**ARSENIC AND OLD LACE** – Character descriptions

Abby Brewster- late 60’s, Victorian charm, a “little darling”

Rev. Dr. Harper- Elaine’s father, upper middle aged, disapproves of the theatre, wary of Elaine’s relationship with Mortimer

Teddy Brewster-Abby and Martha’s nephew, mid 40’s, looks like and believes he is Teddy Roosevelt

Officer Brophy – any age, Brooklyn street cop

Officer Klein – any age, Brooklyn street cop

Martha Brewster- “sweet, elderly woman with Victorian charm”

Elaine Harper- “attractive girl in her 20’s”, Mortimer’s fiancée, surprisingly wise in the ways of the world for a minister’s daughter

Mortimer Brewster- 20’s – 30’s, a nephew, drama critic, exhibits genuine affection for Elaine, his 2 aunts, and Teddy, protects the aunts, stands up to Jonathan even when it’s dangerous

Mr. Gibbs – an elderly gentleman who comes in to see the room for rent

Jonathan Brewster- 20 – 40, a nephew, a vicious criminal with a penchant for torture, is supposed to look like Boris Karloff , has just escaped from a mental institution

Dr. Einstein- 35 – 55 - Jonathan’s evil sidekick, has a German accent, his drinking caused him to remake Jonathan to look like Boris Karloff, is sympathetic with the aunts, would like to leave and avoid more trouble

Officer O’Hara- any age – so excited about a play that he wrote that he leaves Mortimer tied to a chair so he can tell him all about it

Lieutenant Rooney- any age {probably older than the cops}, a “tough, driving, dominating officer”

Mr. Witherspoon- “an elderly, tight-lipped, disciplinarian”, superintendent of Happy Dale Sanitarium, where Teddy may go after the aunts’ passing

* There will be a good deal of flexibility with the ages of the characters. Often, it may be a case of who can “play” the age suggested.
* There may be some flexibility in the gender of the characters, as we would like to include more females.
* Both Mortimer and Elaine flirt with each other quite often, caught in the throes of young love.
* We do not expect anyone to look like Boris Karloff, but presenting a scary, intimidating Jonathan is important.
* These descriptions are not intended to limit the actor, but to help with a starting point for those less familiar with the script.