

# **The Miracle Worker**

By William Gibson

## **WINNER! 1960 TONY AWARD - Best Play**

Immortalized onstage and screen by Anne Bancroft and Patty Duke, this classic tells the story of Annie Sullivan and her student, blind and mute Helen Keller. Helen renders an illness at 18 months old that leaves her blind and deaf. Her parents, who pity and spoil their afflicted daughter, are desperate to have order, and hire a young Annie Sullivan to try and reach the mind of Helen. *The Miracle Worker* dramatizes the volatile relationship between the lonely teacher and her charge. Trapped in a secret, silent world, unable to communicate, Helen is violent, spoiled, almost sub-human and treated by her family as such. Only Annie realizes that there is a mind and spirit waiting to be rescued from the dark, tortured silence. With scenes of intense physical and emotional dynamism, Annie's success with Helen finally comes with the utterance of a single, glorious word: "water."

## **Character Descriptions:**

### **Annie Sullivan, F, 20**

Helen's teacher. She is a strong and vibrant woman who is determined to connect Helen to the world. Her challenging past is what drives her to push Helen. There is a crude vitality to her and she is undeterred by the Keller's protection of their daughter Helen. She is involved in intense physical scenes. Must have a strong connection to Helen.

### **Helen Keller, F, appears to be 8-11**

A deaf, blind mute. She is trapped in her own world, unable to speak, hear, or see. She has been blind and deaf since she was stricken with scarlet fever as a baby. She is involved in intense physical scenes. Must have a strong connection to Annie Sullivan.

### **Captain Arthur Keller, M, age 40s - 50s**

Helen's father. A captain, he is stern, but devoted to his family. He struggles to connect to young Helen, but he is loving nonetheless.

### **Kate Keller, F, age 30s – 40's**

Helen's mother. She is tormented by Helen's perceivably insurmountable disability. She seeks to please Helen in order to avoid the tantrums and to compensate for her extreme misfortune. She is a captain's wife, completely devoted to her husband, but a fiercely devoted mother as well. She is determined to give Helen any chance she can get.

### **James Keller, M, age teens - 20s**

Helen's half brother, the son of the captain. He is described as indolent. He sees Helen as mentally defective and believes it best she be put in an asylum.

**Aunt Ev**, F, age 30s – 50's

Helen's aunt. She is a talkative, opinionated woman who serves as the catalyst for the Kellers' contact with the Perkins School for the Blind.

**Anagnos/Doctor**, M or F age 40s -50s

Annie's counselor at the Perkins Institution for the Blind. A dear and kind man, he is very fond of Annie. He serves as a mentor and friend.

**Viney or Virginia**, F, age 30s - 40s

The housekeeper and mother of Martha. She is cheerful and very loving.

**Martha**, F, age 8 – 12

daughter to Viney and is a playmate of Helen.

**Doctor**, M or F age 40s -50s

Helen's Dr. at the beginning of the show, Dr. in Annie's nightmares later.

**Jimmie**, M, appears to be 6 - 8

Annie's younger brother who died in the poorhouse that Annie and Jimmie were sent to when Annie was 8. (Will appear onstage in Annie's nightmare sequences).

**Crone's 1, 2, 3**, old M or F

Old crazy people from Annie's nightmares (Will appear onstage in Annie's nightmare sequences).