

PLAYBILL

NAMED CITY THEATER



SEVEN PLAYS FROM THE
DISPARATEUM

NIGHT ONE:
small business
written and directed by Rathayibacter

Featuring:

Seshat Kattan as
Avalon, the record store owner

Brianna Reyes as
Viktoria Ashrider, apocalypse survivor

Bertrand Corbin as
Pwk, the spellcrafting crow

Kevin Reid as
Oliver, your new best friend

the Knight, Thief, and Seer as themselves

and, of course, you!

[Excerpt from **small business**, act i scene 1]

INT. RECORD SHOP

[The record shop is a small, boxy shop stuffed with crates of records, racks of vintage clothes, and shelves of books and trinkets. A glass counter occupies the far left corner, and a backdoor behind it sits slightly ajar. Viktoria, a middle-aged woman in studded leather, is listening to heavy metal music on a provided record player. Pwk, a three-foot crow in a dark robe, is looking through a milk crate full of acapella music. Oliver, a young man in overalls, is reading the back of a battered fantasy novel. The Knight, Thief, and Seer are looking through a clothing rack filled with vintage concert tees.]

[Suddenly the back door is flung open, and Avalon, a tall woman in a short white jacket, bursts in. She slams the door shut, vaults the counter, and hides behind it. She gestures to everyone of the store to do the same, and everyone ducks behind something.]

AVALON (whispering):
Shhhhhhhh.

[Strange lights and noises seep through the gaps in the door. Then, a heavy impact rattles it. Then another. After a few long moments, it goes quiet and the lights fade.]

[Avalon stands up, brushes hair out of her face, and claps her hands together.]

AVALON:
Alright, who wants some store credit?

In every game, there's a record store. It's small and out of the way, so you probably never noticed it, but it's always been there. It's a warm, comfortable place, often frequented by background characters waiting for their time in the spotlight.

The record store cross-pollinates music across game worlds, acting as a single, central link in a network of beauty and inspiration that spans unimaginable distances. Patrons from across the gaming space visit and mingle here, sharing art from their own world and bringing art from others back with them. Occasionally, it also acts as a passage between games, allowing non-player characters and gaming constructs to migrate from setting to setting and system to system.

Of course, like any lovely little thing, it's under threat. The record store has recently attracted the attention of the ancient unfathomable beings that exist in the space beyond games, the incomprehensible reality beyond the magic circle. They've grown displeased with the record store's intrusion into their world, and are demanding recompense. Or blood.

Now, the Knight, Thief, and Seer are working together with an odd crowd of characters from across the game-space to help keep the record store out of the hands of horrible void abominations. Tendrils? We don't actually know what they look like. Not important.

act i: Trouble at the Record Shop

Our cast is introduced as patrons of the record shop, who are brought together when the owner requests help settling her debt to the unknowable void-beings that own the metaconceptual real estate the shop occupies. The Landlords have sent a list of demands, each more impossible than the last. Good luck!

act ii: An Unbreakable Vow

The first item on the list is an unbreakable vow: an oath so thorough that no force, in this world or any other, can shake it. What odd individual does our cast try to seek out? How does the nature of their vow complicate that process? What does Vik learn about her own intense determination, from seeing it mirrored in someone else?

act iii: An Unthinkable Idea

The second item on the list is an unthinkable idea: a revelation so strange that nobody, in this world or any other, can imagine it. What wrinkle of the universe has kept it sealed away? What unique opportunity to release it presents itself? How does this knowledge change Pwk's understanding of the world, or their place in it?

act iv: An Ungrantable Wish

The last item on the list is an ungrantable wish: a desire that nothing, in this world or any other, can resolve it. What wish could possibly be beyond all the forces of all the worlds? What previous impossibility would open up if it were granted? What do we learn about the wishes hidden in Oliver's own heart?

act v: Meeting the Landlords

It's time for the reckoning. Has the cast succeeded or failed at their impossible tasks? How do they find a way to where the strange void-gods reside? And how do they fleece the Landlords, saving the shop without giving up the precious things they've found?

[Excerpt from a cast interview with Seshat Kattan, who plays Avalon]

This is your first role of this kind. How does it feel?

It's been really lovely, I've done a lot of smaller roles in productions like this, on- and off-stage, but it's a completely different feeling being right smack in the middle of everything. Still, I'm always grateful to the folks behind the scenes holding it all together!

Avalon's a big role, but with comparatively little stage time. Have there been any challenges associated with that?

But that's one of my favorite parts! Avalon's a great opportunity to cast off subtlety and just run with a character, in large part because she's not in most of the play. She's a chance to go all out in the couple of scenes she's in without worrying about burning yourself out or upstaging the rest of the cast.

AVALON, STORE OWNER
TRAIT- BOND (4)

Avalon owns the record store, and loves meeting all the people who pass through it. The store is a reflection of Avalon, and she a reflection of the store.

DRIVEN TO INSPIRE
TRAIT- MOTIVATION (2)

Avalon wants nothing more than to share interesting art with people, and to see what they come up with when their worldview is expanded by it.

WORLDS TRAVELER
TRAIT- SKILL (2)

Avalon has visited every known world, and then some. If you're ever somewhere strange and unfamiliar, odds are she knows something that'll point you in the right direction.

AROUND THE BLOCK
TRAIT- BOND (1)

Avalon's been around for a while, and the record store means she sees more in a day than many see their whole lives. Whenever an event is described, Avalon can usually say she was around for it.

[Excerpt from a cast interview with Bertrand Corbin, who plays Pwk]

What's your favorite part of playing Pwk? Pwk's a weird character with a lot of contradictions, which lets you stretch out in a bunch of different ways. Sometimes you're playing up their cute side, and then you're reminding everyone that they're powerful and deadly, and then it's right back to cute sidekick.

Would you say Pwk's unique manner of speech makes this role easier or harder? I think a bit of both. Their lines are always charming and silly, and that definitely helps jump right into the character, but also because the lines themselves aren't really the point, *delivery* becomes such a big deal. There's a few moments in the play where Pwk carries an emotional moment because of that, and that's been a really rewarding challenge as an actor.

PWK, CROW WARLOCK
TRAIT- SKILL (4)

Pwk is a talented mage with an eidetic memory. They can copy and replicate most forms of spellcraft after seeing them performed once or twice, and will often record them for deeper study later.

CROWTONGUE
TRAIT- SKILL (1)

Pwk doesn't speak any natural languages, communicating instead through a mix of caws and chirps, imitated noises, and words of power.

FROM ANOTHER WORLD
TRAIT- BOND (3)

Inventory
- Leather spellbook, half filled
- Silver dagger (d6 damage)
- Ragged and worn robes
- 60 feet of rope
- 5 torches
- 2 rations

HEIST OF THE CENTURY
TRAIT- MOTIVATION (2)

Pwk's true name was taken by the fae queen who granted them great power. They want it back, and are gradually collecting relics and allies to do so with.

[Excerpt from a cast interview with Brianna Reyes, who plays Viktoria Ashrider]

This is a pretty unusual role for you, how did you prepare for it?

Oh, it didn't take much; I've got a reputation now for playing a lot of sweet, motherly characters, but I was a right bruiser in my youth. Got in some fights, lost some teeth, burned some houses down. It was all good fun, but those days are behind me now.

What are your plans after this production? I've been so busy lately, I might just take a break from the stage for a few months. And, now that I'm thinking about it, there are a few folks I know who might be overdue for some revenge [laugh]... Would you be a dear and not publish that last bit?

VIKTORIA ASHRIDER
TRAIT- MOTIVATION (4)

Viktoria (Vik to her enemies) is intense and unflinching. When she sets her mind to a task, she'll walk through flames to see it done. She's on your side for now, so make it count.

FROM ANOTHER WORLD
TRAIT- BOND (2)

When Vik intimidates someone, roll 2d6 plus tokens on this trait. On a 10+, choose two. On a 7-9, choose one.

- They surrender something.
- They reveal a weakness.
- They remain scared of her.

LEADERSHIP
TRAIT- SKILL (1)

Vik doesn't like to ask others to do what she can do herself, but she begrudgingly admits that having people do what you say can sometimes come in handy.

ASHRIDER BIKE
TRAIT- BOND (4)

Vik's gang, the Ashriders, have a special connection with their customized motorcycles. What most outside the gang don't know, though, is that the bikes are alive, smart, and angry.

[Excerpt from a cast interview with Kevin Reid, who plays Oliver]

So, you've got an interesting role in this production, since you get to change things on the fly. What's that like?

I love it. Oliver's such a fun character to play, and he never gets boring. Each performance has the chance to bring out a different side of him. And he gets to be a bit of a well-meaning antagonist, adding some fun chaos to the whole thing.

How do you know when to add that chaos? Oh, I just go with my gut. I mean, they don't even let me read the scripts half the time.

Really?

Yeah! Usually when I'm onstage I don't even know what's going on, I'm just smiling cuz I'm happy to be here.

OLIVER, THE CHEERFUL
TRAIT- SKILL (2)

Oliver can always see the good in a situation, even (especially) when it's not an appropriate time to do so.

FROM ANOTHER WORLD
TRAIT- BOND (3)

Choose one that Oliver is, one that he isn't, and one that he pretends to be.

*Charming - Helpful - Brave -
Wise - Reliable - Kind*

INSTANT FRIENDS
TRAIT- BOND (4)

Oliver genuinely cares for the people around him, and is quick to throw in his lot with them. He has a tendency to cause just about as much trouble as he resolves, though.

DRAWN TO DISARRAY
TRAIT- DESTINY (3)

Disaster seems to follow Oliver. At a crucial moment, he will do something innocuous that sends everything into a tailspin. When he does, remove this trait from his character sheet.

