

## ***Character Breakdowns:***

***Dolly Van Striven:*** The matriarch of the Van Striven household, Dolly is in her 40s, and her primary concerns are maintaining the Van Striven family status at the top of Strivers Row and marrying off her only daughter, Cobina. Her rivalry with Tillie Petunia fuels her desire for her daughter's societal debut to be a success, but she also has an unspoken wish for her daughter to make better decisions than she did when she was 18. Light-skinned

***Tillie Petunia:*** Dolly Van Striven's self proclaimed worst enemy, Tillie is the editor of a gossip newspaper--a direct reflection of her social behavior in the high society of black New York City. Light-skinned

***Sophie:*** A boisterous woman in her 20s or 30s, she is the maid to the Van Strivens. She has little care for etiquette and is often more concerned with her access to Mrs. Van Striven's wardrobe than with her job responsibilities. Likely dark-skinned, not necessarily

***Cobina Van Striven:*** 18 years young and Dolly Van Striven's only daughter, her marriage to a suitable husband will ensure the family status for years to come. Unfortunately, she has already fallen in love with a blue collar boy named Chuck. Light- skinned

***Ruby Jackson:*** Won the lottery and intends to use her new fortune to buy the Van Strivens out of some real estate. Eager to nudge her way into high society, Cobina's debut is the perfect opportunity. She desperately wants Dolly's approval and hopes that being in business with her husband is a way to get into her good graces. Dark-skinned

***Mrs. Pace:*** Dolly's self-important mother. Dolly pulls the strings and Mrs. Pace pulls Dolly's. Likely light-skinned, not necessarily

***Lily Livingston:*** mid 20s, glamorous, lives her life with like it's a performance. Likely light-skinned, not necessarily

***Rowena:*** Tillie's niece, in her early 20s. Inarguably attractive, content with the privilege provided for her by her aunt. Light-skinned

***Louise Davis:*** Knows that the price to pay for her luxurious lifestyle is putting up with her husband's flirtatious tendencies. She still knows when to put her foot down. Likely light-skinned, not necessarily

***Beulah:*** Ruby's 22 year old friend. Never passes up the opportunity to get dolled up, but this debut dinner might be out of her depth. Dark-skinned

**Professor Hennypest:** Chair of Zoology at Tuskegee University, 40s and aging, very wise and quietly quick witted. His relationship to the Van Strivens is strictly professional, but he continues to find himself smitten with the women in his company. Likely light-skinned, not necessarily

**Oscar Van Striven:** Dolly's husband, desperately trying to make ends meet to keep the family on Strivers Row. Terrified of what his wife will do if he can't. He understands the importance of his daughter's debut but can't imagine why it would take precedence over paying the bills. Could be light or dark skinned

**Chuck:** Bashful and slightly naive, he's a young army vet working blue collar jobs to make ends meet. Likely dark-skinned, not necessarily

**Ed Tucker:** Young man in his 20s, the son of a prominent judge and the most sought after bachelor of the season. Light skinned

**Dr. Leon Davis:** Louise's flirty husband, he is constantly testing the limits of his wife's patience. Likely light-skinned, not necessarily

**Joe Smothers:** Mid 20s. Ruby's plus-two to the dinner. Too suave for his own good, to the extent of being tacky. Likely dark-skinned, not necessarily