

The Rape of the Lock Character

Writer: Alexander Pope | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Main Characters

Belinda: Belinda is the main character of the poem. She is a wealthy, young, and very beautiful lady. She goes to Hampton Court to enjoy a day with friends. Many men admire her beauty. She feels proud of her looks, but the Baron secretly cuts off her lock of hair.

Ariel: Ariel is Belinda's guardian sylph (an airy spirit). He appears in her dream and says his job is to protect her beauty and purity. But later, Ariel fails to stop the cutting of her hair.

The Baron: The Baron is the villain of the poem. He falls in love with Belinda's beauty. He cuts off a lock of her hair without permission. He is proud of his act and does not return the lock.

Thalestris: Thalestris is Belinda's close friend. When the lock is lost, she becomes angry and emotional. She also tries to support Belinda and demands the lock back.

Umbriel: Umbriel is a gnome who enjoys creating trouble. He goes to the Cave of Spleen and brings a bag full of "sighs and sorrows." He pours them over Belinda and Thalestris to make them feel worse.

The Queen of Spleen: She rules the dark Cave of Spleen. She gives Umbriel sad emotions to spread. She represents women's anger, sadness, and health problems caused by mood and emotion.

Clarissa: Clarissa gives the Baron the scissors to cut Belinda's hair. Later, she provides a wise speech. She says beauty is fleeting, and women should be strong and of good character.

Minor Characters

Sir Plume: Sir Plume is Thalestris's admirer. He tries to get back the lock from the Baron but fails. He is shown as a silly and useless man.

Zephyretta: A sylph who guards Belinda's fan. Her name comes from "zephyr," meaning soft wind.

Brillante: A sylph who guards Belinda's earrings. Her name means "shining," like the earrings.

Momentilla: A sylph who guards Belinda's watch. Her name comes from "moment," related to time.

Crispissa: A sylph who protects Belinda's hair. Her name means "curl," matching her job to guard the lock.

Betty: Betty is Belinda's maid. She helps her get dressed.

Shock: Shock is Belinda's small lapdog.

Caryl: Caryl is based on John Caryl, Pope's friend. He first told Pope the real-life story that inspired this poem.

Supernatural Characters

Sylphs: Sylphs are airy spirits who live in the air. In the poem, they are the most important supernatural beings. They protect beautiful and proud women like Belinda. They guard her hair, face, fan, and clothes. Ariel is the leader of the sylphs. But when Belinda starts feeling love, the sylphs lose their power to protect her.

Nymphs: Nymphs are spirits of water. In this poem, Pope says that women who loved pleasure and beauty in life become nymphs after death. They live in rivers, lakes, or fountains. Although they are mentioned briefly, they are integral to the poem's magical world.

Gnomes: Gnomes are earth spirits. They are linked with bad moods and sadness. In the poem, Umbriel is a gnome who brings sorrow, anger, and tears from the Cave of Spleen. Gnomes enjoy making people feel unhappy and emotional. They are the opposite of the cheerful sylphs.

Salamanders: Salamanders are fire spirits. According to the poem, women who were hot-tempered and proud in life become salamanders after death. These spirits are not very active in the poem, but they add to Pope's idea that every woman's soul becomes a different spirit.