

The Play That Goes Wrong Character Descriptions

Important Note: A crucial thing to remember is that the actors of Cornley are setting out to tell the story of *The Murder at Haversham Manor*. Everything in the show must of course be played for truth and not for laughs or parody. For Cornley this show is not a comedy, it's a serious play, and it is so important to them all that it goes well, so when it goes wrong it hurts. Without that solid structure to support the comedy, the show will unravel.

It is also useful to remember that the actors of the Cornley Drama Society are not bad actors but the victims of an unfortunate circumstance. The comedy comes from their unwavering endeavour to continue, their bad choices in trying to get out of the situations they find themselves in and their optimistic belief that their luck will change.

It is vital everyone works to present “the play that goes wrong”, not “the play that’s being done badly”.

Accents aren’t required, but if you can confidently do the listed accent, you are welcome to do so. RP accent = Received pronunciation/British accent.

CHRIS – The director of the play within the play (*The Murder at Haversham Manor*), Chris is uptight, overly serious, and increasingly frustrated as everything spirals out of control. He also plays Inspector Carter and struggles to keep the show going despite mounting disasters. RP accent.

ROBERT – A pompous, overconfident actor who plays Thomas Colley Moore. He believes he’s a brilliant performer and never acknowledges mistakes, even when things go obviously wrong around him. RP accent.

DENNIS – A nervous, dim-witted actor playing Perkins the butler. Dennis is eager but lacks talent and understanding of the script, often mispronouncing words and taking stage directions literally. Dennis/Perkins can be played by all genders. RP accent.

MAX – An exuberant and childlike actor who plays both Cecil Haversham and Arthur the gardener. Max has no prior acting experience but loves the attention and frequently breaks character to soak up audience applause. RP accent.

SANDRA – A dramatic and self-absorbed actress playing Florence Colley Moore. Sandra is committed to her performance, even after being knocked unconscious and replaced mid-show. RP accent.

ANNIE – The stage manager who reluctantly steps into the role of Florence when Sandra is incapacitated. Initially shy and hesitant, Annie becomes increasingly confident and competitive once on stage. American accent.

TREVOR – The tech operator and stagehand, Trevor is indifferent to the production and more focused on his personal life. He's forced into the spotlight as things fall apart and ends up performing against his will. American accent.

JONATHAN – A cheerful and enthusiastic but painfully unskilled actor playing Charles Haversham, the "murder victim." Jonathan struggles to stay still while "dead," often breaking character with exaggerated reactions or mistimed movements. He's eager to do well but lacks the subtlety or control needed for stage acting, which adds to the chaos. RP accent.