

The Odd Couple Synopsis and Character Descriptions

Synopsis

This classic comedy opens as a group of the guys assembled for cards in the apartment of divorced Oscar Madison. And if the mess is any indication, it's no wonder that his wife left him. Late to arrive is Felix Unger who has just been separated from his wife. Fastidious, depressed and none too tense, Felix seems suicidal, but as the action unfolds Oscar becomes the one with murder on his mind when the clean-freak and the slob ultimately decide to room together with hilarious results as The Odd Couple is born.

Character Descriptions

Oscar Madison - A carefree, good-natured, divorced sportswriter who lives alone in a messy eight-room New York apartment. He is completely oblivious to dirt, clutter, and the overdue child-support payments about which his wife telephones weekly. He has his male cronies in for a weekly poker game with refreshments that invite food poisoning. Oscar's lifestyle is abruptly turned around when he takes in one of the members of the group, Felix Ungar, whose wife has thrown him out. Everything is now antiseptically clean, the food served to the poker players is appetizing, and there is money to pay his former wife, Blanche. Felix is so compulsive, however, that Oscar cannot live with him and forcefully requests that he leave. 4 scenes, 456 lines.

Felix Unger - A fussy man who knows that he is difficult to live with but cannot—or will not—make any concessions or compromises. His wife, unwilling to continue their marriage, asks him to leave the family despite his suicide threat, and he then moves in with Oscar. Made comical by his exaggerated behavior, Felix is persuaded by the end of the play to live temporarily with the Pigeon sisters, who pity him, but it is probable that they too will find him exasperating. 4 scenes, 386 lines.

Gwendolyn Pigeon - Oscar and Felix's giggly upstairs neighbor, one of a pair of English sisters. She is a widow. 2 scenes, 66 lines.

Cecily Pigeon - Oscar and Felix's giggly upstairs neighbor, one of a pair of English sisters. She is a divorcée. 2 scenes, 57 lines.

Speed - One of Oscar and Felix's poker buddies. Gruff and sarcastic, often picking on Vinnie and Murray. 3 scenes, 64 lines.

Murray - A NYPD policeman, one of Oscar and Felix's poker buddies. 3 scenes, 118 lines.

Roy - One of Oscar and Felix's poker buddies. Oscar's accountant. Roy has a dry wit but is less acerbic than Speed. 3 scenes, 64 lines.

Vinnie - One of Oscar and Felix's poker buddies. Vinnie is mild-mannered and henpecked, making him an easy target for Speed's verbal barbs. 3 scenes, 66 lines.