

Audition Packet



Immersive Murder Mystery Dinner Theatre

How This Packet Works

This packet will guide you through your 3+ part audition.

- **Part 1:** Prepared Monologues
- **Part 2:** Scripted Scene / Sides- tests scene work, chemistry, and emotional range
- **Part 3:** Cold Improv with a "Guest" - tests ability to stay in character under unscripted questioning
- **Part 4 (Optional):** Music (Sera-Faye & Eliza required; open to any considered for singing roles)

What to Know

The Gilded Cage is a large-scale, immersive dinner theatre murder mystery set in 1928, at a high-society Prohibition-era speakeasy. Guests attend as if it's a real party, with dinner, drinks, and a "farewell performance" by jazz legend Sera-Faye Fenix, before a sudden murder unravels a web of hidden family, old romance, debt, and organized crime. The audience will work with performers to solve the crime, and unravel the mystery.

This is not a stage show; it's a fully immersive experience. Performers stay in character for the full 3+ hour run (with breaks), mingle directly with guests, and answer unscripted questions on the spot, all in period voice and performance. Some characters have vocal requirements, and some are optional, which will perform classic jazz and lounge music with a live 3 piece professional band. We're looking for actors comfortable improvising, staying grounded in character under pressure, and making every guest feel personally part of the story.

Character Quick Reference

Character	Age	Singing?	Core of the role
Sera-Faye Fenix	40s–50s	Required, lead	Magnetic, classy, warmth without ego; must play grief/sacrifice and a triumphant return
Eliza Nightingale	20s–30s	Required, lead	Wide-eyed but scrappy; has something to prove; debut performance energy
Lorenzo "Lo/Enzo" DeLuca	30s–50s	Optional	Charming host energy, effortless confidence, carries hidden weight/regret
Beatrice Sinclair	30s–50s	Optional	Fiery and intense. Challenging, but sympathetic in her own way,
Antonio "Tony" DeLuca	20s–30s	Optional	Good-natured, a big lug, quick temper, defensive of his mother
Martin Pennyfeather	30s–50s	No	Fast-talking, funny, weary; needs to land both comic relief and real loyalty
Jules DuPont	40s–60s	Optional	Stillness and control; menace without volume; must not overplay
Thomas "Tollbooth" Booth	30s–60s	No	Authority who seems reasonable, but may be corrupt; needs believability, not cartoonish
Maureen Watkins	20s–30s	No	Plucky, fast-talking, underdog investigator
Billie Meyerson	Any	Optional	Warm, yet easily spooked, sympathetic victim of circumstance
Sammy Schmidt	Any	No	Big, funny, mostly-harmless energy; comic timing over subtlety, builds blatant suspicion

Full Character Descriptions

Sera-Faye Fenix - Female, 30s-60s (*Singing: Required, lead vocal*)

Magnetic and classy, without a trace of ego. She's spent a lifetime earning the people's admiration, and doesn't need to chase it anymore. As the night's biggest performance draws near, she's quietly weighing retirement, and quietly protecting a secret that could unravel everything. Warm and playful with people she trusts, especially Lorenzo, whom she alone still calls "Lo." Resistant and a little catty when that old flame gets too close, even as the soft spot shows through. Carries the show's emotional arc.

Eliza Nightingale - Female, 20s-30s (*Singing: Required, lead vocal*)

Wide-eyed but scrappy, she's grown up adjacent to fame and is determined not to simply inherit it. Tonight is her debut as "The Nightingale," a secret from her mother, and in a different way, a secret from herself: she doesn't know who her father is, though someone in the room might. Deflects personal questions on instinct, and occasionally catches herself a half-second before she says too much.

Lorenzo "Lo/Enzo" DeLuca - Male, 40s-60s (*Singing: Optional*)

Effortlessly charming club owner carrying regret beneath the polish. He sent Sera-Faye's invitation himself, after hearing she might be retiring, and that she might have a daughter he never knew about. He isn't certain, but he just can't let it go. Trying hard to play it cool around Sera and visibly failing; increasingly caught between a marriage that's fading, and a spark that never really went out.

Beatrice Sinclair - Female, 40s-60s (*Singing: Optional*)

Fiery and intense, but should land as sympathetic, not simply villainous. She married into this family, she was not born into it, and has never stopped paying for that distinction in effort and vigilance. Watching Lorenzo's attention drift back to Sera-Faye reopens every insecurity she's spent years burying. Protective of her son and her family's reputation, in that order, and willing to fight for both.

Antonio "Tony" DeLuca - Male, 20s-30s (*Singing: Optional*)

Good-natured, a big lug, quick to anger only when his mother is threatened. Kept at arm's length from the real family business, and increasingly resentful of it, a resentment Beatrice knows exactly how to use. Protective, a bit naive, and not always able to see who's really steering him.

Martin Pennyfeather - Any Gender, 30s-60s (*Singing: No*)

Fast-talking and funny, worn down by twenty-five years of keeping other people's secrets. Loves Sera-Faye like a sister and Eliza like a niece, and if she's determined to take the stage no matter what, he'd rather it be with someone who won't take advantage of her. Real fear shows through his usual patter when a debt collector comes calling.

Jules DuPont - Any gender, 40s-70s (*Singing: Optional*)

Total confidence, total control. Menace without ever raising a voice, Jules should stay in command of every scene, treating people as assets to be weighed and used rather than adversaries to be threatened. This role only works if the actor resists the urge to perform villainy; the less effort it takes to unsettle the room, the better.

Thomas “Tollbooth” Booth (flex) - Male, 30s-60s (*Singing: No*)

An authority figure who seems reasonable right up until he isn't. Dismissive, a little too comfortable brushing off questions he doesn't want to answer, and quick to invoke his badge when charm stops working. Needs to stay believable and grounded, this should never tip into cartoon-corrupt-cop territory.

Maureen Watkins (flex) - Female, 20s-40s (*Singing: No*)

Plucky, fast-talking reporter, with a private-eye streak. Used to being underestimated or brushed off, especially by “Tollbooth”. Chases the story even when she's being actively dismissed, and doesn't rattle easily.

Billy Meyerson (flex) - Any gender, 20s-30s (*Singing: Optional*)

Warm, but easily spooked, the sympathetic victim of circumstance who happened to carry the wrong drink to the wrong table. May share some unspoken, ambiguous history with Tony, which should color their dynamic with a flicker of familiarity even under pressure. Should read as scared, nervous, but not shifty.

Sammy Schmidt (flex) - Any gender/age (*Singing: No*)

Big, funny, mostly-harmless energy that curdles into something a little unsettling the longer the scene runs. A superfan who mistakes Eliza for Sera-Faye and reveals a long-nursed grudge over being shut out of a show years ago. Comic timing is essential, but so is letting a genuine, unhinged edge creep in underneath the laughs to draw suspicion.

Part 2: Scripted Sides

Short two-hander scenes drawn from the show's core relationships. These are audition sides only, final scene text will differ in the show itself.

- A. Sera-Faye & Lorenzo ("The Reunion")
- B. Beatrice & Tony ("Protect the Family")
- C. Martin & Sera-Faye ("The Contract")
- D. Martin & Eliza ("Uncle Marty")
- E. Lorenzo & Eliza ("A Stranger, Somehow Familiar")
- F. Lorenzo & Beatrice ("Cracks in the Foundation")
- G. Jules & Martin ("The Debt")
- H. Tollbooth & Maureen ("Who's Asking?")
- I. Billie & Tony ("Just Doing My Job")
- J. Sammy & Eliza ("Biggest Fan")

Part 3: Improv Prompts

This part of the audition tests the single most important skill for this show: **can you hold your character while a total stranger throws you off script?**

- A staff member will play a nosy dinner guest and approach you in character, you won't know exactly what they'll ask ahead of time.
- You'll get a loose prompt or two to start (e.g., a pointed question about a relationship, a secret, or a rumor), then the conversation is yours to run with.
- There is no "right answer"! We're watching how you listen, react, and build on what's given to you, not whether you deliver a perfect monologue.
- Stay in character the whole time, even if the question catches you off guard. If you don't know where to take it, you can buy yourself a beat with a reaction, or remind the audience that you're not the only character in this web of mystery.
- Avoid contradicting major plot facts you've been given, but don't worry about "giving away too much" here. We'd rather see you engage fully than play it safe and flat.
- Physicality and tone matter as much as what you say. Play the scene, not the words.

Part 4: Music

Required for anyone auditioning for Sera-Faye or Eliza. Open to anyone else who wants to be considered for a singing moment or band-adjacent role (Velvetones, Nightcaps, opening act).

- 16–32 bars of a jazz standard, a cappella or with your own accompanist/track.
 - Bonus: actors who can also perform a phrase or two of "Life Is Just a Bowl of Cherries", this is a key musical clue for some characters, so hearing how you color a familiar, cheerful song is genuinely useful casting information.
- We are listening for tone and stage presence as much as technical range, this should feel like a live 1928 club act, not a recital.