

# IN THE HEIGHTS

## Character Breakdown

*Usnavi De La Vega* - Charismatic leading man with tremendous heart. 24 year old owner of De La Vega's Bodega, his parents emigrated from the Dominican Republic and have since passed away. He lives with Abuela Claudia, who isn't actually his grandmother but they are as close as family. Usnavi is in love with Vanessa and remains the eyes and ears of his Washington Heights neighborhood.

*Nina Rosario* - 19 year old Nina has just finished her freshman year at Stanford University. She is the daughter of Kevin and Camila Rosario. Nina is the only member of her family and friends who made it to college. She is best friends with Vanessa and a beacon of hope and inspiration to all who know her; she represents the opportunity outside of "The Heights."

*Kevin Rosario* - In his 40's and owner of Rosario Car & Limousine, Kevin is a husband to Camila and father to Nina. While Kevin was born and raised in Arecibo, Puerto Rico, he immigrated to New York City with Camila. Kevin immediately started working to provide a better life for his newly-arrived family.

*Camilla Rosario* - Also in her 40's, she is the co-owner of Rosario Car and Limousine with her husband Kevin. Also from Arecibo, Puerto Rico, she fell in love with Kevin at 19 and immigrated with him to New York City. She is cool-headed yet keeps a subtle but strong leash on Kevin. Her daughter Nina has just returned for the summer from her first year at Stanford.

*Benny* - Now a 24 year old cab driver for Rosario Car & Limousine, at one time he would often find himself in trouble. Kevin saw promise in Benny and helped shape him into a responsible, hard-working young man. Benny has enormous respect for Kevin and sees him as a father figure. Eventually falling in love with Nina, Benny sees a future for them. He and Usnavi are best friends.

*Vanessa* - A 19 year old shampoo girl at Daniela's Salon, Vanessa is strong, intelligent and grew up with Benny and Usnavi. Though Usnavi would like to be something more than Vanessa's "friend", he has never made any attempt. Vanessa dreams of leaving to create her own life away from her alcoholic mother.

*Sonny* - 15 years old and Usnavi's cousin, Sonny is spending the summer working for Usnavi at the bodega. He usually hangs out on the street with his friend Graffiti Pete but tries to avoid trouble. He is an extremely intelligent young man who strives to emulate Usnavi.

*Abuela Claudia* - In her late 60's, she raised Usnavi after his parents passed away and continues to live with him. She emigrated from Cuba when she was very young. Of all the characters, Abuela Claudia has been in "The Heights" the longest. She struggled to learn English, struggled to find work and in turn has helped others who have followed in her path. She is clearly the matriarch of the neighborhood.

*Daniela* - In her 30's, she is the owner of Daniela's Salon. Savvy to say the least, she is quick witted, brassy, and outspoken. While she retains a motherly relationship with Vanessa, she remains the gossip queen of the neighborhood. No-nonsense, she has built a successful business but is being forced out the neighborhood because of the rent hikes.

*Carla* - In her mid-20's, she is a hairdresser at Daniela's salon. Born and raised in Queens, she is a pure, sweet, innocent, and loving young woman who is devoted to her family and friends though she is easily taken advantage of because of her naivety. She and Daniela are best friends.

*Graffiti Pete* - An 18 year old graffiti artist and the nemesis of Usnavi, he is always hanging out on the streets, dancing to his boombox music, spraying any surface he can. Usnavi is unhappy that Sonny and Graffiti Pete are friends because Graffiti Pete epitomizes everything that Usnavi hopes that Sonny will not grow up to be.

*Piragua Guy* - In his mid-30's, he walks the hot and humid streets of Washington Heights selling piraguas (flavored ice shavings) to earn a living. He represents a rhythm of the islands in the big city.

*Ensemble* - Residents of Washington Heights, men and women.