

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

By Lally Katz

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

What our Production Team is Looking for in Auditions?

PRINCIPAL ROLES:

ANA

CATHERINE

KEN

MARTIN / ARTUR – THE SERIAL KILLER

ANA

An eighty-year-old Hungarian woman and Catherine's neighbour. We first meet her when she complains that Christina's tree drops its leaves into her yard. Ana is a strong, determined, courageous and hardworking woman. She has had a hard life, losing her father, losing a husband and a baby and being imprisoned in Yugoslavia, Italy, France and then coming to Australia as a refugee. Ana is still caught up in the war believing people are wasps and spies trying to attack her. Traumatised by her experiences in prisoner of war camps, Ana is desperate to remain fiercely independent, as illustrated when Dr Williams suggests she move into a hospice. Ana responds that she will never be a prisoner again. Catherine says to her, “*You're still at war. In your mind, you're still at war*”.

She is a nosy neighbour, very cranky and doesn't have any family or friends. She was married twice, but her first husband cheated on her and her second husband died of cancer. She is curious about her neighbour Catherine and through her storytelling she manages to coax Catherine out of her shell. She pushes people away, especially Jovanka who is desperate to be her friend, thinking she is better alone “*Solo Una Ana*”. In the end she learns to let people in and we see this in the final few scenes when she willingly goes to the cinema with Jovanka and Catherine.

CATHERINE

A woman in her late twenties. Catherine is very fragile, as she is still grieving her ex-boyfriend Martin. She is very disconnected with the world, which may explain her unemployed status, her lack of auditioning or going to the job interview. It's like she's in a 'holding pattern' in her life, perhaps fearful of failure. She also has obsessive compulsive issues around ironing and controlling her eating. Catherine finds Ana an

unlikely companion, but she finds herself engrossed by Ana's stories of Hungary and ends up helping Ana with her chores. It is obvious that Ken longs for Catherine though she is caught up on Martin. This is resolved at the end when Catherine finally agrees to watch the West Wing with him and the audience feels hopeful for each character and their blossoming relationship.

KEN

Catherine's housemate. He is in his early thirties. He is a writer, supposedly working on a film, but he spends the majority of his time playing computer games, becoming addicted to *World of Warcraft*. He is a diabetic who ends up quite sick and goes home to his parents to help sort his life out. Ken is attracted to Catherine and truly cares for her wellbeing trying to help her find a job and observing her eat habits. Whilst this starts out fairly casual in the beginning he becomes more concerned throughout the play and is alarmed to find that she's been staying at Ana's place. He almost gives up on Catherine, but returns towards the end of the play and we feel hope that their relationship blooms.

KRISTINA

Catherine and Ana's neighbour. She is in her 40s – 50s, very attractive and well groomed, always keeping up appearances. Living by herself, she is paranoid about security and has cameras set up around her house to keep her safe. She makes knitted dolls for charity, but tells Ana and Catherine that she is tired now that she's having chemotherapy. She has a brain tumour and has it cut out. She turns up at Ana's house dazed and confused one night, relying on a neighbour she'd never had much time for..

JOVANKA

An elderly Serbian woman who comes to visit Ana. She lived on Creswick St with Ana before Ana moved. She is a very insistent, determined woman, continually trying to be friends with Ana, even though she is always turned away. Perhaps she's had a difficult life too, or was once friends with Ana, it is never made clear. Jovanka. Day after day she takes the bus across town to visit Ana, here in Mary Street. Jovanka always tries to ring first but Ana steadfastly refuses to answer her phone. This is a running gag. Jovanka shows up six times in Act One with her tenacious invitations to Ana, 'You want to have one coffee?' She is rebuffed with equivalent tenacity by Ana, who is 'all the time busy'. Jovanka shuffles on, then shuffles off. And we know that she will return. Nothing Ana says can persuade Jovanka that her visits are unwelcome. In the first half of Act One this makes for delicious comic business.

MARTIN

Is Catherine's ex-boyfriend. We discover that two years earlier he committed suicide, leaving Catherine devastated and disconnected with the world. Catherine is still grieving over his passing and does not truly know the extent of why he kills himself. He appears in scenes without it being revealed that he's a ghost, but the memory of him is haunting Catherine as she is expecting him to call her or text her anytime soon.

OTHER ROLES:

We are also looking for Actors that are willing to play several roles some significant like Doctor Vhite, the Russian Soldier, and Young Ana for example.

Also required for Multiple Roles:

A Man 35 + Multiple Roles - The Chemist, An Australian Policeman, A Hungarian Policeman, Ana's Father, the Russian Soldier's Father and an Ambulance Officer.

A Woman 35+ Multiple Roles – Jovanka, Nancy, Katrina, Russian Soldier's Mother, Ana's Mother, and Doctor Vhite

A Teenage Boy to play

An Employee, A Soldier Dying, A Delivery Boy, A Postman and a Russian Soldier 15 years plus ...

Young Ana

A Teenage Girl to play Young Ana (Big Role), and the Gypsy – 15 years plus, (Challenging role)

A Teenager Girl to play a Girl,

A Young woman with a Dog, A Receptionist and A Woman in a Cinema. 15 years plus ... 15 lines. But opportunity to be other characters.