

Characters

Fade
Spam
Dayve Disintegration
Niv
Keith Ghost
John Scarecrow

Bartenders (2)
Cranky Catherine
Goth Elder
Goth dancers (4 minimum)
Ex-convict

Drone footage above Detroit is running in the background as people take their seats.

Prologue

Background changes to a still shot of a black iron door off a parking lot. Enter Disintegration. He speaks directly to the audience as he casually walks across the front of the stage.

DISINTEGRATION Good evening. Tonight you'll get a glimpse into some obscure history, unknown to most "norms." No offense. That's what we call people who live in mainstream society...outside our world. It's a little-known fact that the Motor City was home to one of the world's largest Goth nightclubs [points to background]—infamous some say—our refuge and war room during those surreal nights in the 1990s—the Golden Age of Goth—a time as alluring as it was dangerous for a certain group of rogue Goths...once upon a time in Detroit. [smug, sarcastic] What do you think of that, Quentin Tarantino?

Lighting and background change to the Zombieland building. Disintegration pauses and paces, indicating that he's transitioning to the story.

My name, at least the one I'm telling you, is Dayve **Disintegration**. That's D-a-Y-v-e. [tilts his head to one side, grins and continues] I get to be the narrator of this story because I'm dead. Legacy...immortality...that's one way to get a role in a film or a play, and it would meet with the approval of our protagonist Fade whom you're about to meet.

Fade says I saved the lives of his marauders before I **disintegrated** [chuckling]. *Background changes to the old Packard plant ruins.* He and Spam, his master at arms, buried my body in the ruins of the old Packard plant, but no hard feelings [shrugs]. Fade warned me. He says we live and play in our own graveyard. Some might say he's cold, but those closest to him know he's a realist and a survivalist...as far as those traits can take him and his comrades in an urban wasteland.

Background changes to a crack house.

Actually, we're all dead now. How's that for giving away the end of a story? This entire production is a flashback. I was the first to go, killed during a raid on a crack house. [points to the house shown behind him] Goths are known to be peaceful, so you might ask why we would carry out a violent raid. [aims an invisible gun (his hand) at the audience and pulls the trigger] *The sound of a gunshot is heard, loud enough to startle the audience.* Why a crack house? Because it's the 1990s, and heroin and meth haven't yet become cheaper alternatives. Houses like this one exist on Detroit's underbelly, abandoned and then used by those who prey on addicts and homeless squatters—the dregs of society, the invisibles and the unwanted. Fade, his partner Spam and their fellow raiders are opportunists, but another way of looking at their nocturnal operation is that it provides a service to the city similar to demolition. Some of the houses are set afire as the raiders exit, a cover-your-tracks move learned from rogue cops. The Fade-Spam operation walks away with the money and the drugs. They keep some of the drugs for themselves and sell the rest—a lucrative “enterprise.” [air quotes]

Curtain rises inside the Goth club—a door, a bar and a dance floor.

You're about to meet Fade and Spam. They're royalty here at the club. The Goth scene belongs to **them**, and we all belong to **it**. Fade is an alpha personality. Some refer to him as the Gothfather, but let's not use that title to avoid any confusion with a low-budget, poorly produced film by that name. Don't waste your time looking it up. It sucks, quite frankly.

Fade affectionately refers to this place as Freak Central. He's a Goth loyalist, but he's also an astute observer of its snarky social order. *Briefly show a Skeksis superimposed in an upper corner of the background with the sound of a screeching electric guitar.* You may have seen the movie Dark Crystal with reptile-like characters called Skeksis. One of the best examples of Fade's sense of humor is his comparison of Goths to Skeksis, but I digress. Aside from petty interpersonal spats, Goths are peaceful and non-aggressive, so crack house raids run counter to their nature. Fade and Spam's small group is an anomaly. Fade describes us as outcasts among outcasts—nocturnal predators who just **happen** to be Goths.

Pause

Herein lies one of the complexities of our boy Fade. He has no reservation about killing in the name of survival in the jungle, and yet he never passes a homeless person without digging into his pocket. It's his brand of justice, and it's never shown more fiercely than when animals are concerned. He once took out a dog fighting ring by himself in the basement of a house on the southwest side and gave the operators a taste of their own cruelty, but that's a bloody story for another stage play....

The Black Rabbit is shown briefly at the side or corner of the club/bar scene.

Fade expects an early death and calls it his shadow. His one belief in the mystical, paranormal, supernatural... whatever word you prefer...is The Black Rabbit, his death muse. When he says we live and play in our own graveyard, it's because he knows, as we all do, that we're bound to an inevitable fate.

Disintegration motions with one arm toward the door where Fade and Spam are about to enter, ushering the audience into his world. As dancers enter, Disintegration exits.