

# A MAN ABOUT TOWN (Alexander Clay)

You're a pervert.

Specifically, you're a sodomite. Or "invert," the term is now. One of those particularly tragic ones: rejected by your father, disowned by your family, a brief stint in jail for bedding the wrong sex. Over the years you've made yourself a monster, the very picture of a debauched deviant, obsequious, dapper, charming, and completely sociopathic. You seduce young men and young ladies (the latter's not your preference, but it's what's expected of perverts), ruin their lives, and escape unscathed. The "unscathed" part is really the only inevitability -- you're entirely immortal.

Right.

At age twenty-six, you and your lover realized that you had wholly stopped aging. At age twenty-six you weren't a monster; you were living shabbily in an apartment in East London after being disowned by your family, with Stephan McMahon, the love of your life, who was in every way the opposite of what you've become.

Stephan was gentle, oddly wise, and utterly unselfconscious; he came from a family that'd been poor, and didn't give a fuck if anyone knew he was queer. Stephan found you drunk in an alley after your second stint in prison, and brought you into his flat. You thought he was a sailor, picking you up for a blow, but he never forced himself on you, just brought you inside and fed you soup and salty crackers for the better part of an evening.

He didn't want anything in return either. That part confused you. He found you attractive but wouldn't initiate, not without your permission.

You started living with him, bringing in what you could -- money from clerical work, mostly, what with your hyper-specialized socially-bound gentleman's skill set. You made him iced tea, and read poetry badly, and he put a hand on your shoulder and helped you remember after two stints in prison that you were still human.

Then he was killed and your humanity fled.

They killed Stephan and they called him a monster; they said he was out to dismantle society. Every stereotype of something insidious and sinister was trotted out to damn him and -- it wasn't an oath, not something you swore, it wasn't a one-day decision -- in the wake of his death, for something like revenge, you turned yourself into what they thought he was. You wormed your way back into polite society, kept your mouth sweet and eyes winsome, and seduced. You tore families apart, societies apart, hurting them in all the ways Stephan never had.

It didn't last forever, of course. Nothing lasts forever when you'll never die.

There's a thrill that comes from seduction and ruin, from seeing someone's hypocrisy collapse at their feet. It's vengeful and nasty and used to remind you of Stephan but now it doesn't because it's not something Stephan would ever do. You know minds have a tendency to valorize the slain, but even when he lived, you knew.

You want him back. They say he's in Hell. You want to go to Hell, then.

It's more difficult than you'd think. Bullets through the head just heal. You tried to hang yourself three times: it didn't work and was supremely painful, though that was probably good practice for eternal torment. Something supernatural clearly made you immortal. You need something supernatural to kill you.

And you were never a bad researcher.

The Cave of Elixir contains a potion that can kill those who live forever.

So you'll drink it and die and go to Hell and protect Stephan from whatever of Hell's torment you can, because they say pain can strip your humanity away but nothing of Hell can make you more inhuman than you are now. Stephan's what keeps you un-monstrous.

What else? You know there's an immortality potion in the cave and you want to not drink that one, because you honestly don't know if immortality stacks. You want the death potion to work, dammit, not just remove one superfluous layer of immortality and leave you with another.

You want very badly to successfully suicide.

Right! But there are two other people who stumbled upon the cave at the same time you did. One is Edgar Eakins, a mad scientist who's been chasing you; he wants revenge on you for sleeping with and "ruining" his sister, something that happened years ago. You don't know if you should let him know you're already searching for death -- you're sorry about the sister, but he's an ass and you don't want to give him the satisfaction.

The other is Vesper von Eternity, a Lady of Adventure who's been written up in pulps. She's polarizing, which you can't help but admire. So you cornered her, fast, before she got to the cave.

"What do you want the potions for?"

She looked straight at you. "I want to live forever."



## SPECIALS:

**Immortality:** Unless an effect specifically says that it kills you in spite of immortality, you cannot die. You also cannot age, which is great.

**Sleight of Hand:** Once per game, when someone (including yourself) is about to drink a potion, you may surreptitiously switch that potion with the potion of your choice. People will probably notice the switch... but not until after the potion of your choice is consumed in place of the intended potion.

