**CHARACTERS WITHIN ‘BLOOD BROTHERS’**

ROLES OF THE NARRATOR IN ‘BLOOD BROTHERS’

• On stage he appears in a dark suit- this gives him a neutral status, as we cannot identify anything about his character. it gives him a sense of anonymity throughout the fact that other characters ignore him gives him a ghost like quality. He is omniscient-all knowing. His job is to tell the story.

• His main role is to act as a constant reminder to us of the brother's tragic fate- this is highlighted in the song "shoes upon the table" which is repeated throughout the acts.

• He is suitably dressed from the start because by the end, he looks as if he is attending a funeral - APT! (appropriate)

**Reminds us that the play is a TRAGEDY**

• He creates a bad atmosphere and creates superstition. "One lone magpie overhead."

• "A pact is a pact and must be paid," Mrs Johnstone swears on the Bible = events will not turn out happily.

• "Did you really feel that you'd become so secure?" Reminds the audience that there is no happy ending.

• "You don't even notice the broken bottles in the sand." Creates an image of danger lurking in the future

**Plays other characters that bring BAD news**

The narrator also plays the following roles :

• The Milkman - brings bad news to Mrs Johnstone when she struggles to pay her debts.

• The Gynaecologist - brings bad news to Mrs Johnstone that she will be giving birth to twins.

• The Bus Conductor - brings bad news to Mrs Johnstone that Sammy is in trouble

**Narrating the story**

• He introduces the story, "So did y' hear the story."

• He explains what is happening in the robbery scene. "A man lies bleeding on a garage floor."

• He asks us for our own opinion for what is to blame for the deaths of Mickey and Edward.

"Do we blame superstition for what come to pass or is it... Class?"

• He ends the story

**Represents death and fate**

• He tells the characters it's too late to change things. "Ain't no point in clutching at your rosary."

• He warns the characters that the truth will catch them up. "The devil's got your number."

• "Someone said they've seen him knocking at your door." - Fate is getting closer!

• "There's a girl inside the woman." Linda feels trapped in her marriage with Mickey

**Points out key actions**

• Introduces Mrs Johnstone as, "the mother, so cruel."

• Repeating of key themes of plot. Mrs Johnstone tells Mrs Lyons to take her new shoes off the table. However, when Mrs Johnstone replies to Mrs Lyons' question to whether she is superstitous or not, Mrs Johnstone simply repeats, "I'm not superstitious."

• Shows how possessive Mrs Lyons is of Eddie. When she chases after Edward the narrator says, "there's gypsies in the wood... They're going to take your baby away." Mrs Lyons is very possessive!

• Reminds us that the play ends in death. "Who's tell the lambs the fate that later seasons bring?

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| **Character** | **Profile** |
| Mrs Johnstone | Working Class, down to earth, living with broken dreams |
| Mrs Lyons | Quite wealthy; lives in fear of losing Edward |
| Mickey Johnstone | A fun loving lad but as he grows up, he struggles to express himself and feels increasingly worthless (ends up dependant on pills) |
| Edward Lyons | Impressed by Mickey's adventurousness as a boy; becomes a charming, witty, educated and wealthy man |
| Linda | Friend to both Mickey and Edward; marries Mickey but loves Edward |

I’ve completed the following:

* **Personality**
* **Role**
* **Development (Growth & Change)**
* **Other Information**

**Mrs Johnstone**

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| **Personality** | **Role** |
| * Naturally maternal character, embracing new life and being a caring person.
* Rash decision on impulse. For example, she buys lots of items from a catalogue on credit despite knowing she probably won’t be able to pay for them later.
* Strong, generous character knowing almost instinctively what’s right and wrong,
* Largely unselfish because she is shown only to have concern for the child, foreseeing a more comfortable life for him.
* Naturally a kind and loving mother
* Hard to discipline her children and keep them under control.
* Lively and has a zest for life. This can be clearly seen in her love of dancing, but also in her general attitude,
* Happy-go-lucky, follows her instincts.
 | * At the start of the play she is working for Mrs Lyons, she finds that she is having twins.
* At first she refuses Mrs Lyons attempts to bribe her but she agrees under extreme pressure.
* She is dismissed, she disapproves of Mickey & Eddie's friendship, and she gives Eddie the locket before he goes.
* She rejoices due to the fact that she is being re-housed.
* She jokes about Sammy getting suspended from school for burning the school down and blames it on the school "silly gets play with magnesium"
* Later on when Mickey & Eddie meet again she doesn't stop them from becoming friends. When Mickey goes to jail she convinces herself that it is only a light romance between Eddie & Linda.
* Just before they die she tells them the truth.
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| **Development** | **Other Information** |
| * 25 years old at the start of the play and has already had seven children.
* Refuses Mrs Lyons’ attempts to bribe her showing that she values people above money
* Does agree under extreme pressure to give Mrs Lyons one of her children.
* Superstitious "shoes on the table" sign of bad luck.
* Lacks concern for the education of her children, taking little interest when Mickey & Sammy are suspended from school.
* She does not really concern herself with causes or explanations of the events in her life, instead accepting them as they happen.
 | * Religious rulings against contraception?
* Circumstances make it hard for her to be a straightforwardly ‘good’ person.
* When Sammy burns the school down instead of scolding him she casually jokes that it was the school’s fault for letting ‘the silly gets play with magnesium’.
* Uneducated and does not value intellectual or academic pursuits.
* Poor & trapped by poverty. This makes it very difficult for her to care for her children and is ultimately the reason that she gives Edward away to Mrs Lyons.
* Sacrifice any youthful enjoyment for the life she has.
* Superstitious
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**Mrs Lyons**

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| **Personality** | **Role** |
| * lonely housewife,
* cold character who finds it difficult to be affectionate towards others.
* self-centred character who uses others for her own gain.
* Over-protective mother, who is always anxious about Edward,
 | * At the start of the play, she is the one who Mrs Johnstone works for.
* Manipulates Mrs Johnstone's superstitious mind into giving her one of the twins, then dismisses her.
* When she finds out that Edward has befriended Mickey she moves away to the country because of her 'health.'
* When she reunites with Mrs Johnstone she bribes her, but Mrs J refuses, then she grabs a knife and threatens her.
* When Edward has an affair with Linda she is the one to tell Mickey the truth, but she was only doing this to cause trouble.
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| **Development** | **Other Information** |
| * Once Mrs Johnstone has handed over Edward, she no longer needs her and cruelly discards her, manipulating her through preying on her uneducated and superstitious mind.
* overcome by anxieties and suspicions in later scenes,
* results of excessive loneliness and a loveless life.
* unreasonable and is possibly mad when she attacks Mrs Johnstone
 | * circumstances certainly haven’t helped: she and her husband are unable to have children naturally and her husband spends long periods at work away from home.
* Tries to keep Edward away from Mickey because she doesn’t want him ‘mixing with boys like that’
* "If either learns that they were once a pair, they shall both immediately die," Mrs Lyons to Mrs Johnstone
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**Mickey Johnstone**

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| * **Personality**
 | **Role** |
| * Friendly, excitable boy
* Likes to play adventure games with others and sneak off to pull pranks.
* Shy about his emotions
* Feels the need to impress Sammy
* Likes Edward’s generosity and, in turn, enjoys being able to show him new things
* "I could've been him."
 | * He is the twin that stays with Mrs Johnstone, the working class twin.
* He meets Edward when he was 7 and both their parents want them to stay away from each other.
* He moves away as his family is being re-housed.
* He meets Edward again, gets suspended from school, gets a job.
* Marries Linda who is pregnant, gets fired by Mr Lyons.
* Bribed by Sammy, ends up in jail, gets addicted to anti-depressants, Mrs Lyons tells him about Edward & Linda (who are having an affair)
* Gets Sammy's gun, misfires and shoots Sammy, the police shoot him.
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| **Development** | **Other Information** |
| * Becomes even more withdrawn after becoming unemployed.
* More interested in getting a job.
* Edward gives Mickey a chance to shine and be a leader and escape the oppression he feels from his brother, school and general poverty
* He feels like his friendship with Edward is fading because of their different social backgrounds, e.g. when he loses his job Edward can't understand because it's never happened to him
 | * Looks up to his older brother Sammy and often feels like a cast-off in comparison to him.
* Not very well educated.
* Does not show interest in his schooling
* Suspended for ridiculing his teacher
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**Edward Lyons**

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| **Personality** | **Role** |
| * Friendly, generous character.
* Feels restricted
* Revels in Mickey’s liveliness, bad language and risky games.
* Impulsive character and one who doesn’t think too deeply about the consequences of his actions.
* Lack compassion and does not sympathise with Mickey’s unemployment worries.
 | * He was the twin that was given to Mrs Lyons.
* He was raised in a middle class school, met Mickey when he was 7, moved away to the country because of his mother’s 'health.'
* Went to a posh boarding school, got suspended for not taking the locket off, meets Linda and Mickey again at 14.
* Goes to university, when he returns Mickey is miserable as he is unemployed, tries to cheer him up, instead Mickey gets annoyed at how he can never know how he's feeling.
* When Mickey goes to jail, he helps Linda, they have an affair (or a 'light romance' according to Mrs Johnstone.)
* He is a successful businessman, councillor Edward Lyons.
* He is shot by Mickey
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| **Development** | **Other Information** |
| * Naively offers him sweets in an attempt to impress him.
* Unselfishly tries to get Mickey to express his love for Linda
* Tells Mickey to use his dole money to live like a ‘Bohemian’.
* He arranges for Mickey to have a job, but does so condescendingly by keeping it secret.
 | * When he moves away Mrs Johnstone gives him a locket with a picture of Mickey, Mrs Lyons later mistakes the picture of Mickey for Edward.
* Raised in a middle-class home and is educated at a private school.
* Easily influenced by Mickey and Linda?
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**Linda**

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| **Personality** | **Role** |
| * Naturally kind and compassionate character.
* Feisty and humorous, joining Edward and Mickey in their games and often leading the way.
* Strong-willed and very supportive of Mickey
 | * She meets Edward & Mickey when she was 7, she is the leader of the trio, and she comes at Mickey's aid whenever needed.
* When Mickey ends up in prison she goes to Edward as a last resort to seek for guidance before having an affair with him.
* Her circumstances have trapped her.
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| **Development** | **Other Information** |
| * Mickey’s aid both when he is suspended from school and when he is mocked by the other children.
* Tries to protect Mickey & keeps pushing him to give up his drugs.
* Her betrayal of Mickey suggests that she is in some ways untrustworthy
 | * Linda is from a poor family like Mickey.
* Lack of education and money allows her no real chance of happiness once Mickey becomes a depressed drug addict.
* She asks Edward for help before having an affair with him
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**Sammy Johnstone**

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| **Personality** | **Role** |
| * Aggressive and threatening.
* Enjoy making fun of others, especially Mickey.
 | * When Mickey is 7, he makes fun of him.
* When he is trying to get a bus pass for school children, and the bus driver says he's to old he threatens him with a knife.
* When Mickey is redundant he offers him a job as a look out.
* He kills a filling station worker
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| **Development** | **Other Information** |
| * He is presented as anti-social and criminal,
 | * He has no outlet for his hostile tendencies, he has no job or money.
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**Mr Lyons**

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| **Personality** | **Role** |
| * Distant figure to his wife and son
* Doesn't get involved in their affairs.
* Indifferent to the people whose lives he can directly affect - his workforce
 | * When the bargain between Mrs Lyons & Mrs Johnstone was made, he was working away.
* He doesn't know the truth, but seems to like to please his wife so he agrees to move away.
* He makes Mickey redundant.
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| **Development** | **Other Information** |
| * Wealthy businessman
* Long periods of time away from his family
* Mickey a heartless redundancy letter.
 | * Managing director of the factory where Mickey worked before Mickey was made redundant.
* Provides money and homes in wealthy areas
* Expensive schooling for Edward
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