**Character List Joy Luck Club**

**Woo Family**

**Jing-mei (June) Woo** -  Jing-mei Woo is the newest member of the Joy Luck Club, having taken her mother Suyuan’s place after her death. The other members of the Joy Luck Club give her money to travel to China so that she can find her mother’s long-lost twin daughters, Chwun Yu and Chwun Hwa, and tell them Suyuan’s story, but Jing-mei fears that she is not up to the task. See “Analysis of Major Characters.”

**Suyuan Woo** -  Suyuan Woo was Jing-mei’s mother and the founder of the Joy Luck Club, a group of women who come together once weekly to play mahjong. She started the club in China, in the early days of her first marriage. During her flight from a war-torn area of China, Suyuan lost her twin daughters, Chwun Yu and Chwun Hwa. In San Francisco, Suyuan revived the Joy Luck Club with Lindo, An-mei, and Ying-ying. See “Analysis of Major Characters.”

**Canning Woo**  -  Canning Woo is Suyuan’s second husband and father of her daughter Jing-mei. He met Suyuan in the hospital in Chungking, where she recovered from her flight from Kweilin. After Suyuan’s death, he travels to China with Jing-mei to meet her children.

**Wang Chwun Yu and Wang Chwun Hwa Chwun** -  Yu and Chwun Hwa are Suyuan’s twin daughters by her first husband, Wang Fuchi; they are the half-sisters of Jing-mei. When an officer warned Suyuan to go to Chungking with her daughters to be with Wang Fuchi, Suyuan knew the Japanese were going to invade Kweilin. After many hardships and the onset of dysentery, Suyuan was forced to leave the twins by the side of the road, but Jing-mei and Canning are reunited with them at the end of the novel and tell them their mother’s story.

**Jong Family**

**Lindo Jong**  -  Lindo is a member of the Joy Luck Club. She teaches the power of invisible strength to her daughter Waverly, instilling in her the skills that contribute to Waverly’s talent in chess. She fears that in trying to give Waverly American opportunities, she may have undermined her daughter’s Chinese identity; Lindo also fears that she herself may have become too assimilated. See “Analysis of Major Characters.”

**Waverly Jong**  -  Waverly is the youngest of Lindo and Tin Jong’s children. She has always been a model of success, winning chess tournaments as a child and eventually building a lucrative career as an attorney. Jing-mei has always felt a rivalry with her, somewhat imposed by their competitive mothers. Much of Waverly’s talent in chess stemmed from her ability to hide her thoughts and channel invisible powers. Waverly fears what her mother will say about her white fiancé, Rich. See “Analysis of Major Characters.”

**Tin Jong**  -  Tin is Lindo’s second husband. He is the father of her three children: Vincent, Waverly, and Winston.

**Vincent Jong**  -  Vincent is Lindo and Tin Jong’s second child. When he received a secondhand chess set at a church-sponsored Christmas party, his sister Waverly discovered her interest and talent in chess.

**Winston Jong**  -  Winston was Lindo and Tin Jong first child. He was killed in a car accident at the age of sixteen.

**Huang Tyan-yu** -  Tyan-yu was Lindo Jong’s first husband, in China. His mother was Huang Taitai. When Tyan-yu and Lindo were one and two, respectively, a matchmaker arranged for their marriage. Pampered and self-centered, Tyan-yu makes Lindo’s life extremely unpleasant when she comes to live with his family at the age of twelve. When Lindo is sixteen, they get married, but Tyan-yu remains very much a boy. He has no desire for Lindo, but he is too afraid to admit it.

**Huang Taitai**  -  Huang Taitai was Tyan-yu’s mother. When Lindo came to live in her household at the age of twelve, Taitai trained her to be the epitome of the obedient wife. Domineering and tyrannical, Taitai made Lindo’s life miserable and ignorantly blamed her for the fact that Lindo and Tyan-yu had no children.

**Marvin Chen**  -  Marvin was Waverly’s first husband and is the father of her daughter, Shoshana. Waverly’s mother Lindo was very critical of Marvin, always pointing out his faults. Soon Waverly could see nothing but his shortcomings, and consequently divorced him. Waverly fears that the same thing will happen when she marries Rich.

**Shoshana Chen**  -  Shoshana is Waverly’s four-year-old daughter. Waverly’s unconditional love for Shoshana teaches her about maternal devotion.

**Lindo’s mother** -  After Lindo was engaged at the age of two, Lindo’s mother began to talk about Lindo as if she were already her mother-in-law Huang Taitai’s daughter. Lindo knows that her mother did so only because she wanted to keep herself from feeling too attached to the daughter she loved so dearly but had already given away.

**Rich Schields**  -  Schields is Waverly’s white fiancé. Waverly wants to tell her mother Lindo about their engagement, but she is afraid that Lindo will criticize him to the point that she will be unable to see anything but his faults. Rich loves Waverly unconditionally, but Waverly fears that a bad first impression will unleash a flood of criticism from Lindo.

**Hsu Family**

**An-mei Hsu** -  An-mei is one of the members of the Joy Luck Club. She has learned important lessons about the dangers of passivity and the necessity of speaking up for herself, but, she notes with pain, she has not passed on these lessons to her daughter Rose. Although she has lost most of her faith in God, An-mei maintains a certain faith in the human power of will and effort. See “Analysis of Major Characters.”

**Rose Hsu**  -  Rose is the youngest of An-mei and George Hsu’s three daughters. She married Ted Jordan, despite protests from both An-mei and Mrs. Jordan. She has always allowed Ted to make all the decisions, but when Ted asks her to take on some of the responsibility, Rose’s relationship with Ted disintegrates. An-mei helps Rose understand that she needs to assert herself. See “Analysis of Major Characters.”

**Bing Hsu**  -  Bing was the youngest of An-mei’s and George Hsu’s seven children. When Bing was four years old, the entire Hsu family took a trip to the beach, and Bing drowned. Rose, rather irrationally, blames herself for the death. An-mei had faith that God and her *nengkan,* or her belief in her power to control her fate, would help her find Bing, but the boy never turned up.

**George Hsu**  -  George is An-mei’s husband and Rose’s father.

**An-mei’s mother** -  An-mei’s mother was a strong but sorrowful woman who, after being widowed while still young, was tricked into becoming the fourth wife of Wu Tsing. She went to live in his household in the city of Tientsin. When An-mei’s grandmother, Popo, dies, An-mei goes to live with her mother in the city. Eventually, An-mei’s mother commits suicide so that An-mei will not live a life of shame and unhappiness. An-mei’s mother teaches her daughter to sacrifice herself for her family, to swallow her tears, to mask her pain, and to beware of people who seem too kind or generous.

**Popo**  -  Popo was An-mei’s maternal grandmother. When An-mei’s mother married Wu Tsing, Popo disowned her. According to traditional Chinese values, it was a disgrace that her widowed daughter had not only remarried but had re-married as a third concubine. Five years after leaving, An-mei’s mother returned because Popo had fallen terminally ill and, according to superstitious healing methods, sliced off a piece of her flesh to put in a broth for Popo.

**Wu Tsing**  -  Wu Tsing was a wealthy Chinese merchant who took An-mei’s mother as his third concubine, or “Fourth Wife.” He was easily manipulated by Second Wife and was, at root, a coward. When An-mei’s mother commits suicide, he fears the vengeance of her ghost and thus promises to raise An-mei in wealth and status.

**Second Wife**  -  Second Wife was Wu Tsing’s first concubine. She entirely dominates the household in Tientsin, providing an example of extreme female power in a patriarchal society. Yet hers is a cruel power: she is deceptive and manipulative. She banks on her husband’s fear of ghosts by faking suicides so that he will give her what she wants, and she trapped An-mei’s mother into marrying Wu Tsing so as to fulfill his wish for heirs without losing her authority. At first, Second Wife manipulates An-mei into liking her by giving her a pearl necklace, but An-mei’s mother shows An-mei the deceptiveness of appearances by shattering one of the “pearls” with her foot in order to prove that it is actually glass. An-mei repeats this action after her mother’s suicide, and Second Wife is the first figure against whom An-mei learns to assert her own strength.

**Syaudi**  -  Syaudi was the son of An-mei’s mother and her second husband, Wu-Tsing, but Second Wife took him as her own. An-mei learned that he was her brother through Yan Chang, her mother’s servant.

**Ted Jordan**  -  Ted Jordan is Rose’s estranged husband. When they were dating, he made all the decisions. Later, he asks for a divorce and is surprised when Rose stands up for herself.

**St. Clair Family**

**Ying-ying St. Clair** -  Ying-ying is a member of the Joy Luck Club. As a child, Ying-ying was headstrong and independent. Yet she slowly develops a fatalism and passivity; rarely speaking her mind, she allows her American husband, Clifford St. Clair, to translate incorrectly her feelings and thoughts. Once she realizes that her daughter Lena exhibits the same qualities in her own marriage, Ying-ying recognizes her weakness and resolves to tell Lena her story. See “Analysis of Major Characters.”

**Lena St. Clair** -  Lena is the only child of Ying-ying and Clifford St. Clair. When she married Harold Livotny, Lena unwittingly began to follow Ying-ying’s passive example, believing herself incapable of control in her marriage and her career. See “Analysis of Major Characters.”

**Clifford St. Clair** -  Clifford St. Clair is Ying-ying’s second husband. He never learned to speak Chinese fluently, and she never learned to speak English fluently. Clifford often puts words into his wife’s mouth.

**Ying-ying’s Amah** -  Ying-ying’s Amah was her childhood nursemaid. She loved Ying-ying as if she were her own child and tried to instill traditional Chinese feminine values in her—values that Ying-ying will later regret having adopted.

**Harold Livotny**  -  Harold is Lena St. Clair’s husband. Since the beginning of their relationship, he has insisted that they split the cost of everything they share. He says that keeping their finances separate makes their love purer. However, what he believes will keep them independent and equal in fact renders Lena rather powerless