

Audition Pack - Deathwatch

Hi! Thanks for your interest in auditioning for Deathwatch! For your audition, please choose ONE of the following monologues to perform. Memorisation is not mandatory, but is encouraged. At your audition we will also ask you to perform a cold read (a monologue you have not seen before), to get an idea of your range and style.

The Play

Deathwatch is an absurdist play by French playwright Jean Genet, set in a prison, revolving around the power struggle between three prisoners- Maurice, Jules LeFranc and Green Eyes- as they express their admiration, jealousy, desire and inevitably their violence. We will be staging the production in drag, meaning that our cast will be working with us and the costume department to create a drag king persona inspired by and representing each character. This play is morbid, seedy, intensely homoerotic and outrageously camp. The style of acting will be over-the-top, confident, satirical and absurd, so if that's your thing- you're in the right place.

Learn more about drag kings:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXshUNU65wI>

The Characters

Green Eyes

Green Eyes is a murderer, unlike the other two low criminals in his cell. Green Eyes is the definition of high camp well-mannered evil, consumed with poetic thoughts about his own cruelty and his impending death by guillotine. He's disdainful of Jules and Maurice, irritated by them- but he solemnly revels in the attention and prestige they give him. Viciously intelligent, detached, easily angered- yet also the funniest of the three. The other two spend the play ferociously competing for his attention, and he couldn't give a damn.

LeFranc

Jules LeFranc is a jewel thief, in it for the money- or is he? Arguably our protagonist, he's snarky, irreverent and above all cynical of Green Eyes' pretentiousness and Maurice's simpering adoration. He fights with Maurice and insults Green Eyes- but underneath it he secretly enjoys the descriptions of violence and cruelty they provide, and desires the glory that 'real' criminals enjoy. He spends the play fighting with himself, and eventually comes to a gritty and oh-so over-the-top resolution.

Maurice

Youngest of the three, Maurice is a juvenile delinquent and an effeminate gay man. Irritating, cocky and impassioned, Maurice has the most fun out of the three. He loves baiting LeFranc into screaming matches, and he worships Green Eyes for his crimes. One of the only notes from the playwright reads- '*Whenever Maurice utters the name Green Eyes, he drawls it.*' Obsessed with criminality and manhood, Maurice dreams of murder and ergo prestige, and is constantly either badgering Green Eyes with questions and attention or soothing his ego with flattery.

The Guard

Making the occasional appearance, the Guard is dedicated to the craft of delicately balancing his professional duties with his social function as a lynch pin of the prison's complex hierarchy. He is guard, friend, enemy, executioner, postal service, gift-giver, protector and -presumably- bribe recipient. Friendly with Green Eyes, amused by the other two, his presence is scant but potent. Wields a whip.

MONOLOGUES

Green Eyes- Monologue 1

... everything began to move. There was nothing more to be done. And that was why I had to kill someone. It's your turn. You're going to bump off my girl. But be careful. I've prepared everything for you. I'm giving you your chance. It's easy to begin a new life, you'll see. I realised the danger the moment I killed the girl. And I was scared. I wanted to back up. Stop ! No go ! I tried hard. I ran in all directions. I shifted. I tried every form and shape so as not to be a murderer. Tried to be a dog, a cat, a horse, a tiger, a table, a stone ! I even tried, me too, to be a rose ! Don't laugh. I did what I could. I squirmed and twisted. People thought I had convulsions. I wanted to turn back the clock, to undo what I'd done, to live my life over until before the crime. It looks easy to go backwards-but my body couldn't do it. Now I'm calm. And it's my job to organise your opportunity. You're going to draw lots. Are you scared?

Green Eyes- Monologue 2

I'm sick of all of you. You no longer exist. In a month I'll get the axe. My head will be on one side of the block and my body on the other. I'm a terror, a holy terror! And I can blot you out. If you like my girl, go take her. I knew it. You've been circling around me for a long time, circling round, circling round, circling round, you've been trying to find a spot to land on, without even suspecting I can bash your head in. I make you laugh, don't I? She despises me and fate abandons me and I don't hit the ceiling. Now I realise. I'm a rag. A dish-mop ! You'd like to see me cry, Jules, wouldn't you? Or throw a fit? No, I'm sure my girl doesn't interest you.

LeFranc- Monologue 1

You trying to needle me, Maurice? You want to work me up? You want me to let you have it again? I've got a right to talk. And you, to shut up! [He screams] Yes, I've got a right to ! I've got a right to talk about it. For three hundred years I've borne the marks of a galley-slave, and it's going to end in trouble! You hear me? I can become a cyclone and tear you apart! And wipe up the cell! That sweetness of yours is killing me. One of us is going to clear out. You hear me, Maurice, you're wearing me down, you and your fine murderer! You'd enjoy seeing me on the outs with Green Eyes? All right, I have. You guessed right, Maurice, I have. I've been doing all I can for a long time to get her to drop him.

LeFranc- Monologue 2

Only don't get any false ideas into your head. His friends, .. the real ones, are on the floor above. You were wasting your time defending him the way you did just before. Green Eyes gets his orders from the other world. They send him cigarettes-from where? From the other side of the water. Brought in by a special guard, in full uniform, who offers him friendship on a platter. A message from the heart. You were talking about Snowball's smile weren't you? And you thought it was meant for me, didn't you? You were wrong. The gentleman has already plucked it from Snowball's teeth. All the prisoners are divided into two warring camps, and the two kings smile at each other above our heads-or behind our backs-or even before our very eyes. And at the end they make a present of their girls . . .

Maurice- Monologue 1

Oh, Georgie, don't say that, I'm going to faint. You won't deny that I'm the best-looking kid in the prison. Take a squint at the little male! [He makes the gesture of tossing back a lock of hair] With a face like mine, I can do anything I like. Even when I'm innocent, people think I'm guilty. I'm good-looking. It's faces like mine that some people would like to cut out of the newspapers. Eh, Jules, for your collection? The gals would go nuts about it. Blood would flow. And tears. All the kids would feel like playing around with knives. It would be a holiday. They'd be dancing in the streets. A carnival for murderers. Remember the look on your face when the guard found all the photos of murderers in your mattress. What were you doing with them? What use were they to you? You had them all ! All of them! What were you doing with them? Were you saying mass to them? Were you praying to them? Eh, Georgie? At night, in your mattress, what were you doing, embalming them?

Maurice- Monologue 2

You nauseate me. It's you who heckle Green Eyes. It's you who destroyed our friendship. You were jealous of him. You're furious because you haven't done anything as grand as he. You wanted to put yourself in his class. (pause) That's a lie ! I'll help him. And I'll keep helping him. Don't think you can make friends with me just because I'm feeling low. I may be a coward, Lefranc, but I'm warning you, I'll defend his crime. (Pause) You've got no right to talk like that, Jules! You hear me? No right to laugh ! It's because I saw him in that state that my friendship is so deep. I pity him now. I pity the finest murderer in the world. And it's fine to pity so great a monument that's crumbling. It's because I saw him so broken, and almost on account of me, that I felt pity.

The Guard- Monologue 1

Take it easy. [He turns to GREEN EYES and MAURICE] You see what happens when you want to be nice? Can't be done with guys like that. You end up by becoming inhuman. And then they claim that guards are brutes. [To LEFRANC] If you weren't so thick, you'd have realised I was doing my job. No one can say I pick on you. You may think you're smart, but I'm way ahead of

you. You don't know what a prison-guard has to see and put up with. You don't realise that he's got to be the very opposite of the thugs. I mean just the very opposite. And he's also got to be the opposite of their friend. I'm not saying their enemy. Think about it. [He reaches into his pocket and takes out some cigarettes which he hands to GREEN EYES] Here, this is proof. [To GREEN EYES] There, Green Eyes. They're from your pal. Snowball sends you two cigarettes.