

Martin Vanderhof (Grandpa)

The patriarch of the Sycamore family, Grandpa Martin Vanderhof, is a wise, kind, and eccentric old man in his seventies. He rejected the conventional path of work and success 35 years ago to enjoy life, advocating for living freely and happily. Grandpa's outlook on life and his refusal to pay income tax are central to the play's theme of individualism versus societal expectations.

Penelope Sycamore (Penny)

Penny is the matriarch of the Sycamore family, a cheerful and slightly scatterbrained woman in her mid-fifties. She writes plays and paints as hobbies, reflecting her free-spirited and creative nature. Penny's nurturing personality and her encouragement of her family's diverse interests embody the play's celebration of personal freedom and artistic expression.

Paul Sycamore

Penny's husband and the father of the Sycamore family, Paul, is an easygoing and inventive man in his mid-fifties. He spends his time in the basement making fireworks with his friend, Mr. De Pinna. Paul's passion for his unconventional hobby highlights the play's theme of pursuing one's interests regardless of societal norms.

Alice Sycamore

The youngest daughter of the Sycamore family, Alice is in her early twenties and works as a secretary. She is the most conventional member of her family, sensible, and grounded. Alice loves her eccentric family but is often embarrassed by their antics, especially when she falls in love with Tony Kirby, the son of a wealthy and conservative family. Her character embodies the tension between societal expectations and individual identity.

Tony Kirby

Tony is Alice's fiancé, a young man in his mid-twenties who works as the Vice President of his father's company. Unlike his strict and business-minded father, Tony is open-minded, warm, and genuinely in love with Alice. He appreciates the Sycamores' unconventional lifestyle, which contrasts his upbringing, representing the play's theme of love transcending social barriers.

Anthony P. Kirby

Tony's father, Mr. Kirby, is a wealthy, conservative businessman in his mid-fifties. He is serious, ambitious, and has rigid expectations for his son. Mr. Kirby's interactions with the Sycamore family reveal the play's critique of materialism and societal pressure, contrasting sharply with the Sycamores' carefree and joyous approach to life.

Miriam Kirby

Tony's mother, Mrs. Kirby, is a conservative and proper woman in her fifties. She shares her husband's values and is initially appalled by the Sycamore family's eccentricities. Her character serves to highlight the contrast between conventional social norms and the Sycamores' nonconformist lifestyle.

Essie Carmichael

Essie is Alice's older sister, a cheerful and somewhat naive woman in her twenties. She dreams of becoming a ballerina and spends her time dancing around the house and making candy. Despite her lack of talent, Essie's dedication to her passion adds to the play's theme of pursuing one's dreams without concern for societal judgment.

Ed Carmichael

Essie's husband, Ed is a mild-mannered man in his thirties who plays the xylophone and prints things as hobbies. He supports Essie's ballet aspirations and enjoys his own unconventional interests. Ed's character contributes to the play's theme of embracing individuality and the joy of simple, personal pleasures.

Rheba

Rheba is the Sycamore family's maid, who is good-natured and efficient. She is a loyal and integral part of the household, participating in the family's activities and adding to the inclusive and accepting atmosphere of the Sycamore home.

Donald

Donald is Rheba's boyfriend, who helps around the Sycamore house. He is easygoing and supportive, reflecting the play's message of community.

Boris Kolenkhov

Kolenkhov is a Russian immigrant and Essie's eccentric ballet teacher. He is bombastic, passionate, and often outspoken about his disdain for the Soviet government. Kolenkhov's character brings a touch of the absurd and emphasizes the play's celebration of diverse personalities and backgrounds.

Mr. De Pinna

Mr. De Pinna is a former iceman who now lives with the Sycamores and helps Paul with his fireworks. He is quirky and enthusiastic about his work with Paul, representing the play's theme of finding joy in unexpected and unconventional pursuits.

Wilbur C. Henderson

Henderson is an Internal Revenue Service agent who comes to collect Grandpa's unpaid taxes. His encounters with the Sycamores underscore the conflict between societal norms and individual freedom, adding to the play's comedic tension.

Gay Wellington

An actress whom Penny meets on a bus and invites home to read one of her plays. She is an alcoholic, gets very drunk, and passes out shortly after arriving at the Sycamore's home.

Grand Duchess Olga Katrina

She was one of the Grand Duchesses of Russia before the Revolution. Since then she has been forced to flee to America where she has found work as a waitress in Childs Restaurant.

Three Men with the Department of Justice

Three agents who come to investigate Ed because of the communist origin of some of the "catchy" quotes he printed and placed in Essie's candy boxes, such as "God is the State – the State is God" and "Dynamite the White House."