

Harvey Character Breakdown

Harvey is an ensemble comedy filled with eccentric characters, mistaken identities, physical comedy, and moments of genuine heart. Every role requires strong character choices, commitment to the world of the play, and the ability to listen and react onstage.

Elwood P. Dowd

Charming, gentle, and completely comfortable with himself. Elwood is unfailingly polite, generous, and sincere. His best friend is Harvey, a six-foot-tall invisible rabbit, and Elwood sees nothing unusual about that. This role requires excellent listening skills, subtle comedic timing, emotional honesty, and the ability to hold the center of the play without forcing the comedy.

Veta Louise Simmons

Elwood's older sister and one of the largest roles in the show. Veta desperately wants a respectable social life for herself and her daughter, but Elwood and Harvey continually complicate her plans. High-energy, anxious, dramatic, and deeply human. This role requires strong comedic timing, physical comedy, emotional range, and the ability to handle rapid shifts in energy.

Myrtle Mae Simmons

Veta's daughter and Elwood's niece. Myrtle Mae is frustrated by the effect her uncle's reputation has on her social prospects and is eager for independence, romance, and a life beyond her family. A strong character role for an actor with comedic instincts and a willingness to make bold choices.

Dr. William Chumley

The respected head of Chumley's Rest. Intelligent, authoritative, and accustomed to being the most important person in the room. As the events of the play unfold, Chumley finds his confidence and understanding of reality increasingly challenged. Requires strong presence, comedic timing, and the ability to balance authority with vulnerability.

Dr. Lyman Sanderson

A young psychiatrist working at Chumley's Rest. Intelligent, confident, ambitious, and occasionally too certain of his own judgment. His relationship with Nurse Kelly adds another layer to the character. Requires strong scene work, listening skills, and comedic timing.

Ruth Kelly, R.N.

A nurse at Chumley's Rest who is capable, observant, and more emotionally perceptive than many of the people around her. She has a complicated romantic dynamic with Dr. Sanderson. A strong role for an actor who can balance grounded character work with comedy.

Wilson

An attendant at Chumley's Rest. Physical, intimidating, blunt, and not particularly interested in subtlety. Wilson provides opportunities for physical comedy but should remain a believable person rather than becoming a cartoon. Requires strong physical characterization, commitment, and comedic instincts.

Betty Chumley

Dr. Chumley's wife. Warm, sociable, curious, and immediately charmed by Elwood. Though smaller in stage time, Betty makes a memorable impression and offers excellent opportunities for character work and comedy.

Judge Omar Gaffney

The Dowd family's longtime friend and attorney. Practical, loyal, and increasingly caught in the chaos surrounding Elwood, Veta, and Harvey. Requires strong reactions, clear character choices, and the ability to support fast-paced ensemble comedy.

Ethel Chauvenet

A longtime family friend whom Veta hopes to impress. Ethel is socially conscious, opinionated, and horrified by Elwood's introduction of Harvey. A smaller character role with excellent opportunities for bold comedic choices.

Miss Johnson

The maid in the Dowd household. A small role that helps establish the world of the play and the household's relationship with Elwood and Harvey.

E. J. Lofgren

A cab driver who appears near the end of the play and delivers one of the story's most important observations. A small but significant role requiring strong storytelling skills and sincerity.

Harvey

A six-foot-tall invisible white rabbit and Elwood's closest friend.

Harvey is never traditionally seen onstage, but his presence shapes the entire production. The company will work together to establish Harvey's reality through eyelines, reactions, movement, and ensemble storytelling.

