



## **Also Starring...: Forty Biographical Essays on the Greatest Character Actors of Hollywood's Golden Era, 1930-1965**

*Cynthia Brideson, Sara Brideson*

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You know Billie Burke was the Good Witch in *The Wizard of Oz*, but did you know that she had a small zoo in her backyard that included a baby elephant and two lion cubs? You know Claude Rains as the suave Louie in *Casablanca*, but did you know he began life with a debilitating speech impediment? You know S.Z. "Cuddles" Sakall as Felix the jolly cook in *Christmas in Connecticut*, but did you know he fled Germany after Hitler personally attacked one of his films? In this book, readers will discover the unknown stories of Hollywood's greatest character actors and meet the men and women behind the characters they played onscreen. Through the use of rare interviews and articles from dozens of archives and autobiographical excerpts, this book provides an inside look into these supporting stars' stories and shows how type casting in such roles as flibbertigibbet matrons, wisecracking dames, or eccentric butlers could be a blessing and a curse in their personal and professional lives.

The book includes favorites such as Thelma Ritter, Eve Arden, and Charles Coburn as well as stars who became character actors in later life like Joan Blondell, Shelley Winters, and Claude Rains. Also meet lesser known actors who nonetheless have familiar faces such as Roland Young (of "Topper" fame"), Elsa Lanchester (the Bride of Frankenstein), and 1940s deadpan singer Virginia O'Brien.

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