“You Can’t Take It With You”
Characters
(in random order)

Penelope “Penny” Sycamore (246 lines)
Preferred age: 40 and up
Usually goes by Penny, Penelope is the mother of Essie and Alice, wife of Paul, and daughter of Martin. She writes plays and paints as hobbies because it makes her happy, but is terrible at both. Penny is a loving mother and wife and is constantly concerned with the welfare of her family. Her main goal is to make sure everyone is happy, particularly her daughter Alice. A huge part! On stage almost all the time.

Martin “Grandpa” Vanderhof (207 lines)
Preferred age: 60 and up
Referred to mostly as Grandpa in the play. Father-in-law to Paul, father of Penny, grandfather of Alice and Essie. He is an eccentric happy old man who has never paid his income tax because he doesn't believe in it, as he feels that the government wouldn't know what to do with the money if he paid for it. He lives his life by the philosophy: “Don't do anything that you're not going to enjoy doing.” He goes to circuses, commencements, throws darts, and collects stamps. A challenging role indeed, but most of your blocking is…sitting in a rocker.

Alice Sycamore (181 lines)
Preferred age: 18 and up
Fiancé of Tony Kirby, daughter of Paul and Penny, Granddaughter of Martin, sister of Essie. She the only "normal" family member. She has an office job, and is rather embarrassed by the eccentricities of her family when she has Tony and his parents at her house, yet she still loves
them. She tends to be a pessimist. The actress for Alice needs to show characteristics of love, embarrassment, worry…and many more.

**Tony Kirby (136 lines)**

**Preferred age: 18 and up**
Fiancé of Alice, Son of Mr. and Mrs. Kirby. He sees how, even though the Sycamores appear odd, they are really the perfect family because they love and care about each other. His own family is very proper and has many issues none of them will admit. He is vice president of Kirby and Co. This actor will need to have an adorable properness to him. The audience will need to be on Tony’s side right from the start.

**Anthony W. Kirby (107 lines)**

**Preferred age: 45 and up**
Husband of Mrs. Kirby, father of Tony. He is a very proper man who is president of Kirby and Co. and secretly despises his job. His hobby is raising expensive orchids. He is also a member of the Harvard Society, the Union Club, the National Geographic Society, and the Racquet Club. Being rich and borderline snobby is a good start for an actor to experiment with for this role. Whoever has this role will also need to not laugh when hilarity ensues.

**Essie Carmichael (87 lines)**

**Preferred age: 25 and up**
Wife of Ed, daughter of Penny and Paul Sycamore, Granddaughter of Martin, sister of Alice. She is childish. As a hobby she makes candy that Ed sells. Essie dreams of being a ballerina. She has spent 8 years studying with Boris Kolenkhov, but is a terrible dancer. Actresses who perform these embarrassing, bad dances need to keep a very straight face, and is willing to dance intermingled with Kolenkhov. Hilarity will ensue.
Boris Kolenkhov (83 lines)
Preferred age: 30 and up
A Russian who escaped to America shortly before the Russian Revolution. He is very concerned with world politics, and the deterioration of Russia. He is the ballet instructor of Essie, aware that she is untalented at dancing, but knows that she enjoys dancing so he keeps working with her. He likes the Greeks and the Romans, questions society, and is interested in world affairs. He is opinionated and often loudly declares that something "stinks"! This actor can be either very large and boisterous, or small and flamboyant. Will need to be able to support Essie physically, and keep a straight face.

Paul Sycamore (68 lines)
Preferred age: 40 and up
Father of Essie and Alice, husband of Penny, Son-in-law of Martin. He is a Tinker who manufactures fireworks in the basement with the help of his assistant Mr. De Pinna. His hobby is playing with erector sets. It will help have an age appropriate actor for this role. A common, fatherly character is all Paul needs.

Ed Carmichael (65 lines)
Preferred age: 25 and up
Husband of Essie, son-in-law of Paul and Penny. He is a xylophone player, and distributes Essie's candies. Ed is an amateur printer who prints anything that sounds good to him. He prints up dinner menus for his family and little quotes that he places in the boxes of Essie's candy. He also likes to make masks. The actor will need to be confident in all his crafts, but show meekness when he is later confronted with a visit from the feds.
Mr. De Pinna (55 lines)
Preferred age: 30 and up
The iceman who came inside to speak to Paul five years before, and never left. He helps Mr. Sycamore build fireworks, and moonlights as a model in Mrs. Sycamore's paintings. He is a nutty guy. This is kind of a side-kick role to Paul. Witty, random jokes. A perfect role for someone who can have a lot of fun designing a uniquely written character.

Donald (46 lines)
Preferred age: 25 and up
The boyfriend of Rheba, who seems to serve as volunteer handyman for the Sycamores. In the words of Mrs. Sycamore, "The two of them are really cute together, something like Porgy and Bess." The characters of Donald and Rheba, according to the script, are African-American. These roles, and their dialogues, can be altered freely.

Rheba (44 lines)
Preferred age: 25 and up
The maid and cook to the Sycamore family. She is dating Donald. She is onstage a lot, but doesn't necessarily say anything. The characters of Donald and Rheba, according to the script, are African-American. These roles, and their dialogues, can be altered freely.

Wilbur C. Henderson (34 lines)
Preferred age: 25 and up
An employee of the IRS. He comes to collect the tax money owed by Grandpa, and can't understand why the latter won't pay income tax. A one-scene role that has brought out tons of laughs and stomach cramps from audience all over. Perfect for someone who wants to act, but may not have a lot of time to commit.
Miriam Kirby (33 lines)
Preferred age: 45 and up
Wife of Mr. Kirby, mother of Tony. She is an extremely prim and proper woman and is horrified by the goings-on in the Sycamore household. Her hobby is spiritualism. A small, female role, but one that shows a great deal of emotion.

The Grand Duchess Olga Katrina (20 lines)
Preferred age: 40 and up
She was one of the Grand Duchesses of Russia before the Revolution, another being her sister, the Grand Duchess Natasha. Since then she has been forced to flee to America where she has found work as a waitress in Childs Restaurant. The rest of her family has had a similar fate, such as her Uncle Sergei, the Grand Duke, who is now an elevator man. She loves to cook as a hobby. This character will appear later in the play, and the actress needs to be able to be a bit over-the-top, but not over do it. A memorable, not necessarily overwhelming, Russian accent is desired.

Gay Wellington (9 lines)
Preferred age: 25 and up
An actress whom Mrs. Sycamore meets on a bus and invites home to read one of her plays. She is an alcoholic, gets very drunk and passes out shortly after arriving at the Sycamore’s home. A very small role, but onstage for several scenes. The actress mustn’t be afraid to be physically carried by another actor, and can act “passed out”, in hilarious positions, without breaking character.

G-Man 1 “The Man” (18 lines), G-Man 2 “Jim” (3 lines), G-Man 3 “Mac” (2 lines)
Preferred age: 21 and up (Triplets would rock!)
Three agents who come to investigate Ed because of the
communist things he prints up, such as "God is the State – the State is God". These actors must be okay having a very small role in the show. Perfect for anyone new to acting!

DIRECTOR’S NOTE:
After reading these descriptions, if you know of anyone in your life that may fit these parts, PLEASE BRING THEM IN! The best part of getting people to audition is word of mouth! Hope to see you all there.