

Look Back in Anger Characters

Writer: John Osborne | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Characters

- **Jimmy Porter:** The main protagonist of the play. An intelligent but disillusioned working-class man in his twenties. He is articulate, passionate, and often cruel in speech. His long monologues reveal anger at class privilege, hypocrisy, and the emptiness of modern life. Despite his harshness, he has moments of tenderness, especially in the “bear and squirrel” game with Alison.
- **Alison Porter:** Alison is the wife of Jimmy Porter. She is from an upper-middle-class military family. She is gentle, reserved, and emotionally repressed. She often endures Jimmy’s verbal abuse in silence. Her quiet withdrawal contrasts with Jimmy’s fiery personality. She suffers a miscarriage during the play, which deeply affects her and leads to a fragile reconciliation with Jimmy.
- **Cliff Lewis:** Jimmy’s friend and working-class Welsh lodger. He is Easy-going, warm, and loyal. Cliff acts as a peacemaker between Jimmy and Alison. He provides comic relief but also emotional grounding. Eventually, he decides to leave the flat to find his own life.
- **Helena Charles:** Alison’s friend from the same upper-middle-class background. She is Strong-willed and moralistic. She initially disapproves of Jimmy’s treatment of Alison and persuades her to leave. Ironically, she later begins an affair with Jimmy. At the end when Alison returns. She becomes deeply ashamed. She decides to leave immediately.
- **Colonel Redfern:** He is Alison’s father, a retired British army officer. Represents the older generation and the old imperial Britain. Though he disapproves of Jimmy, he is not portrayed as cruel. Rather, he became confused by the new social change. He feels displaced in modern England.
- **Hugh Tanner (mentioned, not seen):** Jimmy’s absent friend, from a working-class background. Hugh’s mother is important to Jimmy, as she helped him start his sweet stall business. Hugh never appears on stage, but his presence is felt in conversations. It shows Jimmy’s ties to his own class roots.
- **Mrs. Tanner (mentioned, not seen):** Hugh’s mother, a working-class woman. Jimmy admires her for her warmth and strength. She becomes seriously ill during the play. Jimmy shows anger toward Alison for not showing sympathy for Mrs. Tanner.

