



SUMMARY

Gypsy follows Rose, an overbearing stage mother who travels cross-country with her daughters, Louise and June, and their vaudeville act. As times change, Rose will go to great lengths in pursuit of the American Dream and to make her daughters famous.

CHARACTER GUIDE

Rose: A domineering stage mother who pushes her daughters into show business.

June: Rose's extroverted daughter and a promising child star. She becomes increasingly frustrated with her mother as she grows older. June eventually runs away from her family.

Louise: Rose's shy older daughter, who lives in her sister's shadow. She eventually becomes burlesque performer Gypsy Rose Lee and reaches a level of stardom her mother can only dream of.

Herbie: Rose's love interest, who reluctantly manages June and Louise's bookings. He loves the girls and hopes to marry their mother.



EXERCISES & ACTIVATIONS

Writing

Mama Rose is in constant pursuit of fame for her daughters, promising over and over again to make them a “star.” Why is she so determined for them to become famous? Is it about the money? What are her deeper desires that are revealed in Act 2? When you think of famous performers, who comes to mind? Do you feel that fame is a worthy pursuit? Why or why not?

Embodying

The relationships within *Gypsy* evolve throughout the musical. Using the list of main characters above, create three different tableaux that offer insight into how the characters feel about each other and how they may interact with each other within the following possible points of the story. Consider their age, costumes, props, and body language toward each other. What are their most immediate wants? Create the scene and freeze! That’s your tableau!

- Baby June and Baby Louise are mid-show while Rose directs from the wings, and Herbie watches from afar.
- June and Louise have just sung “If Momma Was Married,” and Herbie and Rose are in a separate room talking about show business.
- Louise, now Gypsy Rose Lee, is backstage. Rose has just walked in. Herbie has moved on and is trying to work his candy business. June is far away with her husband, Tulsa, performing another act.

Contextual

Read the lyrics as you listen to “Some People.” What is Rose trying to express? When she references her dreams, do you think she’s recounting or exaggerating to ask for money? Rose has an exceptional passion and ambition for show business and readily makes sacrifices. What are you passionate about? What sacrifices do you expect you may need to make in pursuit of that dream?