

## Characters in ORSON WELLES' Films

### IDEALIST / DECISIVE

**Charles Foster Kane (Citizen Kane)** Even though he owns the 6th largest fortune in the world, Kane chooses to be the publisher of a small New York paper as "it would be fun." Instead of focusing on making more money, Kane decides to become a champion of the underprivileged. His Declaration of Principles sets him up to be the voice of the common people. By doing so, he also goes against his own business interests. When confronted, he admits he is actually two people: one of them is the rich Kane and the other is the Kane with a duty to protect "decent, hard-working people."

**Lucy Morgan (The Magnificent Ambersons)** Lucy's dominant personality trait is her steadfastness and her insistence to follow her logic rather than her heart. From the moment she meets George and up to the moment they split up, she knows they are incompatible. She is shell-shocked by George forcefully inviting her to the sleigh ride. When he tells her he wants to be "a yachtsman," this is not the answer the daughter of an inventor wants to hear. She is insistent that they will not marry, "Not for years." During the send-off, she pretends she doesn't care about whether they may never see each other again. She knows she is in love, but she also knows that there is no future in and with George. Just like the head-strong Isabel she is supposed to replicate in the movie, Lucy trusts her instincts and spurns a man she loves.

**Agent Wilson (The Stranger)** Agent Wilson is determined to catch the "obscene" monster that is Franz Kindler because he wants this Nazi horror to be eradicated, root and branch. He is willing to release Konrad Meinike because he knows he will lead them to Kindler, something the Commission is reluctant about. This doesn't deter Wilson because he knows Kindler won't stop. To him, Kindler is a cancerous cell that needs to be dealt with before it spreads once again. That's why he tells the Commission that he is taking full responsibility. His determination comes from his desperation.

**Miguel "Mike" Vargas (Touch of Evil)** As an officer of the court and representative of his country, Miguel Vargas feels obligated to help Hank instead of enjoying his honeymoon with his wife. His country's reputation and his own moral code beleave him to ensure that the law is upheld. When Hank interrogates Sanchez, Miguel sticks around to observe as he is mindful of Hank's racism and dark past. In order to expose Hank, he leaves his wife in a remote motel and investigates Hank's old case files. Miguel's strict honour code reminds Hank of an angel so much so that Hank accuses his partner of becoming an angel himself by way of association: "Vargas will turn you into one of these here starry-eyed idealists," he says, mockingly. But that's who Miguel is: An honourable idealist who is touched but not wholly stained by evil.

**Josef K. (The Trial)** K. is a character who is supposed to cower and acquiesce. Like the other accused men, he is expected to exist in an indeterminate state. His family and friends as well as the law encourage him to follow usual procedures, which are designed to keep him arrested. However, K. is not afraid of taking the road less trodden. When he witnesses how Bloch has been made to wait for years, he takes his fate into his own hands by dismissing his attorney. At the court house, while each and every accused are waiting for their trials in a quiet acceptance, K. tells the guard to let him out instead. "Can you tell me how to get out of here? I've had enough of this place," K. says, not mincing his words. "I only came here because I wanted to see if the inside of this famous legal system was as loathsome as I guessed it was." He makes every attempt to reach his own decisions and is ready to face the consequences. His decisiveness is an expected result that even his executioners don't know how to handle.

**Henry "Hotspur" Percy (Chimes at Midnight)** Percy's wife doesn't understand his rush to go to war. She wants him to tell her the truth, or she will break his finger. Percy is almost amused at his wife's anger. "Love? I love thee not! I care not for thee, Kate," he says as he prepares to leave. "This is no world to play with mammals and to tilt with lips. We must have bloody noses and cracked

crowns." Percy wants the war. Percy wants power. And he wants it *now*. He cannot wait to receive what is his by right. After losing the one-on-one combat with Prince Hal, Hotspur highlights his ambition in the form of his own eulogy: "I better brook the loss of brittle life than these proud titles thou hast won of me. They wound my thoughts worse than thy sword my flesh."

## PRINCIPLED

**Arthur Bannister (*The Lady from Shanghai*)** Power is what makes Arthur Bannister tick. It's his ability to shape not only his life, but the lives of people around him through the use of his fortune, status, and information. He has never lost a case. His marriage is based on blackmail. He mocks and bullies his partner, George, which probably forces the latter to join forces with Elsa in a plot to kill him. Like most dominant men, his power originates from his weakness. He is insecure about the class his mother, and by extension he, was born into. He can't change that, but he can hurt the man who kept him out of his club due to his mother being "a Manchester Greek." That is power for Arthur. Power gives him the right and agency to erase the past and repackage himself with an upper-class façade as well as to exploit the past so he can carry around a trophy wife who bestows upon him that upper-class status.

**Macduff (*Macbeth*)** Macduff is resolved to kill Macbeth because he wants to establish the true heir as the king, but his individual quest is built upon his revenge. It's not a chaotic or uncontrolled grief, but a sharp and debilitating one that provides him with motivation and strength. "But I must also feel it as a man," he tells Malcolm, who urges him to weaponize his grief. Macduff will do that, for sure, but not before he incorporates the sorrowful memory of his family into his revenge. It becomes potent through love and remembrance. There is intention, resolve and power behind his quest for revenge. As he prepares to duel with Macbeth, he lets the tyrant know what fuels him: "My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still ... I have no words. My voice is in my sword." His family is his revenge.

**Sir John Falstaff (*Chimes at Midnight*)** Falstaff's reluctance to join the war could be construed as cowardly, or his refusal to part with his life along with other men in the service of the king could be seen as treason; however, Falstaff is not bound by the code of chivalry that govern these men. "What is honor?" he asks Prince Hal before the battle begins. "Honor hath no skill in surgery. Honour is a mere scutcheon. And so ends my catechism." This is his scripture. For Falstaff, there is nothing more honourable than wanting to stay alive and keep drinking wine. His code of honour, if any, is to stay alive and enjoy life. "If I had a thousand sons, the first humane principle I would teach them would be," says Falstaff after the war is won, "to forswear thin potations and to addict themselves to sack!" His principles do not fit the period or meet the expectations of a knight. That doesn't mean Falstaff has not built a code for himself.

## CYNICAL

**Jack Hannaford (*The Other Side of the Wind*)** Hannaford doesn't like to talk about the movie he's currently making. He doesn't want to talk about himself. He doesn't even think that he's doing something original. "It's alright to borrow from each other. What we must never do is borrow from ourselves," he tells Otterlake as a thinly-veiled critic of his movies. But one can also sense that Hannaford's words refer to Hannaford himself. In the closing soliloquy of the movie, he questions his own art: "Who knows, maybe you can stare too hard at something. Drain out the virtue, suck out the living juice." He's cynical about the whole process of filmmaking and his latest movie remains unfinished as he dies.

## CONTEMPLATIVE / REMORSEFUL

**Lady Macbeth (*Macbeth*)** This being a Shakespearean tragedy, Lady Macbeth cannot escape her own sorrowful end. She is intricately connected to Macbeth's destiny in that him falling into despair triggers more murders, which in turn pushed Lady Macbeth into depression. After the slaying of Lady Macduff and her little son, she realizes that they are too deep "in blood." They have gone too far. Witnessing her husband's descent into insanity, she tells him: "Naught's had, all's spent, where our desire is got without content. 'Tis safer to be that which we destroy. Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy." They are worse than corpses. During her sleepwalking, she keeps rubbing her hands to wash the blood off her skin to no avail. The murder has marked Lady Macbeth, and she knows:

"What, will these hands ne'er be clean?" The gentlewoman's judgement of her summarizes the rupture in Lady Macbeth's soul: "I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body." Her suicide completes her ironic circle with its recall of her early statement: "What's done cannot be undone.—To bed, to bed, to bed!"

**Macbeth (Macbeth)** Despite his many fouls and faults, Macbeth emerges as a philosopher-king capable of deep contemplation of his self and his place in the world. His soul is wounded by the atrocious murder he has committed. And yet, it's also this split self that offers deep contemplation in the face of evil. Immediately after killing the king, Macbeth confesses that his life as he knew it has now ended "for, from this instant, there's nothing serious in mortality: All is but toys: renown and grace is dead; the wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees is left this vault to brag of." His tragedy is that he cannot stop because he's imprisoned in the promised future, having sacrificed his honourable past and present. In one of the most memorable passages in all Shakespeare, Macbeth puts forth the meaningless of his life: "Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage then is heard no more. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

## INTUITIVE

**Hank Quinlan (Touch of Evil)** One of the perceived advantages of having a limping "game leg" is that it sometimes gives Hank a twinge, "like folks do for a change of weather." That's how he is able to solve crimes. The moment he arrives at the explosion site, he immediately and correctly intuits that dynamite must have been planted in the car. He guesses, again correctly, that Miguel's attacker was a cartel thug. Although he later frames Sanchez, the movie's ending tells us that Hank's intuition was correct all along. The suggestion here is that Hank has developed so potent a moral code based on his clairvoyance that it has replaced the law.

## TORTURED

**Arthur Bannister (The Lady from Shanghai)** Though rich and incredibly successful, Arthur is not a soul at peace. His constant drinking to the point of passing out points to a deep-seated disquiet. He is indeed a tortured man, suspicious of everyone around him, including his wife and his partner. In a way, he wants out, but he is so deep in that his survival depends on the survival of others, especially his wife. When his detective tells him about the plot to kill him, he doesn't seem to be bothered. It's almost like an opportunity of escape for him. He clearly knows something incriminating about her. Whatever it is, he is aware that it will also bring about the end for him. The secret both makes and unmakes the couple. "Of course, killing you is killing myself," Arthur says in the famous hall of mirrors scene. "It's the same thing."

**Bloch (The Trial)** While talking to K. for the first time, Bloch wants to tell him about his case but is worried that K. might sell him out. "You won't give me away?" he asks K. "[The Advocate] is a revengeful man, very, very revengeful." This short exchange summarises the torment Bloch has received from the Advocate. Not only has he been made to wait even to be able to see the Advocate to receive counsel, he is also kept in a small cupboard with food and water delivered through a ventilator's gap. He is at a stage where he has to beg to the Advocate on his knees so that he can keep tormenting Bloch. And we know he has done so: "Yes, once he's aroused, he could do anything," Bloch tells a confused K. who asks if the Advocate would think of harming a client. "He doesn't draw any distinctions."

## ROMANTIC

**Eugene Morgan (The Magnificent Ambersons)** Eugene's love for Isabel foregrounds his character as well as the movie itself. The narrator (Orson Welles) introduces the town and the setting through Eugene's love—or more specifically Eugene's love for an Amberson. As the narrator discusses how people and traditions have changed over time, it is Eugene who is always shown on the screen, helping us trace the progress. When the narration focuses on vanished customs like the serenade, we watch Eugene break his bass fiddle trying to impress Isabel Amberson. The movie bookends itself with Eugene's love. At the beginning, it is silly and performative. In time, it gets hardened and becomes a tragic stone that Eugene cannot get out. It becomes such a blind spot that he is unable to notice Aunt Fanny's similarly hardened love for him. Even though the target of his love is long dead, Eugene stays true to his love and his beloved. His final act in the movie is to take the

son of his beloved under his care so that he'd "been true at last to my true love."

**Mily (Mr. Arkadin)** It is repeatedly suggested or insinuated that Mily's feelings for Stratten are much stronger than Stratten's for her. Stratten wants to take advantage of this great opportunity to blackmail a wealthy man, so he gets very serious about the plan. Mily wants that, too, but the problem is that she doesn't *just* want to get rich. She wants to get rich *with* him. Stratten's intimacy with Raina bothers Mily in spite of the fact that his flirtation is nothing but business. Her threat to expose Stratten is less about her power than the lack thereof. She tries to coax Stratten into treating her well by holding out information regarding Sophie, but she can't even last even a minute before giving him the name. She wants a kiss; she wants Stratten to stop courting with Raina; she wants him to take her to wherever he is going. The message is clear: Let us be one of those romantic criminal couples, in the Bonnie and Clyde mould.

## PROGRESSIVE

**Desdemona (Othello)** It may sound like an oxymoron to call Desdemona progressive when she says things like: "And so much duty as my mother showed to you...I may profess due to the Moor, my lord" or "I would not stay to offend you" after being slapped by Othello in front of everyone. Still, Desdemona appears to be immune to widespread prejudice, bigotry and xenophobia directed against people of darker complexion in her society. She marries the Moor just because he is who he is: an adventurous story-teller with a soft heart. Iago's portrayal of typical Venetian women who enter into marriage "[o]f her own clime, complexion, and degree" does not apply to Desdemona, a noble exception Iago unfortunately abuses. Even when Desdemona is put on the spot before the Duke, the council and her father—read: patriarchy—she does not wilt, defending her love against all of these men and legitimizing her union with Othello. And for that, she is punished.

**Emilia (Othello)** Though Emilia obeys Iago in the same fashion as the women of that era, she also speaks of the equality of sexes and the agency women should exercise. During her conversation with Desdemona about infidelity, Desdemona insists that neither she nor Emilia are that type of people who would cheat on their husbands. Emilia pushes back by arguing that there *are* women who certainly do it. Why not? "Let husbands know their wives have sense like them. They see and smell and have their palates both for sweet and sour," she says in a long soliloquy that reminds us of *The Merchant of Venice*. Hers is the Shylock speech but for women: "And don't we have physical attractions, desire for fun, and weakness, just like men?" The language is proto-feminist, provocative and powerful, more like a sermon than an argument. And it's her prerogative to speak against the injustice even if it means speaking against her man. Before being murdered by Iago, Emilia unmasks the enmeshment: "I will not charm my tongue," she says defiantly in the company of powerful men. "I'm bound to speak."

## RACIST

**Hank Quinlan (Touch of Evil)** Whenever Hank interacts with a Mexican, he makes derogatory remarks. He tells Miguel that he doesn't sound like a Mexican since Miguel can speak English very well and without an accent. Later, when Miguel wants Hank to investigate his wife's harassment, Hank insinuates that she may have been willingly picked up by the young Mexican boy. When Miguel is incensed, Hank tells his partner "let's go back to civilisation," meaning the US side of the border. He cannot tolerate hearing a foreign language. He berates Sanchez and Miguel whenever they speak Spanish because Hank "don't speak Mexican," another thinly-veiled insult. When Miguel tells Hank that the shoe box was empty earlier, Hank gives a meaningful pause and says: "I know how you feel. *You people* are touchy." For Hank, meeting one Mexican means meeting all Mexicans. He regards them as inferior, sentimental and therefore untrustworthy.

## LOGICAL / PRAGMATIST

**Lucy Morgan (The Magnificent Ambersons)** Lucy believes that people will have to have a profession because life should be earned. She is fully committed to her father's automobile business and supports the future his father's inventions will bring. Things are not settled for her unless she knows the shape of the future. The only thing that guarantees stability is the profession one chooses. Therefore, George is not "it." He functions as a litmus test for Lucy's character. "You haven't decided on anything to do yet," she bemoans when George wants to learn why she thinks things are unsettled.

And we understand her: She cannot build a future with someone who doesn't "intend to go into a business." George cannot earn a life. Therefore, George doesn't deserve Lucy.

**Agent Wilson (The Stranger)** Wilson displays a methodical approach in catching Kindler. First, he allows Meinike to believe that he has escaped prison to give him a false sense of security. Then, he follows him to Harper, Connecticut, where he likewise tricks the town clerk. After earning his trust by letting him believe that he's winning at checkers, Wilson gathers crucial information about the strangers. He reveals his suspicions to Mary's brother, Noah, to bring him to his side so that he would have more leverage in convincing Mary. Then, he starts working on Mary by first appealing to her humanity via Holocaust footage and then revealing the truth about her husband. He doesn't get discouraged when Mary refuses to believe him. His crude psychoanalysis reassures him: "But we have one ally, her subconscious. It knows what the truth is and it's struggling to be heard," which proves to be prophetic as Mary ends up exposing and killing Rankin. Agent Wilson approaches this investigation as if this was a war as evidenced in his celebration after Rankin's death: "V Day in Harper."

**Banquo (Macbeth)** While Macduff and Malcolm leave the castle for fear of retribution, Banquo stays with Macbeth because him becoming the king is a good omen for himself. "Why, by the verities on thee made good, May they not be my oracles as well, And set me up in hope," he tells Macbeth as they shake hands, metaphorically, over the king's death. "If you stick with me, when the time comes, there will be something in it for you," Macbeth tells Banquo in order to buy his silence. The latter nods in acquiescence. "I'll do whatever you say." It is in Banquo's interest to be on the good side of Macbeth, having just seen what he's capable of. It's also safer to be in cahoots with the evil man until he may find a better solution. His pragmatism is an interesting addition to the adaptation because Welles chooses to cut this line "...as long as I can do it with a clear conscience..." from the source to emphasize Banquo's opportunism.

**Guy Van Stratten (Mr. Arkadin)** Gregory Arkadin sends Stratten out on a wild goose chase to investigate his past, a job big enough to demand a highly specialized team of investigators. And yet, the opportunist Stratten travels around the world, all by himself, to track down each and every ex-convict and criminal from the underworld who might know something about Arkadin. He investigates, interrogates, and sometimes soft-tortures an assortment of idiosyncratic characters to fish the truth out of them. And he does find that truth. He produces a stellar confidential report exposing the man known as Gregory Arkadin and what does he get out of it? "I should receive 15,000 dollars for the job, but I believe I'll also get a bonus," Stratten says sarcastically in the added voiceover. "A knife in my back." Even that doesn't stop him. He finds and hides Zouk despite Mr. Arkadin's effort to thwart him. When that fails, Stratten uses and manipulates Raina to ensure his survival despite his love for her because that's what Stratten does: he is a relentless survivor.

## ENTERTAINER

**Sir John Falstaff (Chimes at Midnight)** Falstaff, in his core being, is an entertainer. Even when he lies about fighting off a dozen rogue thieves, he knows that nobody believes him. Yet he keeps on for it's the performance that brings joy to Falstaff himself and his companions more than the money. When he realizes that he was hoodwinked by Hal, Falstaff, instead of brooding, turns this into a merry gathering. "What, shall we be merry? Shall we have a play extempore?" he asks, beaming. Together, they enact a scene between the king and the prince while the whole tavern watches and laughs. That's what Falstaff does: He is an actor, through and through. He entertains, and everyone loves him for it. When Falstaff tells Hal that his friendship has spoiled him because he used to be virtuous, everyone including Hal laughs at Falstaff because everybody, including Falstaff, knows this is just an act—entertainment.

## PROUD

**Isabel Amberson Minafer (The Magnificent Ambersons)** We never hear from Isabel herself why she rejected Eugene. The information about her being embarrassed by Eugene's silly serenade attempt comes from the town gossip, and this is important. The movie tells us that lives are not only lived in this town, but constantly reproduced by talk. Within the context of Isabel's rejection of Eugene, the gossip angle makes even more sense because she is an Amberson. She cannot be embarrassed by a silly drunken lover no matter how much she may love him. She cannot star in a comedy script.

Her rejection is as punitive as it is prideful.

**Sophie Radzweickz Martinez (Mr. Arkadin)** Sophie has a complicated relationship with the past. Stratten is shocked when he hears that Sophie chose not to expose Arkadin despite knowing the dark truth about him. For an opportunist small-time crook like Stratten, this is valuable information worth serious money. For Sophie, such information is part of her dear past with Arkadin, which she regards as more precious than any amount of material goods—including the money Arkadin stole from her. This has an inherent value that originates from her own redemption. It's such a strong feeling that even a character like Stratten "gets" it in the end. When he finds out that Arkadin killed Sophie, Stratten shouts that Sophie knew everything but didn't care. "She'd say: 'Live and let live.'" That's what Sophie did. She didn't want her money back; she didn't want to expose Arkadin, and she created a new life for herself out of the ashes of the old one. "Why not take care of your life," she says when Stratten first contacts her, "and leave the others alone?" Her redemption story is about her being alone with her memories. And her most prized memory will not allow that.

**Josef K. (The Trial)** What separates Welles' K. from Kafka's K. is that the former rejects being put in an inferior position against authority while the latter surrenders to it as the story progresses. As soon as the filmic K. understands that the Advocate uses his clients to show off his power, he dismisses him. When he makes a speech at the court house, he accuses the court of being a pawn in a conspiracy. "Can there be any doubt that behind my arrest a vast organization is at work?" he shouts. In the end, despite being sentenced to death, he refuses to give in and laughs at his executioners. "You'll have to do it," he tells them as his final defiance. "You'll have to kill me."

#### SELF-INVOLVED / ARROGANT

**Sir John Falstaff (Chimes at Midnight)** His moral code has taught Falstaff that his comfort is more important than his valour, which he sees as a distraction. "The better part of valour is discretion," Falstaff says, defending his feigning death on the battlefield. The king's soldiers fight for the monarch's life while Falstaff fights for Falstaff's life. During an impromptu play that he and Prince Hal stage in the tavern, Falstaff begs Prince Hal to stay in character despite the fact that they are being interrupted by the sheriff's men. "Play out the play, play out the play," says Falstaff in exasperation, disregarding the panic in the tavern. "I have much to say on behalf of that Falstaff." This is his schtick: Falstaff wants to be Falstaff all the time. He wants to talk about himself. He's full of himself.

**Prince Hal (Chimes at Midnight)** For Prince Hal, his tavern spell is temporary in such a way that none of these people matter to him. Nothing he does within the borders of the tavern count. Stealing is just a fun activity for him instead of an "illegal" act. He first rejects Poin's offer to rob pilgrims; however, when Poin tells Hal that "I have a jest [involving Falstaff]. A jest I cannot execute alone," the prince suddenly changes course and attends the robbery for the sake of messing with Falstaff. He's immune to law and admonishment as long as he stays in the tavern because he doesn't consider that type of life as real. *The tavern* doesn't count, and therefore his friendships with these people are transient, existing only in a vacuum that has no real-life consequences. "And herein will I imitate the sun," he says, while trying to justify his constant presence in the tavern, "who doth permit the base, contagious clouds to smother up his beauty from the world."

**Jack Hannaford (The Other Side of the Wind)** "The old man is a destroyer. What he creates, he has to wreck," Rich says, hearing how Hannaford disparages his actor, Dale. The indictment requires a slight revision: What he creates, he has to wreck *unless they are still valuable to Hannaford*. What is important to Hannaford is how the others serve Hannaford's ego. Dale walking off his movie set is a power move Hannaford cannot accept; thus, he tells the cameraman to keep rolling because "I'd like a record of this." That is his counter power move as he is the man holding the camera, a device of authority. Similarly, he dismisses Otterlake when he finds out Otterlake won't acquiesce. "I relate all I need to relate," Hannaford says at the end of their friendship. If he cannot dismiss people, then he consumes them. That's how he can keep himself relevant and at the top. "Then we must wait, my dear, for him to eat us alive," The Baron tells the reporter Rich with a snigger. "Unless, perhaps you are a critic. He does tend to rather push them to the side of his plate."

#### DOMINEERING / CONTROLLING

**Charles Foster Kane (Citizen Kane)** As he amasses more power, he turns into a tyrant who

shapes public opinion in the service of his own political interests (e.g., “Fraud at the Polls” headlines) and his love interest (promoting his wife’s opera performances). The main impetus behind his dictatorial tendencies is not the desire for ultimate power, but a childish hope to re-create his happy moments on the sled—his Rosebud. As he says: “If I hadn’t been rich, I might have been a great man.”

**Walter Parks Thatcher (Citizen Kane)** Thatcher’s guardianship of Charles Kane plays out in a rather circular manner. He takes charge of the boy Kane and manages his money until Kane comes of age. And when Kane eventually bankrupts and relinquishes his control to Thatcher, he becomes his guardian once again, agreeing to pay to Kane an allowance “as long as he lives.” In a way, Thatcher never stops being Kane’s guardian because Kane never stops being a child. “Your methods,” Thatcher complains, “you always used money to buy things.”

**George Amberson Minafer (The Magnificent Ambersons)** George’s privileged upbringing grants him an invisible shield to bully everyone around him. His entitlement originates from the status of his family. Even as a kid, he is aware of this power, which he wields to wantonly harass those he believes are below his station. He grows to be a hollow youth as well. Since the world revolves around George, he treats everyone either as a nuisance who gets in the way or a tool who helps him get his way. He likes Lucy, but their relationship is regulated by George’s expectations. He prevents his mother’s happiness just because he is in a toxic competition with Eugene. He teases Aunt Fanny about her feelings and, when she cries, he accuses her of being “so sensitive”. All because he is constitutionally incapable of seeing past his own world. In essence, it is his insecurity that drives him to become a bully. He harasses people so that he doesn’t have to sort out his complicated feelings. He is an enlarged baby rather than a grown adult. It is safe to stay as a spoiled child and rely on the protection his powerful family has granted him.

**Elsa "Rosalie" Bannister (The Lady from Shanghai)** The moment she learns that Mike has killed someone in the past, she picks him as the fall guy in her plan. She exploits his infatuation with her by pretending to be a damsel in distress, needing to be rescued, so that he will become her knight. Once he is on the boat, she starts playing the fake romance to keep him on the hook and makes sure that not only they are seen, but that Mike knows that they are seen. After their first kiss is witnessed by Grisby—probably arranged by Elsa—she immediately lets Mike know that “now he knows about us.” Even Bessie tells Mike that she has to stay only because “[t]hat poor little child he married. Somebody’s got to take care of her.” We can also infer that she told George about Mike’s previous murder even though George says he learned it from Mr. Bannister. By extrapolation and relying on what Broome said before he was killed—“Nobody else seems to guess you’re sweet on her”—we can safely assume that Elsa had been manipulating George as well with the same promise of love and lust.

**Iago (Othello)** What makes Iago such a tremendous villain is that he has several playbooks to choose from depending on situations that he wants to create and people he needs to manipulate. He is not just one or two steps ahead of everyone; he sees all the steps because he owns the game. He’s basically a God-like figure. With Roderigo, he uses his desperate love for Desdemona as a means to stoke his lust. With Othello, he sows doubt and jealousy in a systematic manner by carefully choreographing several people’s moves. He dominates his own wife, Emilia, without needing to finesse her because the marriage code obliges her to obey Iago. He is such a powerful figure that he knows what he needs to do in every situation against everyone. Be it love, jealousy, money, marriage or friendship, it’s all the same. For Iago, they are simply tools to play the game. And he has a God-like handle over each of these.

**Gregory Arkadin (Mr. Arkadin)** Mr. Arkadin has enough clout, manpower, and money to control every part of his life: his daughter, his daughter’s boyfriends, his job and his people. The biggest thing that is out of his control is his dark past—memory. In order to eradicate it, he chooses the nuclear option: finding each and every other person who knows the truth about him and then killing them. It’s not about his inability to live with the truth about himself. He’s terrified about the possibility that his daughter may find out about him. Since he can’t *not* love his own daughter, he also has to control what she knows to ensure her love for him. “You don’t know what it is to have conscience and no memory,” Arkadin tells Stratten, completely and deliberately misrepresenting himself. What he really means: “You don’t know what it is to *have* memory and *no* conscience.” Now, that’s control.

**The Advocate (The Trial)** The Advocate's power comes from his knowledge of the legal system, an authority he uses to emasculate his clients rather than to serve them. Bloch has been made to wait in his apartment-office for years. The Advocate sees him only occasionally, and even then, he may berate him for being late. He sends his maid, Leni, to further manipulate Bloch and K. so that they stay with the Advocate, guaranteeing his position of power. Even the bed he sleeps in looks like that of a king. He receives his clients while lying in bed. "And when I allow her [Leni] to... she tells me about these affairs to amuse me," he says, confirming that his clients are a source of amusement for him.

**Jack Hannaford (The Other Side of the Wind)** The ultimate decision-maker on the movie set, Hannaford wants to control his actors' lives outside the movie set as well. All the leading male actors in Hannaford's movies disappeared or committed suicide. While discussing Dale's fake suicide attempt, Hannaford says, "But he stops trying to die. I cured him of that," which suggests a relationship outside the framework of that of a director and an actor. In fact, one of the documentary crew points to this unhealthy attachment. "So, the boy's indebted to him even for that. Could you imagine a relationship more all-consuming? Between master and slave?" The reporter Rich counts off all the male actors: "Leigh, Kingman, Branch Sutter, Garvey..." Hannaford calls them "absent friends," but they are the actors he dominated so forcefully that they all left him. He's obsessed with control: He orders dummies that look like Dale so that he can shoot at them.

## RUTHLESS

**Iago (Othello)** People mean nothing to Iago. They are but little pawns on his board for him to move around to achieve a specific outcome. He's as methodical as he is ruthless in playing this duplicitous, cruel and dangerous game with people's lives. After Roderigo fails to kill Cassio following Iago's orders, Roderigo becomes not only useless, but a loose end that needs to be tied up. Iago therefore kills Roderigo to silence him while also proving his "loyalty" to Othello by murdering someone who tried to kill Cassio. The ruthless Iago appears once again when Emilia unmasks Iago's web of conspiracy. Despite the fact that his schemes are exposed, Iago still kills her without a moment of remorse. His ruthless nature does not discriminate: People are disposable.

**Lady Macbeth (Macbeth)** Lady Macbeth's evil is not so much natural as chaotic. She has no respect for rule of law when it comes to her desires. Her bone-chilling cruelty is not a side effect of her ambition, but an unavoidable ingredient. If need be, she could even kill her baby: "I would, while it was smiling in my face, have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums, and dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you have done to this." Her malice is her own device as she begs the spirits to help her become more cruel: "Come, you spirits that tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here, and fill me from the crown to the toe top-full of direst cruelty!" She wants to feel less like a woman and more like a man who could do the deeds her heart desires. She is determined to become impervious against the impact of her own savagery: "That no compunctious visitings of nature Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between the effect and it!"

**Gregory Arkadin (Mr. Arkadin)** According to Peter Bogdanovich, the Arkadin character was inspired by the Russian dictator Josef Stalin. One can see the immediate resemblance. Like Stalin, Arkadin also goes after his old "comrades" and associates in order to silence them so that he can hold onto power. In Stalin's case, power meant authorial dominance over his country and perhaps the world. In Arkadin's case, power manifests itself as a means to control his daughter's life and, by extension, her love. His struggle for power renders Arkadin ruthless because he is desperate. Like all tyrants in their ironic cocoons, he is actually afraid of what he is controlling. Despite all his might, his own unlimited power turns him into a cornered animal and leads to his tragic end.

**Hank Quinlan (Touch of Evil)** Failing to find his wife's killer as a rookie detective, Hank goes on a relentless revenge tour spanning years to catch murderers at whatever the cost, even if that means crossing the line. His almost infallible intuition has given him a false sense of superiority, and made him "a good detective, but a lousy cop." He disregards all due process and instead relies on his "game leg" to solve crimes. If he believes a suspect to be guilty and he doesn't have enough evidence, then he manipulates the circumstances or plants evidence to frame them. When Menzies brings this up, Hank's answer is succinct: he has not framed "nobody that wasn't guilty." Like all the corrupt people, Hank is a law unto himself: he is absolute authority, acting as a judge, jury and executioner.



**Prince Hal (Chimes at Midnight)** This is a man who announces: "I know you all, and will a while uphold the unyoked humor of your idleness. I'll so offend to make offense a skill." Therefore, it shouldn't come as a surprise to anyone, including Falstaff, that he does what he does. He even tells everyone how exactly he is going to act when he becomes king. During their impromptu play, Falstaff plays the prince and Hal plays the king. Falstaff says, smiling: "Banish not [Falstaff] thy Harry's company. Banish plump Jack, and banish all the world." Then comes Prince Hal's reply as king: "I do!" He pauses and adds: "I will." Even Falstaff, despite this being a play, experiences a moment of confusion and fear due to the seriousness with which Prince delivers that line. Hal knows from the very beginning that he is never going to keep Falstaff or the other "base, contagious clouds" beside him when he has power.

## DUTIFUL

**Othello (Othello)** Othello is a man of love, but not necessarily a romantic one. He's more a dutiful husband than a passionate lover. He woos Desdemona by the stories of his journeys, but he wasn't telling them for the purpose of wooing her. It was Desdemona who had to give him a hint that he could actually woo her if he wanted. He says: "She thanked me and bade me, if I had a friend that loved her, I should but teach him how to tell my story. And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake." It's the same with his military career. When he asked the Council to let Desdemona join him in Cyprus, he says he will never abandon his duty as a commander. "And heaven defend your good souls," he says, "that you think I will your serious business scant for she is with me." Be it marriage or war, Othello remains committed to his duty.

## LOYAL / CHARITABLE

**Jedediah Leland (Citizen Kane)** During their early years, Kane and Leland are on the same page in terms of utilizing the power of newspaper business to support working class. The Declaration of Principles, in which Kane promises to tell only the truth, strengthens the bond between them. Leland regards Kane not just as a good friend, but as a historical figure who may change the course of history. He believes that this document "might turn out to be something pretty important like the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution."

**Mr. Bernstein (Citizen Kane)** Mr Bernstein is a true Charles Kane loyalist, "from before the beginning ... And now after the end." Even Kane's objectively questionable motives and actions are not enough to sway Mr Bernstein. For instance, on the subject of Kane stoking the Spanish-American war, Bernstein offers an apologetic angle to defend Kane's warmongering: "That was Mr. Kane's war ... Do you think if it hadn't been for that war of Mr. Kane's, we'd have the Panama Canal?" He protects Kane's bruised ego by choosing a headline that suggests fraud in the elections. When Leland expresses his concerns over the newly hired editors changing Kane's agenda, Bernstein categorically defends Kane. He is the father figure Kane never had in his formative years.

**Isabel Amberson Minafer (The Magnificent Ambersons)** Eugene, in his letter, tells Isabel that she was a "selfless and perfect" mother. One can argue that her enabling and spoiling George is the reason for George's cruelty, which puts a serious dent on the "perfect" part of her motherhood. That said, it is undoubtedly correct that Isabel selflessly sacrifices her life for her son. In the same letter, Eugene begs her not to strike down his life a second time. She's been a mother long enough; now it's her time to be a lover. "Will you live your life your way," Eugene asks, "or George's way?" Eugene's mistake here is to assume that motherhood has an expiry date and that Isabel should at some point stop being a mother. At least in Isabel's case, it is not possible. Even on her death bed, Isabel is worried that George will catch cold. For Eugene, it takes Isabel's death and George's accident to finally acknowledge how important her son was for her. He tells Fanny at the end of the movie: "And that through me, she brought her boy under shelter again."

**Mary Longstreet Ranking (The Stranger)** As soon as Kindler realizes that Mary can bring him down, he exploits her love for him to bring her to his side. After all, this is a war between two sides: Wilson and Mary's family versus Kindler and Mary. At that moment, Mary has no choice but to stay loyal to her husband because Kindler has made this war hers as well by turning her into an accomplice. She now must protect Rankin and herself. Yes, she is loyal to him, but more crucially she is loyal to the values she's been brought up with. When those loyalties clash, she suffers a nervous breakdown. "That's the usual result of a person being inwardly divided," says Agent Wilson, and we

agree with him because Good and Evil cannot occupy the same space. That conflict is also at work when Mary chooses to face Kindler alone, despite the risks: she has betrayed the Good and now has to fight in the name of it.

**Desdemona (Othello)** Let alone not cheating on Othello, Desdemona cannot bring herself to ponder her own infidelity even as a theoretical concept. When Othello accuses her of being a whore, she yells at him in disgust, calling on her Christian identity in order to protest that she would never “abuse her husband in such gross kind.” That dirty thought cannot even enter her religious mind. Her virtue is not an ethical position she’s worked out for herself; it’s a given. She is Christian. She is married. How could Othello possibly entertain the idea of adultery? Her discussion with Emilia is illuminating about her character as a virtuous soul touched by evil. She would never cheat on her husband, “not by this heavenly light.” When Emilia admits that she could do it for “the whole world,” Desdemona shuts that door completely: “Oh, I do not think there is any such woman.”

**Pete Menzies (Touch of Evil)** It could be argued that Menzies is more loyal to his own moral code than to Hank, but there are a couple of moments in the film that signal deep admiration and loyalty from Menzies towards Hank, too. When Menzies finds the sticks of dynamite in Sanchez’s bathroom, he refuses to take the credit by announcing and celebrating Hank’s famous intuition. Menzies warns Hank that Miguel is an important man and that he should be careful when Miguel accuses Hank of framing Sanchez. On cue, after Miguel does discover Hank’s questionable past, Menzies fervently refuses to acknowledge the fact because he does not want to; he cannot be disloyal to his partner. Betraying his friend will also mean betraying himself as it was Menzies who has enabled Hank to operate for all those years. We can see how distraught Menzies is when he agrees to wear the wire to trap his friend. It’s not just Hank who is being exposed. Menzies doesn’t want to do that. He doesn’t want it to be true. Alas, it is the truth and he must stay loyal to his code more than to Hank in the name of justice.

## SHORT-SIGHTED

**George Amberson Minafer (The Magnificent Ambersons)** George has always lived his life without making any plans or preparing for the future because he had his family’s fortune and status to fall back on. He wanted to become a “yachtsman” instead of holding a job. He underrated automobiles simply due to his hatred for Eugene. Quick, momentary gratifications always took precedent over slow, surefooted plans. His “comeuppance” in a way points to his family’s fall in that their pride and their failure to adapt to the evolving times have eventually determined their fate. The poetic justice has George break both of his legs in an accident involving an automobile, an agent of change that he’s refused to acknowledge all his life, while the booming car industry brought about the financial end for the family.

**Henry “Hotspur” Percy (Chimes at Midnight)** The moment Henry IV dismisses his father and himself from the court, Percy is sent into a rage. Even the malicious, cold and calculating Earl of Worcester tries to rein his temper in. “I’ll talk to you when you are better tempered to attend,” he says, but Percy plows on: “I am whipped and scourged with rods, nettled and stung with pismires when I hear of this vile politician, Bolingbroke.” Nothing can quench his thirst for power and blood other than war, which he eventually gets. When learning that his army might be in a disadvantaged position against the king’s forcers, Hotspur doesn’t heed his cousin’s warning about to wait until further support arrives. “O gentlemen, the time of life is short,” he says proudly. “To spend that shortness basely were too long if life did ride upon a dial’s point, still ending at the arrival of an hour.”

## PROTECTIVE

**Zarah Valeska (The Other Side of the Wind)** She doesn’t let the documentary crew know about her personal thoughts concerning Hannaford the director, refusing to acknowledge her possible romantic relationship or calling him God the Father. Her stoicism comes from her genuine personal connection with Hannaford and eagerness to protect him. Whereas everybody is eager to gush about the artist Hannaford, Valeska wants to protect the man. Her constant refusal to give a definite answer becomes an answer in and of itself. She eventually gets up and leaves the interview as the director pleads with her: “I do wish you could bring yourself to open up, just a little, on Jake.” Valeska gets in a room and gives a short answer before shutting the door: “No sex at all.”

## TRAGIC

**Desdemona (Othello)** Desdemona falls victim to circumstances of her own making: she dismisses the norms, she rebels against the order, and she marries someone she shouldn't marry. Her tragedy is her defining characteristics because it both makes and unmakes her. She is not a character per se, but a bundle of lessons Shakespeare wanted to impart. Danger 1: Desdemona is an innocent and pure woman wooed by a storyteller with a sweet tongue. Danger 2: Desdemona is too honest and soft-hearted not to notice the evil men taking advantage of her. Danger 3: Desdemona is rebellious and wild enough to marry a man of colour. So, don't be like Desdemona. Don't stray too far from your father and from your societal role. Don't commit the fundamental sin of miscegenation even if the man is noble and successful. The quintessential tragedy of Desdemona is that her fundamental character trait, her boldness against social norms, ultimately brings about her death: She *is*, therefore she is not allowed to be.

**Raina Arkadin (Mr. Arkadin)** "If you knew him, you'd see why," Raina tells Stratten, offering us a tremendous irony. We know that she is the one who knows nothing about Arkadin's past. In fact, her being ignorant is the reason why she becomes a pawn in the power game between Stratten and Arkadin. As both men fight to claim her, they want to control the narrative. Raina does not seem to matter to either of them, though on the surface it may feel like they are trying to win her over. Her tragedy is that she doesn't know who her father has been all those years and that her father's obsessive fawning over her is the reason for her being none the wiser. She's, in essence, just a plot point in these two men's lives. "Why use me to trick him?" she pleads with Stratten, who forces her to lie because he cares only about his own survival. Similarly, when Arkadin calls her at the airport, he only cares about his own image. Raina is just a battle ground. "To save your life I had to kill my father" he tells Stratten. It is the terrible indictment of her own life. In the end, she is finally free of both men, but only because she loses them. This is her tragedy.

**Pete Menzies (Touch of Evil)** Tana's observation suggests that the love she refers to is more than the brotherly or fraternal love, but a homoerotic one between the two men. All those years, Hank has caught the suspects by relying on his "game leg" while Menzies has helped him deliver justice by enabling his intuitions and questionable methods. Their friendship was so strong that, during a gunfight, Hank wounded himself by stopping a bullet meant for Menzies. Hank has used a cane for his resulting limp. The ironic tragedy for Menzies is that it is that cane that ultimately forces Menzies to relent and face the real person behind his beloved partner/friend— a corrupt detective. Even Hank is aware of the irony and tragedy as his last words, after Menzies shoots him, prove: "Pete, that's the second bullet I stopped for you." It's Menzies' bloody index finger that Hank follows for the last time towards the filthy river. Hank killed Menzies who, in turn, killed Hank—partners also in death.

**Josef K. (The Trial)** Just like his literary precursor Gregor Samsa, K. also wakes up to a confusing morning: he is arrested with no clear charges brought up against him. All morning, he tries to find out about these strange men in suits who suddenly appeared in his bedroom to inform him of his arrest. He asks them about their IDs and the charges against him, but he is not given any answers. "Well listen, you don't deny anything or affirm anything. You just stand there and stare at me in the middle of my private bedroom," he says in frustration. Still, he gets nothing. In Titorelli's hut, he gets dizzy as he learns about how the law is really stacked against little men like him. On his way out, he tells Titorelli that he is surprised to learn how "ignorant I am about everything concerning this court of yours."

## NOSTALGIC / WISTFUL

**Mr. Bernstein (Citizen Kane)** One interesting thing about the Rosebud quest is that the characters' answers, sometimes, reveal as much about themselves as the Rosebud itself. This is perhaps most evident in Mr Bernstein. When he offers that maybe Rosebud "was something [Kane] lost," he not only correctly contextualizes the mystery, but also opens up his character for further analysis. Mr Bernstein also lost something he cannot bring back. Just like Kane, forgetting is not an option for him, either. "A fellow will remember a lot of things you wouldn't think he'd remember," he tells Mr Thompson. For both these man, remembering is a curse, not a reward. For Kane, it's Rosebud. For Bernstein, it's the girl he saw for just a second on the ferry decades ago. "I'll bet a month hasn't gone by since that I haven't thought of that girl," he says in a wistful tone. Through Bernstein, Orson Welles transforms Rosebud into a metaphor, a symbol for a past lost in remembrance.

**Charles Foster Kane (Citizen Kane)** All his life, he tries to purchase back that happy moment with statues, material goods and even love from people, but the nostalgic past is proved to be as far away from him as anyone. His lonely tragic walk from the dressing room shows an infinite reflection of him between two mirrors, highlighting his many identities and personas. Who he is, we can never tell. The irony here is that everything Kane has bought only worked to prove that he could never buy the only thing he longed for—his Rosebud.

**Sophie Radzweickz Martinez (Mr. Arkadin)** When Stratten arrives in Mexico to question Sophie over her involvement in the gang business, Sophie says, "I'm married. I have business. Everything there was against me is buried long." The ocular evidence tells another story because, two minutes later, she brings out an old album containing pictures of her past life with Arkadin. Nothing is buried. Past never has and never will leave her. What makes her such a subtle character is that she does not want it to leave her. In this sense, she is the perfect foil for Arkadin in that the latter wants to detach himself from his past whereas she keeps the attachment. Even though she plays the "I'm someone new" persona, she has never managed to forget about Arkadin. She does not miss being the queen of a sex gang. Her nostalgia does not have blood stains. It's about her possibly unrequited love for a man who is out there to murder her.

**Hank Quinlan (Touch of Evil)** Hank is a man defined by what happened to his wife. His failure to catch her murderer has haunted him, hardening his soul and turning him into an obese tyrant. His power does not originate from his strength, but his vulnerability: He cannot forget. Remembering is his curse. It makes him cruel and ruthless because, deep down, he knows that he will never be able to undo his first mistake. His strangling Grandi to death in the same way her wife was killed years ago points to the lowest point in Hank's life. Out of Grandi's murder comes out not his victory, but his defeat. Afterwards, he goes to Tana's brothel, which he considers his sanctuary—a safe place where old memories reside. He asks Tana to read his future. "You haven't got any," she says, wistfully. "Your future is all used up."

**Zarah Valeska (The Other Side of the Wind)** During the second screening at the drive-in, Valeska sits in her car, observing the film rather than watching it. She is already reminiscing about the good old days she has lived with Hannaford and she knows the show is not truly over. When Hannaford approaches the car and calls her "beautiful" as he has always done, she says: "With an old friend, it's quite enough to know he's there... Sometimes to keep that feeling, we need to keep our distance". This confirms that their friendship is at an end in the same way Hannaford's career reaches its ugly end. She might be the only person who is truly sad about it, even more than Hannaford himself.

## RESENTFUL

**Jedediah Leland (Citizen Kane)** Leland never hides his resentment. According to him, Kane might have had a private sort of greatness, but he never gave himself away—meaning that he never wanted to be vulnerable. When he confronts Kane by accusing him of trying to own the people, he says: "You persuade people that you love them so much that they ought to love you back." Love has always been an unequal exchange for Kane in which Kane does all the taking, but does not do any giving. In the final analysis, Kane has become the very thing Leland and Kane were supposed to fight against. The idea of Charles Foster Kane was, therefore, better than Charles Foster Kane himself, a realization that ultimately breaks Leland, turning him into an alcoholic and a bitter man.

**Raina Arkadin (Mr. Arkadin)** Living under the shadow of a towering figure like Arkadin is enough for any person to feel trapped. For Raina, this situation gets even more complicated because she loves her father and her father loves her. Raina, of course, loves her father, but she's also bitter about the way he's been treating her. For Raina, her father is a bogey man who eats people alive, an ogre who dominates every aspect of her life. She's chained to him as though he is still holding her navel cord. When she meets Stratten in a hotel room hoping for a romantic getaway, she's surprised to see Arkadin as well. "I wish you'd stop following me, dad," she complains, "I'm tired of living the life of a rich gypsy." She is as frustrated as she is bitter because she knows she leads the life her father considers appropriate, not the one she wants to live.

**Prince Hal (Chimes at Midnight)** Until the moment Prince Hal forsakes his old ways and joins his father in kingly matters, Henry IV acts as a cold and distant father. He prefers Hotspur to Hal even though the former is in open rebellion against the kingdom. "Yea, there thou mak'st me sad and

mak'st me sin in envy that my Lord Northumberland should be the father to so blest a son," the king says when he hears that Hotspur has managed to gather a strong force. He doesn't see his son as someone who may have different likes and dislikes. In his mind, a son has a specific function that comes with a compulsory subscription to code of chivalry. Only when Hal displays that he can be that type of man, Henry breaks down and shows love towards his son.

## DEVIOUS / CUNNING

**Franz Kindler / Charles Rankin (The Stranger)** According to Agent Wilson, what separates Franz Kindler from the likes of Goebbels and Himmler is his devious passion for anonymity. He preferred to stay in the shadows not because he didn't have an ego, but because he was prepared for all types of scenarios including the defeat. He was calculating, he was ready, and he was a couple of steps ahead of everyone. His duplicitousness is a feature, not a bug. It is the reason why he's so good at looking like an ordinary teacher married to a beautiful woman. He is a devious, two-faced monster. As the movie *Usual Suspects* reminds us, "The greatest trick the devil ever pulled was convincing the world he did not exist." As soon as he sees his old friend, he understands that he was released so that he could lead the agents to him. At that moment, Meinike becomes a threat to his survival. This first murder starts a chain reaction, but Kindler stays calm. First, he gets rid of the dog. Then, seeing he has little room for manoeuvring, he surprisingly confesses to killing both Meinike and the dog by concocting a story that paints him as a victim in the eyes of his wife. The impetus behind this is his desire to control the only witness who could tie him back to Meinike. Mary is not his wife anymore, but his accomplice. And once he realizes that his wife has also become a liability and a threat to his survival, he devises a plan that not only ensures that Mary's death will look like an accident but also gives him a water-tight alibi.

**Konrad Meinike (The Stranger)** Prison and God have not softened Meinike. Despite his repentance, he is still the same Nazi war criminal who kills anyone who stands in his way. Only now he is under the spell of a different power. The man is the same man. Kindler clues us in on this cosmetic change when Meinike tells him that he's been freed by "the highest," the same code phrase he uses to communicate with the other Nazis. "The highest" means Hitler. When he hears this, Kindler is duly confused. "You don't mean?" he says, and Meinike immediately corrects him: "I mean God." It's now God in whose name he kills. It used to be the Nazi party and Hitler. Meinike is nothing but a blunt tool. He is as ruthless as he has always been.

**Sydney Broome (The Lady from Shanghai)** When he learns about the plot to kill Arthur, Broome says: "We've worked a lot of cases together. I'll be sorry if we make this the last." We get the impression that he's sorry because he cares for Arthur, but the truth is that he'll lose a great source of income once Arthur dies. While information means power for Arthur, it means money for Broome. And money means Arthur. "When you hear what I got for you, you'll say you bought it cheap," Broome says before revealing the plot. Information can be bought and sold. As such, it doesn't really matter where the money comes from. As soon as he figures out that George likes Elsa, he considers that as another valuable information to sell. "That ought to be worth extra, but I'll throw it in for the same price," Broome tells George, insinuating that Arthur would like to pay for it. George is not dumb about whom he is talking to: "What are you selling?" he asks immediately. "I can shut up, that's what I'm selling," Broome answers. Broome is not a detective, per se. He's an opportunist entrepreneur operating in information business, and he sells what he knows to the highest bidder.

**Banquo (Macbeth)** Banquo's strategy is different than Macduff and Malcolm in that he isn't publicly or privately hostile against Macbeth. He knows Macbeth now holds the country and thus all the power. During Macbeth's coronation, Banquo is labelled as "chief guest" as part of Macbeth's ploy to lure him into a false sense of security. But Banquo is smart. He has already made up his mind to leave because he knows what is coming. "Let your highness Command upon me," he tells Macbeth with a bow, but one can read his trepidation. His uneasiness isn't uncalled for because Macbeth has learned that Banquo is about to ride off. Macbeth asks him where he is going and if he is going to make it to the feast, where he is the chief guest. "Unless my horse goes faster than expected, I will be back an hour or two after sunset," he tells Macbeth, though both men knows that he is not returning.

**Iago (Othello)** Iago's famous utterance—"I am not what I am"—is an incisive character description delivered by the character himself. Iago admits that his good-natured appearance is just a façade that he maintains in order to achieve his end. He follows Othello only "to serve my turn upon him," but for

this to happen, he needs to keep up that Janus-like persona at all times. We only see the true side of Iago when he deals with people that he has a total domination over: At first, Roderigo; then, his wife, Emilia. By the end of the story, he has a complete influence over Othello, as well, when he even tells him how he should kill Desdemona. However, his skilful transitions between his many faces eventually collapse and everyone learns about the real Iago: He is exposed as who he is—a duplicitous man.

**Guy Van Stratten (Mr. Arkadin)** What type of smuggler working in a foreign land doesn't act on a tip given to him by a dying stranger who out of nowhere reveals a name he claims is worth millions? That's the opportunity a man like Stratten will never turn his back on. It's his chance to hit gold by blackmailing a potentially dangerous Russian oligarch, and he accepts it with arms wide open. When Bracco tells Stratten he's going to get rich, "the greatest fool in the world" by his own admission, is there to snatch it without questioning. He doesn't tell the police what Bracco told him, which may have solved the case there and then. Maybe, he could make a deal with the police to escape jail. But Stratten knows better. This might be a once in a life-time opportunity for a small-time crook like him. He even accepts prison time because fortune has finally smiled at him.

**The Advocate (The Trial)** He keeps Bloch imprisoned in the maid's room so that Bloch can amuse him whenever he wants. "He's not a client," K. says of Bloch, "He's the Advocate's dog." The Advocate tortures the old man, berating and humiliating him whenever he receives him, and he never gives Bloch good counsel. In fact, after being made to wait for years, he reveals that his proceedings haven't even begun yet, which sends Bloch into a frenzy. Even then, the Advocate keeps his leash firm. "Quiet there, Bloch! Have you no shame, to behave like that in front of a client? You're destroying his confidence in me." He then makes Leni force Bloch to kiss his hand the way a subject kisses a king's hand. That's the Advocate's modus operandi. As K. leaves after dismissing him, the Advocate tells him: "To be in chains is sometimes safer than to be free."

**King Henry IV (Chimes at Midnight)** His usurpation of the crown from the true heir is not enough, and he knows that. During his coronation, he admits Mortimer's cousins and tries to squash their rebellion before it begins. He refuses to deal with the Welsh to release Mortimer, which would only mean him relinquishing the crown. He knows that he will have to deal with a rebellion when he says, "Worcester, get thee gone for I do see danger and disobedience in thine eye." He understands the vileness of the Earl of Worcester and offers peace terms during the parlay with him, trying to win the war without a battle. Even though he defeats the rebellion, he knows there is going to be another and another. He orders Worcester's death to send a message, but stops at killing the others to keep them in line.

**Juliette Rich (The Other Side of the Wind)** She is a journalist at heart, constantly questioning Hannaford's motives in making this movie and always having a male lead star. Her main suspicion is about Hannaford's sexual preference and his possibly homoerotic domination over his male stars. "It's not that he didn't make any female stars. It's just that he didn't make them stars," she says to a group of filmmakers in a bid to explain her thesis. "How he scores and who he scores with... that, my friend, gets us into some very interesting country." She is suggesting and arguing that he dominates his male actors both artistically and sexually. According to her, this is why he makes movies. "Expensive vice, isn't it?" she asks with a sneer.

MYSTERIOUS

**Elsa "Rosalie" Bannister (The Lady from Shanghai)** We don't know much about Elsa. Considering that this is a story told from Mike's perspective, it is understandable that she appears mysterious and enigmatic because that's how she hides: in plain sight. She claims to be from Zhifu, China, but we don't much about her background. She can speak Chinese and seems to have a connection with Chinese underworld in San Francisco, which creates more questions than answers. During their picnic, Arthur insinuates that he was able to marry a woman like Elsa only because he had something incriminating on Elsa. What that is we don't know. The fact that she sets out to kill Arthur gives us a clue to her mindset, albeit a small one: there is something in her past, probably in connection with her life in China, that Arthur holds against her. She does not want it to be unearthed. Arthur's letter to the DA that "tells all about you, Lover..." confirms the dark past of this character.

RESOURCEFUL / STRATEGIC

**Mr. Potter (The Stranger)** He claims that he, as town clerk, runs the town. As such, he knows not “just about everybody” but “everybody” in town. Even the bus stops in front of Potter’s drugstore, where the town of Harper begins. Wilson is greeted by Mr. Potter after he gets off the bus. Meinike also entrusts Mr. Potter with his suitcase. All this is to establish that Mr. Potter is indeed who he says he is: the resourceful Informant. By welcoming everyone to town, he also gets to record all the strangers who have arrived in town. The list he gives Agent Wilson proves to be crucial.

**Michael O’Hara (The Lady from Shanghai)** While he is gullible, his saving grace is that he is at least aware of his resilient nature, which turns out to be his main source of strength. When he realizes that he’s been used as a pawn in Elsa’s elaborate plan, he turns his passivity into a weapon. He pretends to attempt suicide and manages to escape by hiding among the members of another jury. At the opera house in Chinatown, he hugs Elsa only to look for the gun that killed George. His confronting Elsa is his culminating moment of victory that reveals his determination. He has managed to get to the bottom of this plot, and this will be his ‘get out of jail free card’—literally. Those people might be dangerous sharks in search of prey, but their evil nature ultimately brings about their end. Mike’s “innocent” and “foolish” nature, however, ensures his survival because he stays true.

**Sydney Broome (The Lady from Shanghai)** He is the only party who knows about all the plots and schemes other than the plotters and schemers themselves. We don’t know if he’s employing his own minions to tail people, but it seems like he intuitively knows where he is supposed to be. He knows about the plot to kill Arthur, which means he must have spied on Elsa and George; he knows about the fake murder plot, which means he managed to follow George and Mike without being seen; he also materializes almost out of thin air in any scene between Mike and Elsa. Mike notices this about Broome at the very beginning. “I saw you last night at the garage, it was,” he tells Broome who replies: “Somebody else, Danny-boy, not me.” He’s the perfect spy for Arthur.

**Othello (Othello)** He has an honour code that he follows to a fault. When he is faced with punishment before the Duke’s Council over Brabantio’s allegations, he offers to resign not only from his position, but also from his life if he was found at fault. “If you do find me foul in her report the trust, the office I do hold of you, not only take away but let your sentence even fall upon my life,” he says, suggesting that he is ready to die rather than bring dishonour to his reputation. Again, as soon as he learns that his most-trusted commander, Cassio, caused mutiny, Othello delivers the sentence. Despite Cassio’s storied career in his army, Othello follows his principles and stripes his friend of his rank to protect the establishment.

**Macduff (Macbeth)** Once the army reaches Great Birnam Wood, Macduff orders his soldiers to bring down trees and wear the branches to conceal the presence of their army. “Macbeth’s spies will give him inaccurate reports,” he says to explain his strategic decision. The military camouflage, albeit a smart move, doesn’t pan out the way Macduff envisioned within the irony of Macbeth’s story. The scouts do indeed spot the English army and report the correct number; however, Macduff’s soldiers carrying tree branches appear as if the Great Birnam Wood is moving towards Dunsinane Hill. Macduff’s strategy, then, becomes another sign for Macbeth that the prophecy about his future is about to come to pass in the shape of his death.

**Emilia (Othello)** Being a good judge of character, Emilia knows what kind of husband she is married to. As she delivers Iago the handkerchief, she is already suspicious of her husband’s motivation in acquiring the accessory. “If it be not for some purpose of import, give ’t me again. Poor lady, she’ll run mad,” she says. She also knows Othello and Desdemona enough to conclude that there is a foul play. When Desdemona tells Emilia about what Othello did, Emilia is adamant that he must have been abused by “some most villainous knave, some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow.” In that scene, Iago, in Wellesian fashion, shows up in the deep-focus background and quiets Emilia as the latter slowly figures out who the knave is. In the end, Emilia proves to be the one to have connected the tragic dots. Alas, she arrives late to the scene, as it were, to expose Iago’s schemes before the tragic deeds are committed.

**Miguel “Mike” Vargas (Touch of Evil)** It doesn’t matter if the crime is committed in his jurisdiction or not; Miguel Vargas will chase after the monster. He’s not so much a Mexican prosecutor as a protector of the innocent upholding the law far and wide. While he is investigating the drug cartel in Mexico, he also helps uncover a corrupt detective in the United States. The world is his courtroom. He won’t rest until justice is served in all places. If it means going through old case files in a basement to

find evidence to support his hunch, he will do it; if it means blurring the line between legal and illegal himself to catch a corrupt cop, he will do it; if it means wading through a filthy river during his honeymoon when his wife has just been attacked, Miguel Vargas will do it so long as good prevails in the world. He speaks English, he speaks Spanish, but most importantly, he speaks the Law.

**Susan “Susie” Vargas (Touch of Evil)** Susan never loses her composure even when she is faced with a serious threat. On her way to the motel after witnessing a terrible assassination, or when she is surrounded by a group of street thugs, she doesn’t flinch. In fact, she follows the cartel thug to learn what he has to say about her husband; it might be important for him. During her meeting with the cartel leader, she is bold and headstrong in her defiance. She is the wife of a famous prosecutor; it’s her duty to stay firm against evil. Even if she is scared, she won’t show it. Until the very moment she is physically attacked and assaulted in the second half of the movie, Susan displays an enormous amount of courage, conducting herself in a brave and composed manner even when dealing with ruthless and scheming criminals.

**Leni (The Trial)** She may not bring those clients in, but it is Leni who helps the Advocate keep them. Her function in the story is to enable the Advocate’s legal enterprise so that the clients stay uninformed and attached to the Advocate. It is Leni who urges Bloch to kiss the Advocate’s man in order to apologize even though it is Bloch who is being shouted at. She maintains the *status quo*. She tries to prevent K. from dismissing the Advocate as well, but fails. Then, she suggests K. see Titorelli for help, but that suggestion, too, can be construed as another attempt to enable the system at the expense of the defendant. “You’ll be back here,” Leni tells a frustrated K., knowing what Titorelli would do to him. “You won’t have any choice.”

**King Henry IV (Chimes at Midnight)** Despite winning the war and squashing the rebellion, King Henry IV shows mercy to all those who rebelled against his reign except for Percy of Worcester. Since he’s aware that this is not the first rebellion he’s going to have to face, Henry IV chooses to govern by compassion and mercy rather than oppression and fear. He knows that a usurper can be usurped. He shows that he can be fair and bring justice to the land. Before the war, he offers Worcester the chance to lay down his arms and receive the offer of his grace. “Both he and they and you, every man shall be my friend again, and I’ll be his,” Henry IV says. “We offer fair.

**Juliette Rich (The Other Side of the Wind)** As soon as she appears on screen, she sets the stage for her antagonistic assaults, asking Hannaford deeply uncomfortable questions that no-one has dared to ask. She questions the off-screen character in the movie spying on the boy and girl, suggesting that it could be Hannaford himself. She tries to provoke Hannaford and Otterlake by revealing that Otterlake will “walk away with 40 million dollars after his company goes public.” She tells them, in front of everyone, they are friends because they need each other. Whatever she does, she does to expose Hannaford because she senses something sinister. When she eventually figures out Hannaford at the end of the movie, she immediately confronts him: “Hannaford has to possess [the actor’s girl] because it’s the only way that he can possess [his actor].” Hannaford’s slap does nothing but validate her assessment. She has finally exposed the man in the artist.

## AMBITIOUS

**Macbeth (Macbeth)** When the first prophecy comes true within a minute of learning about it, Macbeth seals his own fate. Validation begets confidence. Confidence leads to ambition. And ambition forces Macbeth to focus on the promised future at the expense of his present. “If good, why do I yield to that suggestion whose horrid image doth unfix my hair, and make my seated heart knock at my ribs against the use of nature?” he asks because even he is terrified of what he is capable of. Macbeth knows murder isn’t the answer because violence begets more violence. He even resists his wife’s coercion and manipulation but proceeds to kill Duncan anyway because the crown is too strong an image to withstand. Macbeth was always a resourceful man. It’s the promised future and the allure thereof that transformed it into toxic ambition.

**Brooks Otterlake (The Other Side of the Wind)** Otterlake is the golden boy of Max, who has just walked out of Hannaford’s movie. “Brooks Otterlake is money, not just success, but money,” Billy says when they are discussing the possibility of asking Otterlake for funds. Based on Rich’s report, Otterlake is soon going to receive 40 million dollars from the studio, and yet, Otterlake refuses to help his old friend, colleague, and mentor to finish his film. All he could do was to set up a screening. No



more. This contention between competitive artists ultimately ends the friendship. "What did I do wrong, Daddy?" Otterlake asks sarcastically, pulling a line from Shakespeare, knowing Hannaford's obsession with the playwright: "Our revels now are ended." Translation: I am *the* Director, now. From this point forward, Otterlake won't have to worry about any accusation of being a Hannaford derivative.

## MANIPULATIVE

**Fanny Minafer (The Magnificent Ambersons)** After her brother's death, Fanny now knows what is coming: There is nothing left that prevents Isabel and Eugene from marrying. Once she figures out that the couple are spending time in secret, she baits George into breaking them up. She packages her own thoughts as town gossip: "Everybody in this town knows that Isabel never really cared for any other man in her life." Her scheming works because she knows everyone, having lived with them for so long. She knows their weaknesses and vulnerabilities. She uses George's hatred for Eugene. She uses gossip to take the blame off herself. And she accomplishes what she sets out to do: The lovers never get together.

**Franz Kindler / Charles Rankin (The Stranger)** Kindler appears as an incredibly potent manipulator in two separate scenes. The first one is the family dinner immediately after his marriage to Mary. Agent Wilson, suspicious of Rankin's identity, asks Kindler about his thoughts on Germany. Kindler/Rankin, aware of Wilson's agenda, creates a perfect façade of an anti-Nazi persona on the spot, belittling German people and cursing their lust for another war. He ironically suggests the annihilation of German people as the "final solution", which almost convinces Agent Wilson that Rankin cannot be Kindler.

**George Grisby (The Lady from Shanghai)** The image that introduces the character George Grisby is that of him peeping through binoculars. Another scene shows Grisby killing Broome in the yard. Again, Mike is not there to witness this, but he surmises it based on what he knows about George. And this is very indicative of the way George's character is developed. What we know about him is always that image of him, either behind binoculars, hiding somewhere, watching everyone's move. George always ends up being the one who "happens to be there" to witness Elsa and Mike kissing, or Elsa and Mike discussing their plans. He's been made into a schemer by Elsa and he plays his part perfectly. He's not the mastermind Elsa is: he's the enforcer. He's a useful idiot Elsa utilizes to make her schemes work. Mike's memory of George as a "voyeur" confirms this for us as well: George is always in the act of scheming. That's who he is. Nothing he says can be trusted. There is always another rationale or an ulterior motive behind every one of his moves.

**Lady Macbeth (Macbeth)** She wants to be the wife of a king more than Macbeth wants to be king, but she considers her sex as an obstacle. In turn, she uses it to her advantage to deceive and manipulate Macbeth. When he wants to back out, she accuses him of being a beast, less than a man, who has dismissed the chance of being "more than a man." She devises the murder plan on behalf of him and tells him what he should do: "When Duncan is asleep, whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey soundly invite him, I'll drug his servants' wine." He then *surely* could kill an old and unguarded Duncan, couldn't he? After the deed is done, "What not put upon his spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt of our great quell," which is exactly what Macbeth does. She has even engineered the aftermath: "As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar upon his death." She won't even let Macbeth suffer from remorse as that could give them away. She tries to placate him by saying: "What is done is done. Sleep—to bed, to bed."

**Leni (The Trial)** The moment K. steps into the Advocate's office, Leni seduces him by throwing furtive glances and touching him. Her influence on K. is such that he ignores the all-important meeting between the Advocate and the chief clerk about his own case and spends time with Leni. It is almost as though Leni seduces him away from the meeting so that K. stays uninformed and thus reliant on the Advocate. . Leni has used sex to keep Bloch in line so that she can manipulate him. "I kept him locked up in the maid's room, so he wouldn't disturb me when I worked," Leni tells the Advocate about how she's controlling Bloch.

## JEALOUS

**Othello (Othello)** Othello's jealousy is less organic than manufactured. During Iago's initial

stage of manipulation, Othello first dismisses Iago's insinuations. "Thinkest thou I'd make a life of jealousy to follow still the changes of the moon with fresh suspicions? No!" He trusts Desdemona, who has chosen him among other fairer men, therefore he will not believe any word of infidelity *unless* he sees proof. It's not in him to be jealous of Desdemona. Therefore, Iago ups the ante by providing him with proof: first, the manipulated conversation between Iago and Cassio; then, the planted handkerchief; and finally, the lies about Cassio admitting his infidelity. Towards the end, Othello is a jealous man made so by Iago, a "green-eyed monster" himself, who has turned into an untameable beast.

**Gregory Arkadin (Mr. Arkadin)** Arkadin does everything to ensure the love of his daughter. As Raina's boyfriend says at the end of the film, Arkadin "loved her in a very strange way." He declares men "persona non-grata" just because they dare to date Raina. He employs minions to have his daughter and her potential boyfriends followed. Once he realizes that Stratten could steal Raina from him, he not only blackmails him, but also tries to paint him as a blackmailer in hopes that Raina rejects him. "I wish you'd stop following me, dad," Raina complains. "I'm tired of living the life of a rich gypsy." The love he has for her daughter is not a healthy one. It's obsessive to the point of destructive, a reverse Electra complex.

## INSECURE

**Susan "Susie" Vargas (Touch of Evil)** During her interaction with Joe Grandi, we get the impression that Susan is more annoyed than scared. She yells at Pancho and Grandi, calling them names with impunity and acting as if they are wasting her time. She even insults Grandi to his face with a mouthful: "You ridiculous old-fashioned, jug-eared, lopsided little Caesar". It's the same when Pancho holds a flashlight to her face in the motel room. Susan gives back. She responds. But we understand that it is all just a façade. She lets go of it when the stakes are revealed. As soon as Grandi delivers his threat, Susan is faced with real life consequences for the first time. Her face betrays her calm demeanour as she asks if she is free to leave. Or when she is given the picture that shows her standing Pancho as if they were lovers, she once again is reminded of the real threat she and Miguel are facing. She retreats. She decides to stay with Miguel instead of returning to Mexico City because she is truly frightened. She has *been* frightened all along: she was simply trying to put on a brave face until she couldn't.

**Brooks Otterlake (The Other Side of the Wind)** "This is Mr. Hannaford's night. Let's save the questions for him," Otterlake says when a reporter approaches him; however, in two minutes, he is already talking about his films and how "he is third biggest grosser in movie history." Otterlake is painfully aware of the widespread belief that he has stolen everything from Hannaford. He tries to laugh it off cynically, but the insecurity is there, waiting to surface. When Hannaford tells Rich "[i]t's alright to borrow from each other. What we must never do is borrow from ourselves," everybody laughs at the joke except for Otterlake, who pauses for a second and contemplates this remark with a bitter smile for it is not a joke. To him, it's a brutal indictment. Even Hannaford knows that Otterlake is not a danger to his legacy because he is a copycat. Otterlake's earlier half-joke to Rich that "I'm never going to walk away from that" becomes more tragic and self-revealing in retrospect.

## SUBMISSIVE / WEAK / FRAGILE

**Susan Alexander Kane (Citizen Kane)** Weak Susan is a person whose choices and wishes have been ignored by everyone including people who supposedly loved her. Her mother wants her to become an opera singer though Susan knew that her voice "isn't that kind". Kane treats Susan not as his wife, but as his project, trying to shape her based on his wishes, not hers. During the confrontation between Gettys, Emily and Kane about Kane's illicit affair with Susan, nobody cares about how the scandal might impact her. It takes Susan's suicide attempt for Kane to realize that Susan is a person, not his clay, who has her own wishes and her own dreams. Unfortunately this is Susan's tragedy, not her success: that her life is only noticed at the moment of her death. "You don't know what it means to know that the whole audience just doesn't want you," she tells Kane.

**George Amberson Minafer (The Magnificent Ambersons)** George's tragedy is what propels the story. It's his fall and, by extension, that of the Ambersons' that the movie is chiefly concerned about. Both of them refuse the moment in order to live in the glorious past, but the future arrives just the same at the expense of them. George's redemption arc appears two-fold: The literal "comeuppance"

comes in the form of an automobile accident, while the symbolic one reveals his true character: Alone and defeated, by his mother's empty bed, he asks for forgiveness from God and from Isabel that he will never receive. And yet, it makes all the difference because, for once, he does something that reveals his vulnerability, his terrible fragility and his loneliness.

**Fanny Minafer (The Magnificent Ambersons)** Fanny never gets a moment in the movie that is only about her. She is always brought up and shown on the screen in connection with other characters: When she gets teased, it's Eugene she's tied to. When the subject is money, it's either her father or George who is relevant. Even when we hear about her life, we learn about it through other characters while Fanny stays offscreen. Her life trajectory is decided the moment she falls for Eugene, an unrequited love that has forever demoted her to being a side character in other people's lives. The movie makes this clear by never allowing us to see Fanny from her perspective. "You know, George, just being an aunt isn't really the great career it may sometimes seem to be," Uncle Jack tells George. "I really don't know of anything much Fanny has got. Except her feeling about Eugene."

**Konrad Meinike (The Stranger)** He wants to meet Kindler because he believes it is his mission to urge him to atone for his sins. He is a changed man now: from a Nazi agent to God's agent preaching peace. Therefore, Meinike regards his freedom as a spiritual gift from the "highest" rather than a physical absence of a prison cell. And he has come to help Rankin reach salvation. Of course, Rankin sees through the charade immediately: "They freed you so you'd lead them to me," he says, already plotting to get rid of him. At that point, though, Meinike has become so delusional that he describes Agent Wilson as the evil one who "was dressed like any other man. He even smoked a pipe."

**Michael O'Hara (The Lady from Shanghai)** For a cunning, intelligent and attractive femme fatale like Elsa, Mike is an easy target. He is a man of desire, so she immediately turns herself into an object of his desire. Lust makes Mike vulnerable and open to suggestion. As soon as he enters Elsa's orbit, his trajectory is on a downward spiral. Under the spell of promised love and flesh, his only option is to do her bidding. At no point in film can Mike see past his desire, which renders him as the perfect fall guy. Among the sharks, he is the natural prey. And he admits it both at the beginning ("When I start out to make a fool of myself, there's very little can stop me") and at the end ("I'd be innocent officially. But that's a big word, innocent. Stupid is more like it").

**Macbeth (Macbeth)** Whatever he does to secure his future only works to diminish it—that's the heavy irony that fuels Macbeth's tragedy. His insecurity stems from the fact that his fate now relies on the witches and their prophecy, which renders him a child-like figure. The resulting vulnerability feeds his aggression. He tells Lady Macbeth that he's afraid of Banquo more than anyone not because Banquo is dangerous, but because the prophecy about Banquo is a threat to his well-being and power. Similarly, the order to kill Lady Macduff and her son points to his insecurity, which seems to have been amplified by the new prophecies. The locus of his sense of safety and security is outside him. It's something he cannot control. The more he acts on his vulnerability, the less safe he becomes until the vicious circle leads to his death.

**Mily (Mr. Arkadin)** Bracco whispers the two names exclusively into Mily's ears, which means she is free to run the blackmail game without relying on Stratten while he is in jail. She, however, does not have the means to execute a complicated plot like that. Once Stratten gets out of jail, he puts the plan in action, instructing Mily to get herself invited to Arkadin's yacht, which she does, and use her charm to see what she can find out, which she does. Since she is the only one who knows about the name "Sophie," she attempts to use that as a bait, but she backs down immediately when Stratten dismisses her out of hand. She cannot perceive the danger she is in when she drunkenly confronts Arkadin in his cabin because she cannot see the big picture. She cannot run the game. She's just a sidekick, who is seen and treated as expendable by both Stratten and Arkadin.

**Bloch (The Trial)** Bloch is treated like vermin by the Advocate and Leni. Even when he talks about Bloch's own case, he tells Bloch that he wouldn't understand the arguments made against him. He gives Bloch a book, knowing that it's "only meant to give him a bare inkling of the complications" that he never explains to Bloch. The Advocate makes Bloch fall on his knees and beg just to break his spirit. When Leni talks to the Advocate about Bloch, she acts like he is indeed a dog: "Once he asked me for a drink of water and I handed it to him through the ventilator. Then about eight o'clock I let him out and gave him something to eat." The Advocate's answer is as emasculating as it is revealing:

“You're praising him too much, Leni.” Bloch, to them, is less than a human.