

## Arsenic and Old Lace

One of the best loved American plays of all time, *Arsenic and Old Lace* is set in the home of Abby and Martha Brewster in Brooklyn, NY in the early 1940's. Their nephew Teddy lives there with them although one might argue that he lives on another planet or at least another continent. The old sisters take in roomers but they have standards. The men who rent must be socially and religiously acceptable. Normally down on their luck the men are perceived to be sad and unhappy by the sisters and must be helped to a "better place." The cellar is full of the gentlemen's remains because that's where Teddy buries the malaria victims. Of course Teddy believes that because he also believes he is Teddy Roosevelt and is building the Panama Canal. Add to the mix a very nervous but otherwise normal nephew Mortimer who keeps an eye on his aunts, nephew Jonathan who shows up unannounced and looks like he just stepped out of a horror movie and enough police officers to hold a St. Patrick's Day parade and you have more laughs than the audience can survive.

## Characters

**ABBY BREWSTER (MAJOR) 60's** - A SPINSTER WHO OCCUPIES THE HOUSE WITH HER SISTER MARTHA & NEPHEW TEDDY.

**MARTHA BREWSTER (MAJOR) 60's** - ABBY'S SISTER.

**MORTIMER BREWSTER (MAJOR) 40'S** -NEPHEW OF ABBY & MARTHA. HE'S DRAMA CRITIC FOR THE NEWSPAPER, HE'S A NERVOUS SORT. HE'S ENGAGED TO ELAINE HARPER.

**JONATHAN BREWSTER (MAJOR) 50'S** -NEPHEW OF ABBY & MARTHA. A SINISTER LOOKING MAN WHO BEARS A STRANGE RESEMBLANCE TO BORIS KARLOFF (FRANKENSTEIN).

**DR EINSTEIN (MEDIUM+) 50'S** - HE IS SOMEWHAT RATTY IN APPEARANCE & WEARS THE SMIRK OF A MAN WHO LIVES IN THE PLEASANT HAZE OF ALCOHOL. SOMETHING ABOUT HIM SUGGESTS AN UNFROCKED PRIEST.

**ELAINE HARPER (MEDIUM+) 30** - ENGAGED TO MORTIMER. AN ATTRACTIVE GIRL, THE DAUGHTER OF REV DR HARPER.

**TEDDY BREWSTER (MEDIUM) 40-50** - NEPHEW OF ABBY & MARTHA. HIS LARGE HANDLE BAR MOUSTACHE AS WELL AS HIS ATTIRE & MANNER SUGGEST THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

**OFFICER O'HARA (MEDIUM-)** -A POLICE OFFICER OF UNDETERMINED AGE. HE IS TRYING TO BE A PLAYWRIGHT.

**LIEUTENANT ROONEY (SMALL)** - A POLICE OFFICER OF UNDETERMINED AGE ALTHOUGH THE FACT THAT HE IS A LIEUTENANT SUGGESTS HE'S OLDER THAN THE OTHER OFFICERS.

**OFFICER BROPHY (SMALL)** - A POLICE OFFICER OF UNDETERMINED AGE.

**OFFICER KLEIN (SMALL)** - A POLICE OFFICER OF UNDETERMINED AGE.

**THE REV DR HARPER (SMALL) 50'S** - A MINISTER WHO LIVES NEXT TO THE BREWSTERS.

**MR WITHERSPOON (SMALL) 50'S-60'S** -THE CARETAKER OF HAPPY DALE SANITARIUM,

**MR GIBBS (SMALL) 60'S** -A MAN WHO COMES TO RENT A ROOM.