

The Bluest Eye Character Descriptions

Pecola Breedlove: The tragic heroine of the piece. Her story ends in madness. Completely innocent. The audience must love her and want to take care of her, but not pity her. She has a certain quiet pride. She is called ugly until she believes it. She is still a child, though, one who plays and laughs and doesn't understand that she is doomed. She is eleven.

Claudia McTeer: It is her voice we hear describing the events of the story. She speaks from adulthood. She is trying to figure out how this could have happened in a universe in which she is loved and cared for by her parents and her sister. But again, she is young, younger than Pecola. She must be able to move gracefully between the innocence of youth and the wisdom of the narrator who has lived through it all.

Frieda McTeer: Frieda is Claudia's smart, funny, observant older sister. She watches Pecola with her sister, but is a little saltier, more practical, a little more judgmental. She is the narrator of the play as well, and she and Claudia must have an intimate connection—they tease each other, support each other, affirm each other's interpretation of events.

Pauline Breedlove: Pecola's mother. Pecola has to call her, "Mrs. Breedlove." She has an intense, violent relationship with Cholly. Painfully shy and insecure. She has pretty much emotionally deserted her family in exchange for the white family that employs her. Her life is ruined by a bad tooth.

Cholly Breedlove: Pecola's father. He suffers a terrible trauma in his youth, and thereafter his hatred is directed towards the women in his family. He is an abusive drunk, but we see him before, as a young man, with potential to love. So the actor must be able to play both the person he was, and the broken, cruel man he becomes. Diamond describes him as the shell of a man who may have been physically impressive at one time.

Mama: Frieda and Claudia's mother, she can be tough but is a loving parent.

Daddy: Funny, sweet and endlessly capable, this is Frieda and Claudia's father, who again is a supportive and instructive parent, standing opposite the Breedloves.

Maureen Peel: Maureen is eleven as well, a young woman who is a little closer than any of the others to Pecola's standard of beauty. Lighter-skinned and higher class, Maureen is almost a figure of awe to Pecola. This actor also plays the voice of the doll (the white child for whom Mrs. Breedlove cares).

Soaphead Church: A mysterious man who is another monster. Soaphead works doing psychic readings and casting spells. At the end of the story, Pecola comes to him while pregnant to ask for the eyes she so passionately desires. Soaphead exacts a cruel price, and promises her the eyes, something he cannot deliver. Soaphead is more educated than the other men in the story, and his voice reflects that education, but he is a cruel villain.

Beyond that, there are scenes with the women of the town, a group of three-five, who comment on the action, or gossip about the characters, depending on your perspective. I don't have pieces here for Daddy, as his speeches are all quite short. There is also Darlene, a young woman from Cholly's youth seen in flashback.