



CALIFORNIA
ZEPHYR

Zephyrettes

CHARACTERS

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS

SALLY SWANSON ZEPHYRETTE

Sally is the show's main protagonist. Zephyrettes is her story.

The first episode introduces her as a nervous young woman beginning her dream job aboard the train, despite the reservations and resentment of her small-town boyfriend, Randy.

As the replacement for the popular but controversially dismissed Katharine McKay, Sally initially finds some of the Zephyrettes secretly vexed by her appointment.

But as the show and the seasons progress, Sally grows into a strong leader, at one stage taking over from Delores Mayberry, while overcoming personal obstacles and career hurdles, eventually starting a family, blossoming in the big city, and even finding fame.

Burdened by guilt over a fatal car crash involving her father, and the terrible secret she buried in its aftermath, Sally lives in constant fear that the truth will resurface... and resurface it will. But facing these threats only adds to the resilience of a woman who frequently wears her innocence as a mask of defense.

We follow Sally's journey as she matures from nervous apprentice to confident, experienced leader, along with all the dizzying highs and desperate lows that inevitably accompany such an extraordinary life.

This is Sally's story. Let's meet the people who will change it forever.



DELORES MAYBERRY ZEPHYRETTE

Known as “Mama” to the others, Delores is the senior Zephyrette and respected manager of the team, caring for her fellow hostesses with quiet, motherly devotion.

Having worked aboard the Zephyr since its inaugural journey in 1949, there isn’t a corner of the train, or a type of passenger, she doesn’t know by heart. Little escapes her notice, and even less ever surprises her.

She demands the highest standards but leads with compassion, believing the girls should be free to express themselves naturally. It’s an approach that earns their loyalty, but often puts her at odds with the railroad’s more old-fashioned executives.

But with the arrival of new conductor Milton Morrissey, and the very future of the Zephyrettes in jeopardy, Delores faces her greatest challenge yet: keeping her girls together while adjusting to a new authority aboard the train. Yet amid the growing friction, the widowed Delores may discover that Milton brings something entirely unexpected into her life.



MILTON MORRISSEY CONDUCTOR

The train's conductor, and therefore head of its entire crew, Milton is newly transferred to the Zephyr. Whatever the circumstances, whatever the weather, it is his responsibility to get the train and everyone aboard safely to their destination.

Stern and uncompromising at first, Milton has good reason to take the job seriously. Years earlier, faced with an impossible choice between duty and his dying wife, he abandoned his post to be with her, a decision that nearly ended his railroad career. The California Zephyr is his last chance.

Charged with restoring order after the scandal surrounding the Zephyrettes, Milton finds himself walking an increasingly fine line between loyalty to the company that gave him a second chance and his growing appreciation for the women he has been sent to control.

His closest ally becomes Delores. But as two widowed people spend days together aboard the train, could Milton's last chance at the railroad ultimately become a second chance at something else, too?



LA FAUN SHIRLEY ZEPHYRETTE

Raised in a strict religious household in Salt Lake City, La Faun lost her father in the war, and her mother never truly recovered. Desperate to escape, she eventually found her way to Reno, where a very different education taught her about cards, gambling, and considerably fewer rules.

Becoming a Zephyrette offered another escape, and every layover is a chance to outrun the past, usually with Floraine and Nancy by her side. Bold, sexually confident, and rarely far from trouble, La Faun's Reno-honed gambling skills can also prove surprisingly useful aboard the train.

But beneath the carefree exterior lies a secret she has never shared: the child she was once persuaded to give up for adoption, a loss she has carried with her ever since.

La Faun dreams of finding her daughter again. And in a future season, she may discover that she doesn't have to look very far.



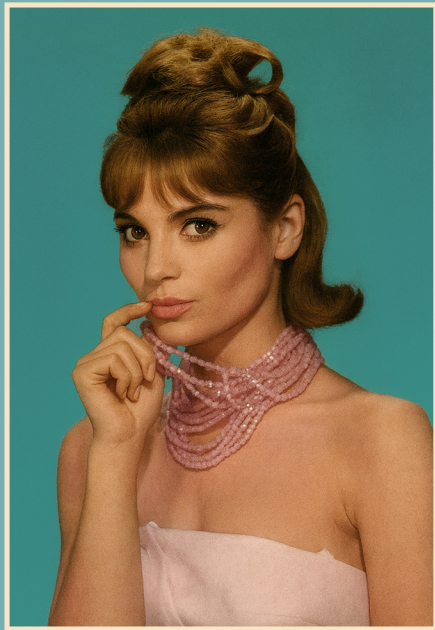
NANCY ZAVARELLA ZEPHYRETTE

Hot-headed, fearless, and fiercely loyal, Nancy is the disciplinarian of the Zephyrettes. The only thing she enjoys more than leading male passengers on is putting them firmly back in their place.

Gutsy and feisty, Nancy is Delores' secret weapon against troublesome, overly forward, or drunken passengers. With ambitions to one day take Delores' place, she may be the perfect woman for the job, if only she can learn to control her temper.

But Nancy's loyalties are complicated. She remains Katharine McKay's greatest ally among the Zephyrettes, and may even possess evidence that could threaten Sally's new job.

Then there's Vincent Lucchese, a dangerous figure from Nancy's Chicago past whom she believed was dead. When he suddenly reappears, Nancy is frightened not only by Vincent, but by where his return could lead, and the trouble it could bring to everyone around her.



FLORAINE EVEREST ZEPHYRETTE

Floraine, whose heart will always be in her home state of California, also breaks hearts in many others, especially on layovers in Chicago.

It's a lifestyle she has come to embrace, though not without guilt, and one on which her extravagant tastes are largely dependent.

Living an unashamed but hugely complicated double life, with devoted partners on both coasts, Floraine is so naturally charming and quick-witted that even her misdemeanors aboard the train go largely unpunished.

But balancing the security offered by her devoted husband, Budd, with the excitement of wealthy Chicago tycoon Hudson can only last so long. And when an unexpected development makes it impossible to keep her two lives apart, Floraine faces the very real possibility of losing them both.



ORPHEUS THOMAS PULLMAN WAITER

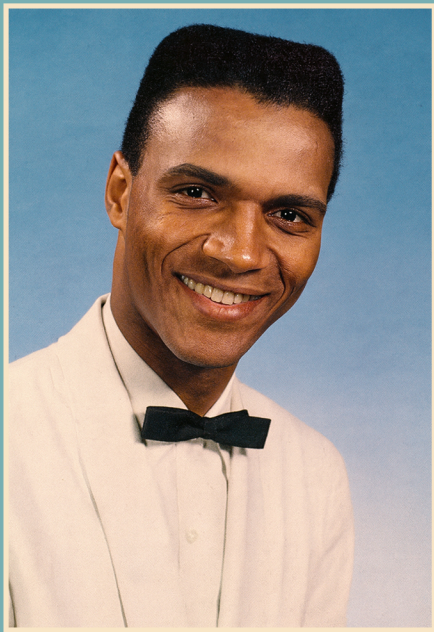
Orpheus is a young Black man from Bronzeville, Chicago, who adopts a well-practiced, polite Deep South persona while working as a Pullman waiter aboard the train.

It is a world away from his life in Chicago, where trouble is never far behind. A former Marine, Orpheus was dishonorably discharged after taking the fall for a crime he didn't commit, making his job aboard the Zephyr a vital second chance.

As Orpheus becomes increasingly involved with the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, he realizes that traveling across America gives him a unique opportunity to spread information, rally support, and play his own part in the growing Civil Rights movement.

His growing activism also puts him at odds with Roosevelt, whose loyalty to the railroad Orpheus struggles to understand. But he may discover there is far more to the older man, and his methods, than he realizes.

And as his feelings for Nellie deepen, Orpheus must decide whether one man can answer both the call of love and the call of history.



NELLIE LIGHTFOOT ZEPHYRETTE

Nellie is a country girl from the Colorado mountains. Much like Sally, she is innocent, but after nine months on the train she is no longer quite as naïve. She still believes the world is kinder than it is, and that optimism can come at a cost.

As the season unfolds, her growing interest in Orpheus becomes impossible to miss, sparking curious whispers and knowing looks from the crew.

What begins as an unlikely attraction could become forbidden love, as Nellie and Orpheus grapple with the realities of the world around them and the judgment of those unwilling to accept them together.



EVELYN LATTIMORE ZEPHYRETTE

Evelyn has several problems. She loves her life on the Zephyr and the other girls, but away from it she is deeply unhappy. The oldest aboard after Delores, the two have always been close friends. Indeed, it was Delores who encouraged Evelyn to apply for a vacant Zephyrette post, helping her regain her confidence and independence after years as a housewife.

But her abusive husband, Alton, strongly resents the move, and Evelyn's work is beginning to suffer. She has started drinking on the job and initially hides it well, but passengers are beginning to notice.

With her marriage deteriorating and her career increasingly at risk, how long before Evelyn's private life follows her aboard the train? And as Alton's mounting debts draw him into increasingly dangerous waters, could he drag Evelyn, and the Zephyrettes, down with him?



ROOSEVELT JONES PULLMAN CONDUCTOR

As head of the Pullman crews, Roosevelt manages the train's African American service staff and reports directly to Milton. A military veteran, he understands rank, discipline, and duty better than most.

To some, his unwavering loyalty to the railroad can make him seem more aligned with management than his own people. In truth, Roosevelt is fiercely proud of his staff and community, and there is far more beneath his immaculate uniform than even those closest to him realize.

His greatest challenge may come from Orpheus, whose growing involvement with the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters threatens the careful balance Roosevelt has spent years maintaining. The younger man sees compromise where Roosevelt sees survival, and both may have something to learn from the other.

As America enters the Civil Rights era, the line between duty and conviction becomes increasingly difficult to walk. How long can Roosevelt remain caught between the railroad he serves and the people he leads?



RUBY WILLIAMS DINING CAR ATTENDANT

Like Sally, Ruby is new to the train, having excelled as a waitress and dishwasher in a respected Chicago restaurant.

Through Ruby, we experience the Zephyr from a very different perspective. Expected to blend effortlessly into the background, she sees and hears things others miss, quietly observing the passengers, crew, and changing America passing before her window.

An accomplished amateur chef and gifted writer, Ruby secretly records these observations in a notebook, gradually discovering that the invisibility imposed upon her might also give her something powerful: a unique voice.

As the seasons progress and the Civil Rights movement gathers momentum, Ruby's writing could carry her far beyond the railroad. As America begins to find a new voice, perhaps Ruby will find hers, too.



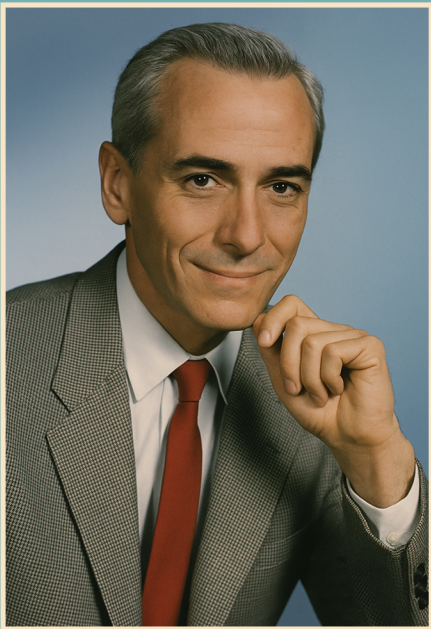
EUGENE LANGLEY THE BOSS

As Head of Operations for the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad, Eugene oversees the California Zephyr from a company and business perspective, making him ultimately responsible for everyone who works aboard it.

Authoritative and firmly in command, Eugene believes problems, and there are always plenty of them, should be dealt with swiftly. Which is precisely why the Zephyrettes increasingly become one.

His darkest secret is a passionate affair he once had with Katharine McKay. While Kat left it firmly in the past, Eugene knows its exposure could destroy his career, reputation, and family.

As Eugene begins gathering evidence to abolish the Zephyrettes altogether, Kat realizes she holds the one piece of evidence that could stop him. If he tries to destroy their future, she could destroy his.



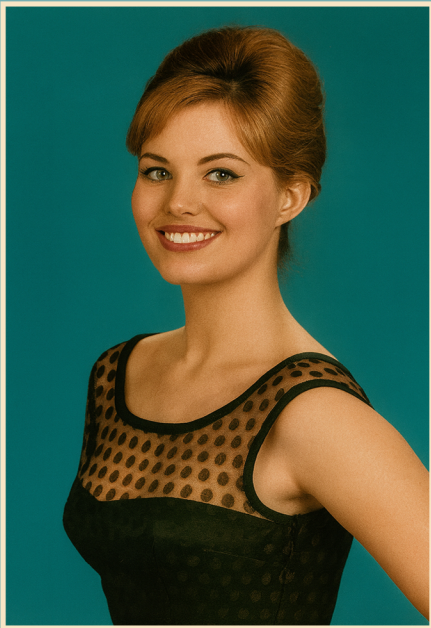
KATHARINE MCKAY FORMER ZEPHYRETTE

Katharine was fired from the Zephyrette team after bringing scandal upon the company, ultimately leading to the recruitment of new arrival Sally Swanson.

“Kat” reappears with an ultimatum: either she gets her job back or she’ll bring the company to its knees with revelations about the Zephyrettes, train crew, and management.

Once a hugely popular member of the team, Kat returns as an agent of chaos, armed with secrets and determined to reclaim the life she lost. Sally, the woman who replaced her, quickly becomes a particular target, especially when Kat discovers she has secrets of her own.

But Kat also knows where some of the railroad’s most powerful bodies are buried. As the future of the Zephyrettes comes under threat, could their greatest enemy ultimately become the one person capable of saving them?



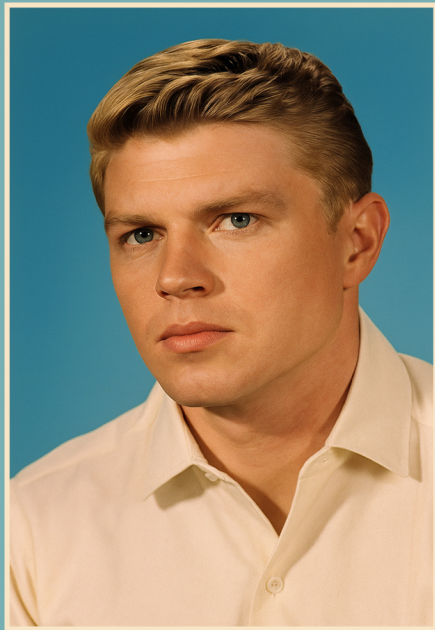
RANDY CRAVEN HIGH SCHOOL SWEETHEART

Randy is Sally's boyfriend and high school sweetheart, fiercely protective of the girl he has loved for years. When Sally's world fell apart after her father's fatal crash, Randy was there for her every step of the way.

But when Sally joins the Zephyrettes, her world suddenly becomes much bigger than his. Stories of famous passengers, distant cities, and extraordinary experiences leave Randy increasingly worried that the girl he loves is outgrowing him.

Determined not to be left behind, Randy embarks on an earnest attempt to reinvent himself, believing he must become the kind of man who belongs in Sally's new world. Yet perhaps keeping Sally won't require becoming someone else, but finding the confidence to be himself.

As the seasons progress, Randy develops an unexpected fascination with aviation, eventually discovering an ambition entirely his own, one that may someday carry both their lives in a very different direction.



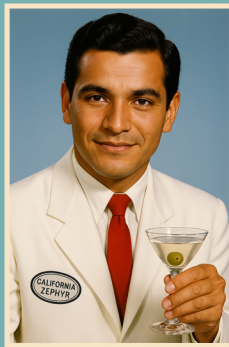
SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

JIMMY 'THE FIZZ' BARTENDER

A Mexican-American bartender working in the rear lounge car, the most exclusive part of the train, Jimmy (born Javier Ortega) is also pursuing his own American dream.

Jimmy perfected his craft in San Francisco, where a Western Pacific employee was so impressed by his cocktails, professionalism, and charm that he pulled the right strings to get him a job aboard the Zephyr, where he has thrived.

As the rear lounge's best-connected host, favors, solutions, and the occasional discreet workaround seem to appear with a snap of his fingers.



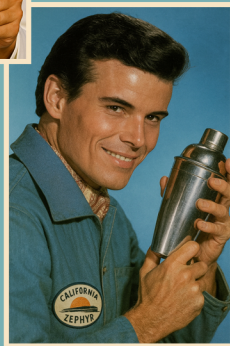
HUEY AUSTIN BARTENDER

A musician, James Dean fan, and wannabe star, Huey works as a bartender aboard the train but still dreams of making it as a rock 'n' roll singer.

His good looks earn him plenty of admiring glances, particularly from teenage girls traveling with their parents, and his habit of serenading them has won many hearts.

He comes from the small town of Danville, Indiana, yet dreams only of big cities and bright lights.

A dreamer for sure, Huey knows that if he can make it as far as the Zephyr, anything might be possible.



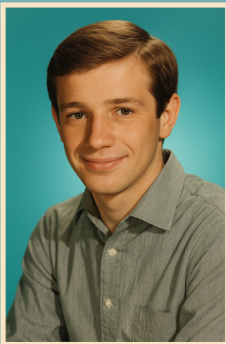
PALMER CLEMENTS TRAINMAN

A trainman helping with everything from passenger boarding and luggage to minor repairs, Palmer is normally found carrying bags or fixing a leaky faucet, always with a smile.

He comes across as a simple, happy-go-lucky soul, though his surprising knowledge suggests there is more to him than meets the eye.

And there is. Palmer is an undercover CIA agent using his ordinary job aboard the Zephyr to track suspicious passengers and Cold War activity crossing the country.

When a KGB double agent boards, Palmer's carefully constructed cover is put to the test.



DWIGHT IRWIN ENGINEER

An old-school senior engineer, Dwight is a grease-covered mountain of a man with diesel fumes in his lungs and steel track for arteries.

The locomotive is his domain, and Dwight knows every sound, shudder, and groan it makes, sensing trouble long before anyone else.

He considers some of the high jinks back in the silver cars ungodly, and new conductor Milton certainly isn't the first boss he's had run-ins with. But beneath the gruff exterior, Dwight adores the railroad and the people who keep it moving.

Above all, Dwight knows he isn't driving just any train.



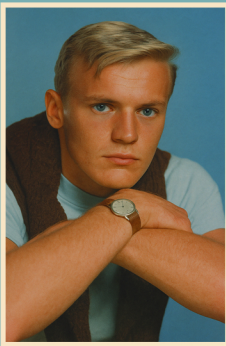
BUDD EVEREST FAMILY MAN

Budd is Floraine's devoted, hard-working husband. An archetypal high school jock, he matured quickly after college, determined to build a secure life for the woman he loved.

Unfortunately, Floraine appreciates his genuine, trustworthy nature but craves far more excitement in her life.

Completely unaware of her double life, Budd struggles with his sailing business in San Francisco and Floraine's frequent nights away.

But as her secrets unravel, Budd proves far less passive than anyone imagined, setting him on a collision course with Hudson that leads straight back to the Zephyr.

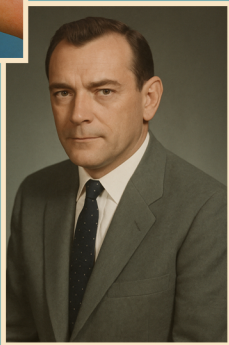


HUDSON HILDEBRAND TYCOON

A ruthless tycoon with a wandering eye, Hudson has a monopoly over Chicago's newspaper industry. Never married but with a history of lovers, one of them is Floraine Everest, who is herself married to Budd.

Hudson makes several trips on the Zephyr each year and met Floraine on one of these journeys, but it is only away from the train, in his vast, soulless apartment, that he shows her any true affection.

When Floraine reveals she is pregnant, Hudson coldly casts her aside. But faced with the emptiness of the life he has chosen, he begins to question that decision, eventually boarding the Zephyr in pursuit of the woman he may have already lost.



ALTON LATTIMORE EX-COP

Alton is six years older than his wife, Evelyn, and has always regarded her as younger and less worldly than himself.

Yet, when he lost his job as a cop, he believed his authority had vanished... a frustration that he started to take out on her. Verbally... at first.

After Alton had been unemployed for four months, Evelyn took the initiative and enrolled as a Zephyrette.

Over the past year, Alton has become increasingly abusive, gambling away Evelyn's earnings and blaming her for his losses. His mounting debts eventually draw him into the dangerous orbit of mob associate Vincent Lucchese.

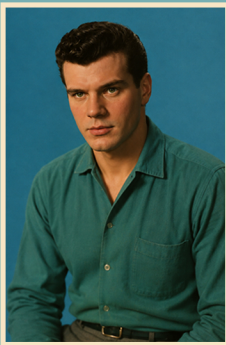
VINCENT LUCCHESE MOB ASSOCIATE

Vincent grew up alongside Nancy in Chicago, always believing she would one day be his. But as his ties to the underworld deepened, Nancy found her escape aboard the Zephyr.

Then Vincent disappeared. After years presumed dead, Nancy believed she was finally free of him.

When he suddenly appears at her birthday at the Blue Note, it's as though she's seen a ghost. Vincent hasn't forgotten her.

As Vincent enters the fray toward the end of Season One, he sees opportunity in a train that crosses the country and all the possibilities that brings, potentially putting the Zephyrettes themselves in jeopardy in Season Two.



ABOARD THE VISTA-DOME *California Zephyr*



Thank You

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