she turns.

Catherine places her hands on the pew in front of her. Tom pulls down the kneeler. Catherine pushes against the pew. She grunts.

TOM  
What's wrong?

CATHERINE  
My-my legs. Or my hips. I can't  
tell. They won't...

She pushes against the pew. She stops and clenches her fists.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)  
They won't bend. They won't...

Her voice fades. Tears slide down her face. She covers her mouth and shakes her head.

Tom grabs her waist and guides her to sit on the pew. He sits next to her. Catherine wipes her eyes. She turns her head.

Charlotte and Al stand on the other side of the church. Charlotte leans on her husband. Al clutches her waist.

Charlotte meets Catherine's gaze. Charlotte reaches up to clutch the empty sleeve pinned at the shoulder. Catherine clenches her jaw.

EXT. MAIN STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

Tom strides down the street. He stops at a grocery. An advert on the door reads: "Radithor - Radium-Infused Tonic for the Athlete in All of Us". Tom frowns. He turns away.

Tom narrows his eyes. On the end of the block, Mr. Reed exits a store.

Tom runs across the street. Mr. Reed turns a corner.

EXT. SIDE STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

Tom turns the corner. Mr. Reed paces along a few stores ahead of Tom.

TOM  
Mr. Reed? Mr. Reed!

Mr. Reed stops. He turns. He frowns.

REED  
Tom? This is highly unusual--

TOM  
We got a letter. Look.

Tom pulls out the letter and proffers it. Mr. Reed steps back.

REED  
That's none of my concern--

TOM  
It's about Catherine. Doctor says she has radium poisoning.

REED  
And who exactly is that?

TOM  
Dr. Loffler. He's from Chicago.

REED  
See? That's your problem right there, trusting them big city doctors.

TOM  
Catherine is getting sicker.

REED  
There's nothing wrong with her, or any of the other women.

TOM  
Charlotte Purcell lost her entire arm because of a growth.

REED  
Mrs. Purcell has not worked with the company in several years.

TOM  
Dr. Loffler is quite reputable. If he says it's radium poisoning, then it is. Catherine's got it.

REED  
Mr. Donahue--

TOM

All of them women do. All of the ones who worked for Radium Dial. Please. They need help.

REED

You're on your own. The company is in no way to blame.

Mr. Reed turns around and rushes away. Tom stares at Mr. Reed's retreating back.

TOM

(to himself)

You're wrong about this.

Tom turns and marches away.

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The door swings open. Tom stomps inside. He inhales, turns, and closes the door.

CATHERINE

Oh, Tom! You're home.

She pushes herself up. He hugs her.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

What is it?

TOM

Had a talk with Mr. Reed.

CATHERINE

What?

TOM

Told him about the letter. Wanted him to see proof.

CATHERINE

Why, Tom? You know it won't change... any of this.

She points to her legs.

TOM

I know. But I had to tell him. Had to reason with him. How could he not understand?

CATHERINE

I wish I knew.

TOM

Catherine, we need a lawyer. A good one.

CATHERINE

And where are we going to find one? How can we even afford one?

TOM

We'll mortgage the house again.

CATHERINE

No, it's too much--

TOM

You need treatments. We need money for them. Radium Dial owes you.

CATHERINE

But who could we find to represent us? Surely not here in Ottawa?

TOM

No, but I bet Dr. Loffler knows someone.

CATHERINE

Yes. You're right. That's a wonderful idea.

TOM

I'll call him first thing in the morning. Now... you rest, you hear?

Tom caresses Catherine's belly.

TOM (CONT'D)

And ignore what everyone else says.

CATHERINE

You are my rock, Tom. Praise the Lord I found you.

TOM

Might be the other way around.

They kiss.



INT. LOFFLER'S OFFICE - DESK - DAY

A small room covered in medical posters. To one side, a file cabinet stands open, files piled on top. On the other, a large desk sits with several open folders and medical books.

The phone RINGS. Dr. Loffler rushes through the door and picks up the receiver.

LOFFLER

Hello?

He sits on the edge of the desk.

LOFFLER (CONT'D)

Mr. Donahue. How are you and Catherine doing? Oh... I see. You're absolutely right. I think I know just the man. Jay Cook. Let me get his number for you.

Dr. Loffler places the phone down and walks to his file cabinet.

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Catherine sits reading the Bible. Tommy plays at her feet. A KNOCK sounds.

CATHERINE

Come in.

The door swings open and Charlotte steps inside.

CHARLOTTE

I hope I'm not too early.

CATHERINE

Oh, that's fine. I just haven't prepared anything yet.

Charlotte closes the door. Catherine attempts to stand.

CHARLOTTE

Don't bother, Catherine. I know your house well enough by now.

Catherine sinks back. She closes her Bible and sets it aside.

CATHERINE

I suppose that's unavoidable.

Charlotte takes off her coat one-handedly and sits opposite Catherine.

CHARLOTTE

For the moment, yes. But by the grace of God, we're still here and we're still fighting.

Catherine and Charlotte cross themselves.

CATHERINE

Amen. Charlotte, thank you. You've been the best friend I've needed, even with your own troubles.

CHARLOTTE

I didn't work at Radium Dial nearly as long as you did, so despite having one arm, I don't suffer like you. How can I not help?

CATHERINE

And all the others... so many girls. Pain in their jaws, their joints. Growths in their bodies.

CHARLOTTE

Radium poisoning. Oh, how the company lied to us.

CATHERINE

At least we have Mr. Cook working for us now.

Charlotte sighs and leans back.

CHARLOTTE

If Radium Dial wasn't completely ignoring our claim.

CATHERINE

Tom took out another mortgage on the house, but I don't know how long the bank will keep letting us.

CHARLOTTE

For your treatments?

CATHERINE

Dr. Loffler is wonderful, but expensive. All the big cities doctors are.

CHARLOTTE

But at least they're doing something for you, unlike the ones here.

CATHERINE

They still refuse to believe. I just don't understand it.

CHARLOTTE

Radium Dial employs a lot of people. Small town like this in middle America needs a factory.

CATHERINE

All they're doing is getting more people sick. More girls. If the company could just see us. Maybe...

CHARLOTTE

Maybe they'd understand how afflicted we are.

CATHERINE

I've half a mind to go in person myself.

CHARLOTTE

Just show up unannounced.

CATHERINE

Exactly. They can't turn me away then. And if someone at the company sees me like this...

Catherine sighs. Charlotte nods.

CHARLOTTE

Then let's go.

CATHERINE

What do you mean?

CHARLOTTE

Let's go, right now. No more waiting. The company doesn't understand, but if we're there--

CATHERINE

They can't keep ignoring us.

CHARLOTTE

Exactly.

Charlotte stands.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)  
Are you up for the walk?

Catherine pushes herself to her feet.

CATHERINE  
I will do what needs to be done.

Catherine turns and leans.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)  
Eleanor! I'm going out. Can you  
come get Tommy?

Charlotte hands Catherine her coat. ELEANOR TAYLOR, 20s,  
petite, enters.

ELEANOR  
Come along, Tommy. Your mother has  
some work to do.

CATHERINE  
We won't be long. I think.

ELEANOR  
I'll get supper started.

CATHERINE  
Thank you, dear.

She turns to Charlotte.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)  
Shall we?

Charlotte opens the door. Catherine marches outside.

EXT. MAIN STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

Catherine limps next to Charlotte. She clutches Charlotte's  
single arm.

CHARLOTTE  
Are we really doing this?

CATHERINE  
I think we have to, don't we?

Charlotte sighs. They turn the corner.

EXT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - FRONT LAWN - DAY

Catherine and Charlotte enter the company grounds. They pause.

CATHERINE

Strange to think of all those days  
spent here, laughing, not a care in  
the world.

CHARLOTTE

Covered in dust.

CATHERINE

Deliberately covered. Peg, laughing  
away, so full of life.

CHARLOTTE

For her, then.

CATHERINE

For all of them. All of us. Our  
families and our children.

Charlotte squares her shoulders. Catherine straightens her spine. They walk inside.

INT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - REED'S OFFICE - DAY

Mr. Reed scribbles at his desk. Stacked papers cover the surface. A KNOCK sounds. Mr. Reed frowns.

REED

Enter.

The door opens. Catherine and Charlotte advance.

REED (CONT'D)

Mrs. Donahue, Mrs. Purcell. This is  
highly irregular. We're in the  
middle of a workday--

CATHERINE

I've just gotten a letter from my  
doctor.

CHARLOTTE

As have I.

CATHERINE

He's been seeing me for several weeks now, and he's done multiple tests on my blood. It definitively shows a radioactive substance.

Catherine glances at Charlotte. Charlotte nods.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

We both, without a doubt, have radium poisoning.

Mr. Reed sets his glasses higher on his nose. He leans back and remains silent.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

After obtaining legal advice, I've been advised by my lawyers to ask Radium Dial for compensation for current medical costs and ongoing care.

CHARLOTTE

We've all been told we are entitled to compensation. As you can see, I no longer have an arm.

CATHERINE

And my limp worsens every day.

Mr. Reed narrows his gaze. It travels over Charlotte's empty sleeve and to Catherine's trembling stance.

REED

I... don't think... there's anything wrong with you.

CATHERINE

What? But... you can't be serious. Look at us!

REED

There's nothing to it at all. You're perfectly fine.

CHARLOTTE

My arm is gone. Forever. How can you even think--

REED

The company cannot consider your request for compensation, as neither of you are current employees.

Catherine and Charlotte gasp.

REED (CONT'D)

Now if you please, I am in the middle of a tight schedule.

CATHERINE

We're not the only ones with this condition. There are others--

REED

I trust you can see yourselves out.

Charlotte snaps her mouth shut. Catherine turns around and limps out. The door closes. Mr. Reed throws down his pen.

EXT. RADIUM DIAL COMPANY - FRONT LAWN - DAY

Catherine closes the gate and sags against it. Charlotte struggles to lift her up.

CHARLOTTE

Catherine, can you walk?

CATHERINE

I just... need to catch my breath after... that man--

Catherine pushes off from the gate. Charlotte holds out her arm.

CHARLOTTE

Come on. I don't want to be here any longer.

They continue down the street.

EXT. MAIN STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

Catherine and Charlotte turn a corner. Catherine catches sight of herself in a window. She stops.

CHARLOTTE

Do you need a break?

CATHERINE

I wonder...

She wipes her hair.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

Did we get dust on us in there? Or  
is it too late to worry about that?

CHARLOTTE

Too late, I gather.

Charlotte rubs her empty socket.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

You know what this means?

CATHERINE

We have no choice. We have to sue.

CHARLOTTE

Some people around here might get  
offended. Radium Dial at least  
offers steady work.

CATHERINE

And sick babies and missing limbs  
and rotting teeth.

CHARLOTTE

I'm with you.

CATHERINE

We'll call everyone. Get a group of  
us together. There's no choice  
anymore.

Catherine's hand drifts to her stomach.

CHARLOTTE

Are you...?

CATHERINE

Yes. So right now, no more  
treatments from Dr. Loffler. No  
more experiments. I must simply  
endure. For the baby.

CHARLOTTE

And we'll keep fighting for what we  
deserve.

CATHERINE

And God willing, a cure.

Catherine nods and clutches Charlotte's arm. They pace down  
the street.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1934"



EXT. MAIN STREET - STOREFRONTS - DAY

Catherine pushes Tommy down the sidewalk. She stops at a door. She rubs her protruding belly. She puts her hand on the knob.

The OWNER appears. He flips the sign from "OPEN" to "CLOSED". Catherine smiles and steps away. He frowns.

She pushes Tommy to the next door. Another STORE OWNER appears.

STORE OWNER  
We just closed.

CATHERINE  
Oh. I'm sorry. Is it that late--

Store Owner slams the door shut. Catherine jumps. She crosses the street. She nears the grocery.

GOSSIPER ONE (O.S.)  
...something wrong with them.

GOSSIPER TWO (O.S.)  
Don't they know that company is the only thing keeping this town alive? Why do they want to ruin everyone's jobs?

GOSSIPER ONE (O.S.)  
Selfish, that's what. Want to get in on the company's dime.

GOSSIPER TWO (O.S.)  
And you see them always going to the doctor with some new ailment? Like that Donahue girl.

Catherine stops before the door. She peeks around the corner. Two OLDER LADIES stand in line.

GOSSIPER ONE  
The one with a limp. Where did that come from? I bet it's all an act.

GOSSIPER TWO  
Shameful, isn't it?

Catherine backs away. Tears form in her eyes. She wheels the stroller around and turns the corner.

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Catherine closes the door behind her. She picks up Tommy and places him in his crib. Catherine sits and presses her forehead in her hands. Muffled sobs emanate from her.

Tom enters. He rushes to her side.

TOM

What is it, Catherine?

Catherine lifts her head. Tom wipes her tears.

CATHERINE

It's silly, you know. But... this town. They don't believe us. Just now, I was trying to shop--

TOM

And they were rude to you?

CATHERINE

Not rude, exactly. It was like I had some disease they didn't want to pass on to them.

TOM

Let them think what they want. Just focus on Tommy and the coming baby and giving them a loving home.

Catherine nods.

CATHERINE

You're right. I want to just try and live a normal life.

Tom kisses her. She wraps her arms around him.

TOM

Let's go to bed.

She nods. He lifts her and carries her out, her arms around his neck.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1938"

INT. COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM - DAY

Marvel looks down at Catherine.

MARVEL

Go ahead, Mrs. Donahue.

Catherine nods. She reaches into her lap and picks up a pill box. Everyone in the court leans forward.

Her hands shake as she opens it. She stares inside for a moment. She reaches in and pulls out two small white objects. She flattens her hand.

CATHERINE

These are pieces of me. My jawbone.  
They fell out into my mouth.

The court erupts into noise. Grossman turns to the audience.

GROSSMAN

What better evidence do we have as  
proof of Mrs. Donahue's suffering?  
What must it be like to feel pieces  
of your own body fall off like  
nothing more than detritus? As if  
you were turning in to nothing more  
than an accumulation of bones  
riddled with holes?

Grossman approaches Catherine. She slides the jaw pieces into the pill box. She hands the pillbox to Grossman. He takes the pill box and holds it aloft.

GROSSMAN (CONT'D)

I'd like to submit Mrs. Donahue's  
jaw into evidence.

He places the pill box on the center of his table. Reporters lean in and and take photos.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1936"

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tom and Al sit on one side of the room, newspapers in hand. Charlotte and Catherine huddle together at the dining table.

Catherine selects a paper from a pile on the table. Her clothes hang off her thinning frame.

CATHERINE

(reads)

The Chicago Daily Times really nails it, doesn't it?

TOM

That writer, Mary Doty. She sure packs a punch.

(reads)

They shoot to kill when it comes to cattle thieves, but womenfolk come cheap.

The four of them look at each other. Al shakes his paper.

AL

Says here, some victims creep along, unable to move beyond a snail's pace.

Al lays the paper down and taps it.

AL (CONT'D)

See? It says right there. Victims.

TOM

It's not right. None of this is right. And the doctors don't even try to find a cure anymore.

CHARLOTTE

At least we're alive. There are so many who didn't make it.

Catherine covers Charlotte's hand.

CATHERINE

I know you miss Peg. We all do.

AL

But it's an injustice, what they say about her. About... how she died. 'Bout tore Chuck apart.

CATHERINE

He was loyal until the end.

TOM

I think he'll always be loyal.

Catherine smiles at Tom. She glances down. Her smile fades.

CATHERINE

Well, perhaps this will get some attention. Finally. We certainly need some sort of help.

CHARLOTTE

It's these statutes of limitations. Anyone can see that these illnesses build up over time.

AL

Radium Dial doesn't care. Some days, I've a thought to give them a piece of my mind.

CHARLOTTE

Albert Purcell! There's no need to speak like that.

AL

I'm sorry, but it's not easy to see you - see any of you - suffering. On and on, and no reason for it.

TOM

We know the reason.

AL

Well, the company's still not paying their medical bills.

CHARLOTTE

But maybe now they'll start considering it. That's what's important.

CATHERINE

We can only pray and keep fighting. That's what articles like this do - keep our stories alive.

TOM

(reads)

I am in constant pain. I cannot walk a block, but somehow, I must carry on.

Tom cover's Catherine's hand.

TOM (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I wish I could take it away.

(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)

I wish Mary Jane wasn't a - how does the paper say - wizened little baby. I wish Radium Dial would just listen to us.

CATHERINE

Do you think they don't know? They've been taking tests for years.

CHARLOTTE

Not that they bothered to share them with us.

CATHERINE

I wish they would. Otherwise, why make us do them?

AL

No one has any idea what their results were?

CATHERINE

Mr. Reed refused to share them. Said it was company policy. Said we would... we would riot if they did.

TOM

We just need the company to see reason.

Tom balls his fists. Al nods. Catherine massages her legs as Charlotte straightens her empty sleeve.

EXT. MAIN STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

Tom strides along, article in hand. He glances at an advertisement and shakes his head. He looks up and sees Mr. Reed enter a store across the street.

TOM

He's got to know the name of them doctors. The ones who gave them women the exams.

Tom balls up the paper. He marches across the street. Mr. Reed backs out of the store. He turns and meets Tom's gaze.

REED

Oh. Mr. Donahue. How do you do?

TOM

What didn't you give them doctor reports to me?

Mr. Reed frowns and brushes past Tom. Tom grabs Mr. Reed by the arm.

TOM (CONT'D)

Hey. I asked you a question.

Reed shakes off Tom's arm and scurries away. Tom stares.

TOM (CONT'D)

Will you please listen?

Tom runs after Reed.

TOM (CONT'D)

I only want to help the women, them that have the radium poisoning.

Reed whirls and swings his arm. His fist connects with Tom's jaw. Reed steps back and pants.

Tom balls his hands. He rises and swings. His fist connects with Reed's cheekbone.

TOM (CONT'D)

That's for Catherine.

Reed growls. They both swing and hit each other. Tom lands a hit.

TOM (CONT'D)

And Charlotte, who don't have no arm no more.

A crowd gathers. Reed punches Tom. Tom swings and connects.

TOM (CONT'D)

This is for Ella, and Mary, and poor Peg.

Tom punctuates each name with a blow.

HORNS sound. A police car drives up. Two officers exit and pull Tom and Reed apart.

Reed straightens his coat and wipes his bloody nose.

REED

Have that man arrested.

TOM  
What? But he swung first!

REED  
I'm pressing charges. Assault and battery!

An officer pulls Tom's wrists behind his back.

TOM  
You went for me! Why? You feeling guilty 'bout what's been going on under your watch?

Reed turns away. He glares at the crowd.

REED  
Nothing to see here but some disorderly conduct.

The officer pushes Tom into the car.

TOM  
Yours, Mr. Reed!

The officer shuts the door. Tom stares through the window. Mr. Reed confers with the other officer. Tom drops his head.

INT. JAIL - WAITING ROOM - DAY

A small room with chairs to one side, a desk, and a single door. Catherine sits and waits.

Tom emerges, his eye bruised. Catherine pushes against the chair.

TOM  
No, I'll come get you.

Tom rushes over. He grabs Catherine's arms and pulls her upright. They embrace.

CATHERINE  
Tom! I was so worried.

She leans back. She stares. She runs her fingers over the bruise on his face.

TOM  
Should see the other guy.

CATHERINE  
What happened?



TOM

Funny thing. I'm not sure.

CATHERINE

You got in a fight with Mr. Reed  
and you're not sure?

TOM

I just wanted to get them exam  
results.

CATHERINE

From our tests?

TOM

You deserve to know. You all do.

CATHERINE

So what did he say?

TOM

He didn't say anything. He just  
walked away and when I went after  
him, he swung at me.

CATHERINE

That's terrible. Tom... Mr. Reed is  
charging you--

TOM

I know. Assault and battery. So he  
said.

CATHERINE

Not just that. He said... he  
wants...

TOM

Is it bad?

CATHERINE

Insanity.

Tom sighs.

TOM

Well, at least we know that's not  
true. I bet the company is making  
him do that. They don't want anyone  
asking questions.

CATHERINE

Can they... put you away?

TOM

They'd have to prove it. And no street fight is enough for that.

Catherine slumps. Tom tilts up her chin.

TOM (CONT'D)

Hey. They can't prove any of that. The company has its back against the wall. We should celebrate.

CATHERINE

Why?

TOM

Because they're afraid. They know they've been hiding the truth. It's only a matter of time now.

CATHERINE

I hope you're right.

Tom hugs Catherine.

TOM

Come on. I miss the children. Let's go home.

Tom slings his arm around Catherine and pulls her up.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1937"

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Catherine and Charlotte sit on the couch. They stare at a newspaper.

The door slams open. Al and Tom enter.

TOM

And there you have it. Judge saw the truth. Case dismissed.

Al closes the door.

AL

I think we should celebrate.

Catherine and Charlotte look down. Tom frowns.

TOM

What's wrong?

Catherine and Charlotte glance at each other. They turn to Tom and Al.

CATHERINE  
Radium Dial Company has  
disappeared.

Tom crosses the room.

TOM  
What? How?

CATHERINE  
No one knows.

Charlotte shakes the newspaper.

CHARLOTTE  
Papers say the company closed its  
doors from one day to the next and  
skipped town.

AL  
So now what?

CATHERINE  
We keep on. Mr. Cook is helping us.  
He'll know what to do.

TOM  
But Radium Dial has to pay.

CATHERINE  
How can we make them do that when  
we don't know where they are?

Tom shrugs. He slides into a chair. Al sits across from Charlotte.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - COOK'S OFFICE - DAY

A wide room with an expansive window on one side. In front of it, a large desk stands covered with stacks of paper.

JAY COOK, 30s, lean, picks up the phone.

COOK  
Escort them in, please.

He hangs up and stands. The door opens. Catherine, Tom, Charlotte, and Al enter.

COOK (CONT'D)  
Come in, please. Thank you for  
making your way out here.

He waves at the chairs in front of his desk. Tom helps Catherine hobble forward. He lowers her into a seat. She winces.

COOK (CONT'D)  
How was the trip?

AL  
We live here in Chicago now, so it weren't as long for us.

COOK  
Ah, of course. Lots of folks moving to the city nowadays.

Al shrugs.

AL  
Man's gotta work.

Charlotte and Al sit. Cook returns to his chair.

COOK  
Frankly, I've got news that's both good and bad. We found Radium Dial.

Catherine leans forward.

CATHERINE  
That's wonderful news!

COOK  
Not exactly. You see, they up and relocated to New York.

TOM  
New York?

COOK  
That's right. Because the company is no longer in Illinois, it cannot be prosecuted for damages incurred while employed here.

CATHERINE  
But... all the women. We're sick.

COOK  
I understand. I do have a solution. It's not great, but it's something.

AL

Tell us.

COOK

Radium Dial posted a bond with the Industrial Commission. You can try and sue for that.

CHARLOTTE

How much is in there?

Cook leans back and sighs.

COOK

The grand sum of ten-thousand dollars.

TOM

That's it?

COOK

I'm sorry. My hands are tied. The company is refusing to take any blame. This is what's left.

Tom and Catherine exchange glances.

CATHERINE

Well, if this is all there is, then this is what we'll fight for.

COOK

That's good to hear. There's just one other thing.

Cook steeples his fingers.

AL

Come on, man. Out with it.

COOK

As you know, I took on this case even though there have been no payments made.

CHARLOTTE

Are you... abandoning us?

COOK

Mrs. Purcell, I passionately believe in your cause. But I'm afraid I simply don't have the money to keep representing you.

(MORE)

COOK (CONT'D)

This office costs money, as do my assistants. I hope you understand.

CATHERINE

We do, Mr. Cook. And we are grateful for all that you've done. If you can recommend anyone, please let us know.

COOK

I will do so. And may I say, I am wishing you the very best. God bless you and everyone involved.

Cook pushes himself up. The others follow suit.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1937"

INT. CITY HALL - CORRIDOR - DAY

Charlotte and Catherine exit a courtroom. They turn and stare at each other.

CHARLOTTE

That was... unexpected.

CATHERINE

What are we going to do? We can't drop our suit.

CHARLOTTE

We'll find someone.

CATHERINE

But how? Now we have a court date and no one to represent us.

They turn and limp down the hall. Catherine pauses to rest.

CHARLOTTE

Something will come up. I'm sure of it.

CATHERINE

You're likely right. I'm sorry. I don't mean to be so negative. It's just lately, I'm so tired. I barely have any strength in me.

Tom approaches.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

Tom. We were just discussing the court date. We're almost out of time.

TOM

We're in luck. I just got word of a lawyer here in Chicago. Goes by the name of Leonard Grossman.

CATHERINE

Is he reputable?

TOM

They say he's real interested in causes like this. Marched for women's rights, you know.

CHARLOTTE

That's excellent. I'll call Pearl and the other ladies. We must meet with him right away.

Tom sits Catherine on a bench.

TOM

Where's Al?

Charlotte blushes.

CHARLOTTE

Oh, well. He found a job today. It's short term, but you know... it's something.

TOM

Good. I'm glad to hear the move here is working out.

CHARLOTTE

Speaking of which, I better get home. The children will be back.

Charlotte leans over and kisses Catherine on the cheek. Charlotte strides down the hall. Tom stares after her.

TOM

She knows, doesn't she? That we're on relief?

CATHERINE

We needn't be ashamed. She and Al are some of our oldest friends. Come on we, need to go.

Tom helps Catherine stand.

INT. TRAIN - PASSENGER SEATS - DAY

Tom and Catherine sit alone in the back of the car. Tom picks up Catherine's hands.

TOM

I'm trying, you know. If we weren't mortgaged up to the hilt, I'd have moved us here, too.

CATHERINE

It's my fault--

Tom whips his head around and grips her shoulders.

TOM

It's the company's fault. Them the ones who made you sick, lying to you for years.

CATHERINE

I wish my medicines cost less. I wish I could take care of my own children. Do you think I want this?

Tom shifts off his seat kneels next to her.

TOM

No. I'm sorry, honey. It's just... watching you like this, day after day, and them treatments not working... standing in line, waiting for handouts... unable to provide for my own family... and the treatments - are they even helping?

CATHERINE

Some days are harder than others.

TOM

Are you angry at all?

Catherine flails her arms. She cries.

CATHERINE

I'm furious. I feel like a failure as a wife and mother. Little Mary Jane is so fragile - how do I know I haven't passed my troubles on her?

(MORE)



CATHERINE (CONT'D)

I can't cook you a meal, or- or lie  
with you in our bed. I'm miserable!

Tom embraces her. She leans in to him.

TOM

I'm so sorry.

Catherine snuffles and wipes her eyes.

CATHERINE

I haven't given up, though. I  
believe God will save us in our  
time of need.

TOM

But why does He let you suffer?

CATHERINE

I don't know. I only know... I must  
keep on. Not just for our family,  
but for all the women.

TOM

How can you bear it?

CATHERINE

The Lord lends me strength. I don't  
understand it, and I get mad at  
Him, too. But mostly I want to  
believe that one day, I'll get  
better and be free from all this  
pain. We'll be a family again, the  
four of us, the way we're meant to.  
Surely, there's some cure for  
radium poisoning.

TOM

I'd like to believe that.

Tom pulls her close. She closes her eyes. Tears slide down  
her face.

INT. GROSSMAN'S OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A long room with a large round table and several seats.  
Catherine and Charlotte sit to one side.

The door opens. Grossman strides in. He approaches the women  
and holds out his hand.

GROSSMAN

Leonard Grossman. Mrs. Donahue?

Catherine nods and accepts his hand.

GROSSMAN (CONT'D)  
And you must be Mrs. Purcell.

He switches hands. Charlotte nods and accepts.

GROSSMAN (CONT'D)  
My assistant has briefed me on your case. It presents a unique opportunity. Not just for your own plights, but for all the women who have worked for this company and yet suffer ailments. Can you tell me, when is the date of your trial?

Catherine and Charlotte exchange glances.

CATHERINE  
In two days, Mr. Grossman.

His eyebrows shoot up.

CHARLOTTE  
Are we crazy to think something can be done?

GROSSMAN  
Not at all. This is merely a challenge that we must overcome.

CATHERINE  
We are grateful for all of your help. We don't know what we'd say to the judge.

GROSSMAN  
We better get right to work.

CATHERINE  
Can you be ready by then?

GROSSMAN  
No, but I'm going to ask to push the date back enough so we can prepare.

CHARLOTTE  
Will they let you do that?

GROSSMAN  
Given my newness and the scope of this case, I think it would be unusual if they did not.

CATHERINE  
I suppose that's good.

GROSSMAN  
It is. Now, there are how many  
women in this suit?

CATHERINE  
Six. I have a list of the names.

She pulls a sheet out of a folder and hands it to Grossman.

GROSSMAN  
Very good. Ladies, we should have  
laws that will do away with things  
that rack, ruin, and destroy  
bodies.

Tears gather in Catherine and Charlotte's eyes.

GROSSMAN (CONT'D)  
We do not need to have martyrs such  
as we have sitting here and the  
many dead who worked with you.

CHARLOTTE  
Like Peg. And Inez.

CATHERINE  
And Mary Robinson.

GROSSMAN  
It is a heavy cross to Calvary, but  
we will bear it. With the help of  
God, we will fight to the finish.

Catherine and Charlotte smile and cross themselves.

INSERT TITLE CARD: "1938"

INT. COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM - DAY

Catherine sits next to Grossman. Tom sits behind her, Pearl  
and Charlotte on either side.

Grossman consults his notes. He nods and looks at Marvel.

GROSSMAN  
I'd like to call up Dr. Walter  
Dalitsch to the witness stand.

DR. WALTER DALITSCH, late 30s, clean-featured, rises and  
strides forward. The Bailiff approaches.

BAILIFF

Do you swear to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God.

DALITSCH

I do.

Dalitsch sits.

GROSSMAN

You are Mrs. Donahue's dentist. Can you begin by reviewing your dental treatment of Mrs. Donahue?

DALITSCH

Certainly. Mrs. Donahue came to my attention in regards to ongoing pain she was having, along with a loss of teeth and bone tissue, as you've just seen.

GROSSMAN

Have you seen this type of problem before?

DALITSCH

I had not treated anything of this type previous to meeting Mrs. Donahue.

GROSSMAN

Of this type?

DALITSCH

This specific level of bone decay and necrosis of the jaw. Phossy jaw is similar, but not quite the same.

GROSSMAN

You're located in Chicago, not Ottawa?

DALITSCH

That's correct.

GROSSMAN

Why would she come all the way to you?

DALITSCH

Both Mr. and Mrs. Donahue felt they were not receiving the treatment necessary to alleviate her symptoms.

GROSSMAN

What do you believe is the cause for these?

DALITSCH

It appears to be from radium poisoning. This type of necrosis and decay was previously found in the New Jersey dial painters.

GROSSMAN

So Mrs. Donahue is not the only one to suffer from this?

DALITSCH

No. It has been proven that many dial-painters working with radium-infused paint became sick and died. Sadly, many received a diagnosis different than the truth.

MAGID

Objection! This is conjecture--

MARVEL

Overruled. Dr. Dalitsch is both skilled and knowledgeable. He provides expert testimony.

Magid sinks down. He frowns.

GROSSMAN

What would you say is the cause of the disease that Mrs. Donahue suffers from?

DALITSCH

Based on the evidence from examination and tests of her teeth, the condition is caused by poison from radioactive substances.

GROSSMAN

Do you believe that Mrs. Donahue is today capable of manual labor?

Dr. Dalitsch shifts his gaze to meet Catherine's.

DALITSCH  
No, she is not.

GROSSMAN  
Is she capable of earning any  
livelihood at all?

DALITSCH  
She can not.

GROSSMAN  
Do you believe this condition to be  
temporary or permanent?

DALITSCH  
Permanent.

Catherine inhales. She drops her head. Tom's grip tightens  
against her shoulders.

GROSSMAN  
Do you believe her condition is  
fatal?

Dr. Dalitsch pauses. He meets Grossman's gaze. He glances at  
Catherine then back to Grossman. His eyes shift to Judge  
Marvel's.

MARVEL  
Will you please answer?

DALITSCH  
In her presence?

Catherine looks up. Tears slide down her face. Sobs shake her  
frame. She slips down her chair and covers her hands.

TOM  
Catherine?

Catherine straightens. She screams. Her back arches. She  
gasps for air and moans. She collapses and slides out of her  
seat. DR. WEINER, 40s, thick, rushes forward and catches her.

Tom leaps from his seat and dashes to her side. He holds her  
as she sobs, mouth agape. Gaps show in her teeth.

Several reporters rush forward and snap pictures. Flashing  
lights surround the couple. Dr. Weiner checks her pulse.

Judge Marvel bangs his gavel.

MARVEL  
Order!

Charlotte kneels next to Catherine. She offers a cup of water.

TOM

Catherine? Can you hear me? Please,  
it's Tom.

Lights flash. Tom looks up. His eyes widen. He looks at around him at the crowd. His gaze lands on Grossman.

TOM (CONT'D)

Can you help us carry her out in  
the chair?

GROSSMAN

Of course.

Tom, Grossman, and Dr. Weiner lift Catherine and carry her out.

Marvel bangs his gavel once. The crowd looks back.

MARVEL

I call for an immediate recess. We  
will continue the hearing once she  
has gone.

Grossman and Magid nod.

INT. COURTHOUSE - BAILIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

A neat room with a large desk. The door bursts open. Charlotte hurries inside. Charlotte lays out a fur coat.

Tom, Grossman, and Dr. Weiner carry Catherine inside. They lift her from her chair and lay her against the desk.

Charlotte grabs a stack of files that read: "Birth Records". She tucks it under Catherine's head. Tom grabs one hand and strokes her hair with the other.

Catherine wheezes. Tears stream down her face.

CATHERINE

Don't leave me, Tom.

TOM

I'm staying right here, Catherine.

Charlotte stands to one side. She clutches her rosary and mouths prayers.

INT. COURTHOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Marvel confers with the Bailiff. Dr. Weiner exits the office. Marvel looks up.

MARVEL  
Can she continue?

WEINER  
No, Your Honor. Mrs. Donahue is  
suffering from a total collapse.

Dr. Weiner takes off his glasses and wipes his forehead.

WEINER (CONT'D)  
She will not live much longer.

Dr. Weiner replaces his glasses and squares his shoulders.

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tom leans over Catherine. She sleeps. On the other side, Charlotte sits.

TOM  
Will you watch over her? I feel it  
is my duty to be at the courthouse  
and- and stand in her stead.

CHARLOTTE  
Of course.

TOM  
Thank you.

Tom picks up his hat. He stares at Catherine. He opens the door and exits.

INT. COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM - DAY

Marvel faces Grossman and Magid. Dr. Dalitsch perches on the witness stand.

The door opens. Tom slips inside. He walks to the front pew and sits.

MARVEL  
We will now proceed. Counsel.

Grossman stands.



GROSSMAN  
Your Honor, I would like to  
continue questioning the witness.

MARVEL  
Proceed.

GROSSMAN  
Dr. Dalitsch, as we left off, is  
Mrs. Donahue's condition fatal?

DALITSCH  
It is in her case.

GROSSMAN  
And given your expertise, what is a  
reasonable amount of time left to  
Mrs. Donahue's life?

Dr. Dalitsch glances at Tom.

DALITSCH  
Uh, that is, we can conjecture,  
given the type of treatments she  
receives and the care--

GROSSMAN  
Dr. Dalitsch. Are you an expert in  
Mrs. Donahue's case or not?

Dalitsch nods. He inhales.

DALITSCH  
Months. At most, she has a few  
months left to live.

Tom's eyes fill with tears.

GROSSMAN  
Thank you.

MARVEL  
Defense?

Magid stands. He consults his notes.

MAGID  
In your opinion, is radium a  
poison?

DALITSCH  
I believe that radium has poisoned  
her system.

MAGID

Radioactive substances may be  
abrasive, but certainly not  
poisonous.

Dalitsch raises his eyebrows and shakes his head.

MONTAGE

Dr. Weiner, Dr. Loffler, and Dr. Dalitsch each provide  
evidence.

-Dr. Weiner leans forward.

WEINER

She is beyond a doubt in the  
terminal stages of the disease.

-Dr. Loffler stretches his hands and points to the door.

LOFFLER

Mrs. Donahue has but a short time  
to live. There is absolutely no  
hope.

-Dr. Dalitsch looks at Judge Marvel.

DALITSCH

There is a definite causal  
relationship between her employment  
and the condition in which I found  
her.

-Dr. Weiner shakes his head.

WEINER

The radioactive compounds had a  
poisonous effect upon Mrs.  
Donahue's system.

-Dr. Loffler adjusts his glasses.

LOFFLER

The effect of the radiation was not  
merely what is ordinarily termed  
abrasive, but what comes under the  
medical definition of poisons.

-Dr. Dalitsch shrugs.

DALITSCH

The evidence is without question.  
Mrs. Donahue will soon die from  
radiation poisoning.

END OF MONTAGE

Magid turns and addresses the room.

MAGID

The company's position is that their former employees cannot recover compensation under the new section of the law because that relates only to diseases incurred from poisons as a result of occupation and the firm has determined radium is not a poison. Therefore, they cannot be held liable.

Tom and Al frown and shake their heads.

MAGID (CONT'D)

Radium poisoning is a phrase that is convenient for doctors to describe the effects of radioactive substances on the body.

GROSSMAN

Did you not recently argue in the case of Inez Vellat vs. Radium Luminous Corporation that radium was in fact a poison?

MAGID

Objection. I am not under interrogation here.

MARVEL

Sustained.

GROSSMAN

Then can you provide expert evidence that radium is not a poison?

MAGID

Not at this time.

GROSSMAN

I see.

Tom drops his head and sobs. A reporter leads him outside.

Charlotte enters. She approaches Grossman. They whisper to each other. Grossman nods.

GROSSMAN (CONT'D)  
Your Honor, Mrs. Donahue has  
recovered from her collapse and  
wishes to continue giving evidence.

Dr. Weiner, Dr. Loffler, and Dr. Dalitsch rise.

MARVEL  
Yes, doctors?

WEINER  
It is our opinion that she is too  
ill to leave her bed as she remains  
in a state of complete collapse.

LOFFLER  
The revelations today were  
extremely hard on her body.

DALITSCH  
Were she forced to continue as a  
witness, it might prove immediately  
fatal to her.

CHARLOTTE  
Catherine - Mrs. Donahue - is quite  
insistent that she finish.

GROSSMAN  
If I may. Can we not continue the  
hearing tomorrow at her bedside? If  
she cannot come here, then we can  
bring the courtroom to her.

Marvel steeples his hands. He frowns. After a few moments, he  
nods.

MARVEL  
Very well. In light of today's  
events, I will grant this change of  
venue.

He bangs his gavel.

MARVEL (CONT'D)  
Court adjourned.

Judge Marvel stands and exits. Magid gathers his paperwork.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - FRONT STEPS - DAY

Grossman exits the doors. A swarm of reporters approach. He  
stops and holds up his hands. The crowd quiets.

GROSSMAN

Upon consideration of Mrs.  
Donahue's collapse, our hearing  
will continue at her bedside  
tomorrow morning.

Grossman sweeps his gaze across the crowd.

GROSSMAN (CONT'D)

That is, in case she is alive.

Grossman turns and strides away.

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Pearl fixes Catherine's hair. Tom props her up. Charlotte  
offers her water.

A KNOCK sounds. Tom opens it. Grossman stands there.

GROSSMAN

Mr. Donahue.

TOM

Thank you for coming.

Grossman enters. Tom closes the door.

A KNOCK sounds. Tom opens it. Marvel stands on the doorstep.  
Tom steps back.

TOM (CONT'D)

Welcome, your Honor.

Marvel nods and points.

MARVEL

My secretary, Carol, here to take  
notes.

TOM

Please come in.

Marvel and Carol enter. Tom swings the door. A hand stops it.  
Tom looks out. Magid stands.

TOM (CONT'D)

Oh. Right. Didn't see you. Please.  
Come in.

Magid marches past. Tom looks out.

Four reporters stand at the door.

REPORTER ONE

I'm here representing Ottawa Daily Times.

TOM

Right. Come in, everyone.

The reporters file in. Tom closes the door. He slips through the crowd. He sinks onto the bed next to Catherine. On the opposite side, Pearl and Charlotte sit against the wall.

Grossman sits next to Catherine, notepad in hand.

MARVEL

Is Mrs. Donahue well enough to begin?

Catherine flutters her eyes.

CATHERINE

I can... speak.

MARVEL

Very well. Let this hearing resume now. Prosecution?

GROSSMAN

I'd like you to demonstrate for us how you were taught to point, as you described yesterday.

Grossman holds out a child's paintbrush. Magid rises.

MAGID

Objection. We object to the use of the brush, as there is no proof it is the same type used in the plant.

Marvel turns to Grossman.

MARVEL

Is there one you could get?

GROSSMAN

Why yes. They're being used now at the Luminous Processes plant, which is using all of the equipment from Radium Dial Company.

Grossman glares at Magid. Magid sits.

MARVEL

Very well. We will proceed with what we have.

Catherine lifts a skeletal hand and accepts the brush.

CATHERINE

Here's how it's done. We dipped it  
in the radium compound mixture.

Catherine dabs at the air. She bends her stiff arm and raises  
the brush to her lips.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

Then we shaped it like this.

Catherine presses the brush between her lips and twists it.  
She withdraws it and shows the now-pointed end.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

I did this thousands of times. It's  
how they told us to do it.

Tom brushes tears from his eyes. Grossman takes the brush.

GROSSMAN

Did any official of Radium Dial  
ever tell you that the U.S.  
Government had condemned the use of  
camel-hair brushes in painting with  
radium compounds?

CATHERINE

No.

MAGID

Objection.

MARVEL

Overruled.

GROSSMAN

Was there any notice posited  
arising from the dangers of radium  
dial-painting with the hair  
brushes?

CATHERINE

No sir. There was none. We even  
ate... our lunches on the work  
tables near the luminous paint. Our  
superintendent, Reed, told us it  
was all right to eat there... but  
not to let... the food spot the  
dials. All they told us was to be  
careful... not to get any grease  
spots... on the dials.

Catherine pants. Her eyes flutter closed. Grossman brushes her shoulder.

GROSSMAN

Thank you, Mrs. Donahue.

TOM

She needs to rest. She's clearly exhausted.

GROSSMAN

I agree. I would like to call up the rest of the witnesses when we return, if I may.

MARVEL

Permission granted. We will adjourn and continue with witness testimonies in the courtroom.

Marvel stands. Carol scribbles, closes her book, and rises. Magid and the Reporters stand. They file out.

Reporter One turns and looks. Tom holds Catherine. Charlotte and Pearl pray, hands on Catherine. Eleanor leads the children into the room.

Reporter One raises his camera and snaps a photo.

INT. NEWS COMPANY - WORK STATION - DAY

A bustling room full of reporters at desks. A RING sounds. Reporter One answers.

REPORTER ONE

This is Ottawa Daily Times... Uh-uh... yes...

He straightens.

REPORTER ONE (CONT'D)

Thank you! I owe you.

Reporter One jumps up and throws on his coat and hat. He rushes out.

EXT. MAIN STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

Reporter One hurries through a press of people, hand on his hat.



PASSERBY

Watch it!

REPORTER ONE

Sorry. Story of the decade!

Reporter One slips past the crowd.

EXT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Reporter One lopes to the door and bangs on it. He waits. He bangs on it again. The door swings open.

TOM

My wife and children are trying to rest.

REPORTER ONE

I'm sorry, Mr. Donahue. I just wanted to be the first to congratulate your wife.

Tom steps out the door.

TOM

What are you talking about?

REPORTER ONE

Judge Marvel finished his ruling. In favor of Mrs. Donahue.

Tom exhales and drops his head.

REPORTER ONE (CONT'D)

Mr. Donahue?

Tom lifts his head.

TOM

Thank you for coming all the way over. I'm sure our lawyer will be here soon with the details.

Reporter One tips his hat. Tom steps inside and closes the door.

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tom turns away from the door. He approaches the bed and sits. Catherine stirs.

CATHERINE  
Was there... someone--

TOM  
Yes. One of the reporters came by.

CATHERINE  
There's word?

TOM  
There is. Judge Marvel has ruled in  
your favor.

Catherine closes her eyes. She cries.

CATHERINE  
Praise the Lord.

She lifts her hands and sketches a slight cross over her  
chest. Tom wraps his hands around hers.

TOM  
I'm sure Mr. Grossman will be here  
soon with news. Why don't you rest  
until then?

CATHERINE  
The children--

TOM  
They're fine. Now rest.

Catherine lifts Tom's hand to her lips. She closes her eyes.

EXT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Grossman opens the gate and strides to the door. He knocks.  
Tom opens it.

GROSSMAN  
The verdict is in.

TOM  
So we've heard. Reporter just came  
by. Come on in.

Tom steps back.

INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Catherine reclines against the headboard of her bed. Tommy and Mary Jane sit and play. Eleanor reclines on the sofa and sews.

Grossman strides inside. Tom follows and closes the door. Grossman takes off his hat and approaches the bed.

GROSSMAN

Mrs. Donahue.

Catherine rolls her head and lifts her gaze.

CATHERINE

(whispers)

Mr. Grossman. What a... delight...  
to see you.

GROSSMAN

And it is always a pleasure to see  
you and your lovely family.

Tom sits on the bed and takes Catherine's hand.

TOM

Mr. Grossman has more news for us.

GROSSMAN

If you're up to it.

CATHERINE

I may not have... much strength,  
but this, I have been... praying  
for... so long.

GROSSMAN

Well, as you've heard, Judge Marvel  
ruled in your favor. This is  
amazing news for all of the women  
who suffer afflictions from their  
time working at the company.

CATHERINE

That is wondrous news indeed.

GROSSMAN

It is. And I am proud to have  
helped all of you right this wrong.  
That said, despite the company  
leaving behind money in the trust  
just for this exact scenario, they  
are likely going to keep fighting.

TOM

How so?

GROSSMAN

They will file an appeal of the decision.

TOM

What does that mean exactly?

GROSSMAN

In the short term, it means the money you're owed isn't coming to you yet.

TOM

But she needs treatment. Anyone can see that.

GROSSMAN

I agree, Mr. Donahue. But the company has the right to ask a higher court to review the ruling.

TOM

So what can we do?

GROSSMAN

For now, sit tight. Don't lose hope. God has taken us this far.

CATHERINE

We've opened up the way, haven't we?

GROSSMAN

You have, Mrs. Donahue. For you and all the others to get compensation for all you've spent on medical costs.

CATHERINE

Thank you, Mr. Grossman. We wouldn't have won without you.

GROSSMAN

Mark my words, we still have a battle to wage, but I am confident the law will prevail.

CATHERINE

Praise God for His mercy. My time may be short, but I'm pleased that this will help other women in need.

(MORE)

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

If this saves even one life, one family, from suffering as mine has, then it will have been worth it. I only wish I could stay a little longer. For my children and my husband. But I am blessed to know such love in this world.

She stops and coughs. Tom hands her water.

TOM

Now, if you please, Catherine needs her rest.

GROSSMAN

Of course. It has been my pleasure to get this case this far. Don't give up just yet.

Grossman places his hat on his head and tips it to Catherine. He strides out. Tom turns to Eleanor.

TOM

Will you take the children upstairs? I want a few moments with Catherine.

ELEANOR

Of course. Tommy, Mary Jane. Give your mother a kiss.

Tommy and Mary Jane each kiss Catherine on the cheeks.

CATHERINE

My beautiful children.

She hugs them. Tom ruffles their hair. Eleanor takes their hands and leads them out. Tom sighs.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

We won...

Her eyes drift closed. Tom sits next to her and picks up her hand.

TOM

I suppose we did. Just... not quite.

Tom leans over and kisses her forehead. Tears stream down his face. He closes his eyes and shakes with silent sobs.

END OF ACT THREE

TAG

INSERT TITLE CARD: "Radium Dial company appealed the decision - eight times. The case made it to the Supreme Court, where it was tossed out and the original ruling upheld."

INSERT TITLE CARD: "Thanks to Catherine's bravery, the other women suffering from radiation poisoning were able to move forward with their suits."

INSERT TITLE CARD: "On the morning of July 27th, 1938, after the second appeal, Catherine H Donahue passed away in the arms of her beloved Tom."