

# **SILENT SKY**

by: Lauren Gunderson

Directed by: Brittany Bara

## **AUDITION SIDES**

Notes:

Actors Auditioning do not have to have any of the following monologues memorized, but should have familiarity with the text and come in ready to make clear and bold choices.

If you would like to be considered for multiple parts, you only need to choose 1 monologue, except for WILLIAMINA: I would like everyone auditioning for WILLIAMINA to bring in the WILLIAMINA monologue and do their best with the Scottish accent. (accent reference materials have been provided)

## HENRIETTA

It's – the whole thing – it's like music. The stars are music. The pattern. The numbers – When you put them in the right order – they're – Oh my God the blinking is music – it's so simple – Right there!

The pulsing isn't random. There *is* a pattern. (Her big idea) The brightest stars take the longest to blink. *A pattern is a standard.* And if we have a standard we can *compare* stars all over the sky. Right now if we see two stars that look equally as bright, we can't tell which one is the *brighter* star, and which one is the *closer* star. But the pulsing can tell us which is which. *The pulsing is the answer.*

If you think of the notes as the star's brightness. If *this* is the dimmest star gets – (H hits a low note) and *this* is the brightest (H hits a high note). Then the time it takes to get from here (low note) to here (high note) – could tell us *how bright it actually is*, which we could compare to how it *appears*, which could tell us how far away it is, which we could compare to other stars (she plays various chromatic scales) which could tell us how far away *they* are, and if we know *that* we can – we can skip star to star across the deepest space until we know...Exactly where we are.

## MARGARET

I just wonder why you exceed expectation in everything except this family. Even so, Daddy is so proud. You think he isn't. You think he resents your "great escape," and because you never wrote or came home, you wouldn't know. You also wouldn't know that I made you up for him. I wrote letters for you, "from you," brought them in the house every week – So happy – thrilled! – Read them to the whole family – "Look what we got from Henrietta today!" "Oh Daddy, she says hello, she says she loves you, thank you." On and on. Such a comforting fiction.

I did that so that you could have a home to come back to.

## WILLIAMINA

Is it wrong that I like him a wee bit more because of that? I quite enjoyed that little fluster. Speaking of that, has he proposed yet? He always seems like he's going to.

(Laughs)

I'm not laughing at you. I'm not. Love makes us all look a bit stupid.

Oh Henrietta. It's just life. Ridiculous and miraculous and often not funny at all. But better when you're laughing. Especially husbands. Mine abandoned me as soon as we docked in Boston. I was 21, pregnant, poor, and Scottish. So I laughed. Found my way to Dr. Pickering, worked his house as a maid, he brought me here, and here I sit. So I laugh, because that seemed to work.

## ANNIE

You know Will was the first woman to ever hold the title “curator” in astronomy? And the Draper Catalogue is *all* her work – She discovered stars, and nebulae, novae – She’s the reason that I’m here, and even if she has far too much fun I am the first to admit that she is fundamental to this institution.

We have WORK. TO. DO. And Dr. Pickering is a very particular man – Align the spanker with a star. The matching dot indicates how bright that star is. Record magnitude, position, date and repeat until you fill up the logbook. We collect, report, and maintain the largest stellar archive in the world. And we resist the temptation to analyze it.

Can you do this job, Miss Leavitt?

## PETER

There is an ocean liner leaving tomorrow – You should be on it – I'll be on it – I'm saying come with me – to Europe – For a month – or two? You don't have to decide now – but close to now because the liner leaves tomorrow – I said that – Pack warmly – cold at night – We might stop in Spain – And there's dancing and lobster and water and moonlight and bobbing around and that's romantic – or sickening – Either way they'll be an eclipse. Which is fun...

This is a rather large moment for me so I just want to be clear because it took me three years to get this far. So. Your mind and spirit...I quite adore...those things...about you. And I don't expect you to reciprocate immediately or at all, but I feared combusting if I didn't tell you that you've been the brightest object in my day since we met. And we work with stars. And I know I haven't been the most emotive suitor but I have been a thoughtful one, and I hope that counts for something. And I also hope I do not offend you by expressing how deeply I...admire you.