

## CASTING THE PLAYERS:



To run *Drink Me* as a theatrical experience, you'll need:

- Three sufficiently enthusiastic and unspoiled players.
- A private room to play in.
- A table or other flat surface, for holding drinks.
- Six glasses, each containing a liquid of a different color. (For this, water with food coloring is sufficient, though at the Orchestrator's discretion, fruit juices, alcohol or other beverages may be used.)
- Optionally, costuming (costuming is certainly not necessary, but tends to add to atmosphere).

Once three sufficiently enthusiastic and unspoiled people have been recruited for a run of *Drink Me*, you'll have to cast the players. This step, more than any other, requires the Orchestrator to make independent judgment calls...but, that said, a few recommendations are worth bearing in mind.

- Edgar Eakins has an exceedingly small chance of getting a "happy ending" should he not at some point rethink his ambitions regarding Lily's resurrection. Eakins's player should be someone who is comfortable grappling with this difficulty, and who will not cease to have fun upon learning his "goal" is not as straightforward as it seems.
- Alexander Clay should be played by someone who will not be unhappy to engage with the character's homosexuality and history as a seducer.
- Vesper von Eternity's player should be comfortable grappling with issues of terminal illness and traumatic sexual experience.
- If any of your players is particularly sensitive about the topic of suicide, this is almost certainly not the game for them.

As a general matter: this game is actually pretty dark and pretty intense, despite its brevity and its playful central mechanic. Try to find players who will be OK with that, and make sure the players you have are adequately prepared.

## PREPARING FOR GAME:



Once players have been cast, each player should be given a copy of their character sheet as well as a copy of the rules. While all this information may be sent digitally to players, the author recommends also printing hard copies of all relevant sheets for players to look over before the game; digital devices can fail inconveniently, and players may wish to mark up hard copies of their sheets.

Before the game, the Orchestrator should also fill six glasses (ideally transparent ones) with different-colored liquids. Given the amount of potion-drinking that goes on in this game, the author recommends using water tinted with food coloring; other liquids, imbibed in sufficient quantity, may quickly become sticky, heavy or intoxicating.

The colors of the various potions are left wholly to the discretion of the Orchestrator, excepting the "Sight" potion, which must be associated with a red drink in order to interact properly with Vesper's power. All six of them should be easily distinguishable, however.

The game, being a three-person affair, requires only a very small space; a table upon which the six

"potions" sit, and optionally a candle (or several) for atmosphere, should be plenty sufficient.

Cards describing each potion's effect can be found on page 18 of this manual, and should be clipped out for the Orchestrator pre-game. Likewise, cards representing Edgar's mice should be clipped out and handed to Edgar's player pre-game, and Vesper should be provided with a pocket-watch (or equivalent timekeeping device) before the game begins.

## DURING GAME:

Running "Drink Me" isn't complicated; during the game proper, the primary task of the Orchestrator is to keep time during play. (Even there the Orchestrator has some redundancy. Vesper von Eternity's player should also be keeping time). The simplest way to do this is to set an alarm for an hour after game start; you should then ask the player of Vesper Von Eternity to tell you if and when she decides to add five minutes to the clock.

Likewise, it's recommended that the Orchestrator read over the rules, lore and character sheets before the game. Keep them handy during the game itself, in case players have unanticipated questions.

When a player drinks a potion, the Orchestrator should hand him or her a card describing the potion's effect. Cards for this purpose are included on page 18 of this PDF.

The Orchestrator should decide in advance which magical effects pair with which colors of potion, and then be strictly consistent about this throughout the game. A cheat sheet is recommended.

## POTION EFFECTS:

**Pain:** Choose a body within line of sight as your target. Simply by willing it, you may now cause that body's bearer incredible pain. The terrible pain you cause will cripple the bearer for up to ten seconds; he or she will be unable to speak while in pain, and will be unable to drink potions or stop other player characters from drinking potions. You may cause your target excruciating pain a maximum of once per thirty seconds; you may continue to effectively cause pain even when your target is out of sight. Your ability to produce this effect ends only when you, or your target, dies.

**Soul:** Choose a soul that exists anywhere in Heaven, Hell, or Earth as your target. You may now seat this soul in a body of your choice that is within line of sight.

**Life:** You are now immortal. You cannot sicken, age, or die from violence unless an effect specifically says that it kills you in spite of immortality. If you were already immortal, you now possess an additional "instance" of immortality.

**Death:** In exactly forty minutes, you will perish. This is true even if you are currently immortal. If you are currently possessed of multiple instances of immortality, you immediately lose one of them; the others remain unaffected.

**Sight:** Choose two vials, empty or full. You now know the effect of the potions that are or were contained within each vial so chosen. However, you feel an irresistible compulsion to identify and announce the effects of those two potions to everyone else in your presence.

**Gift:** Pick an empty vial. You may now refill that vial with the potion it previously contained.

Potion effects of the "pick a target" variety need not be expended immediately: a drinker of "Pain", "Soul" or "Gift" may wait several minutes, or several years, before finally choosing a target for the potion's effect. Likewise, a drinker of "Sight" may wait as long as they please before choosing potions to identify; however, once the two potions are chosen, the drinker is hit immediately with the irresistible compulsion to reveal their effects.

All effects described above are learned by the drinker of the relevant potion as soon as that potion is consumed (or by the user of the "Sight" potion as soon as they choose which potions they want to identify.) There are, however, some effects that will NOT be revealed to the players in this way. These are discussed below.

Souls are always immortal; only bodies die. Once a body dies, the soul inhabiting it is expelled. That soul goes immediately to Heaven or Hell, and stays there unless later placed in another viable body. A soul in Heaven or Hell, or on Earth, may be placed in a viable body via the "Soul" potion.

However, killing a body is not the only way to expel a soul from it.

If the "Soul" potion is used to place a soul in a body already inhabited by another soul, the original soul is immediately expelled from that body, to be replaced by the newcomer.

Ex: If Alexander Clay, in trying to resurrect his lover Stephan, moves Stephan's soul into Edgar's body, Edgar's soul is expelled from that body and Edgar effectively "leaves the cave" -- his soul is now in Heaven or Hell, and can only be brought back by another use of the Soul potion. Stephan, resurrected, will find his soul animating Edgar's body.

A body without a soul inhabiting it becomes inanimate. If the "Soul" potion is used to place a soul from the body of someone already present in the cave into another body within the cave, the original body falls and becomes inanimate while the new body is animated by the newly-resident soul.

Ex: If Edgar Eakins, in trying to resurrect his sister, moves the soul of Lily Eakins/Vesper Von Eternity from Vesper's body into the corpse he's sewn together, Vesper's body would fall to the floor of the cave, inanimate, while Edgar's homunculus would be newly animated by Lily/Vesper.

The "Life" potion makes a person's body immortal; it does nothing to the soul. If a person drinks the "Life" potion in one body, then is moved to another body by the "Soul" potion, the effects of the "Life" potion do not carry over to that second body.

Ex: If Vesper Von Eternity, in her original body, drinks the Life potion, that original body becomes immortal. If Edgar Eakins then moves Vesper's soul into his homunculus, the immortality does not move with Vesper's soul; instead, Vesper is now possessed of a (bizarre) mortal body while Vesper's original, inanimate body keeps the instance of immortality.

Notably, this means Alexander Clay can kill himself by committing suicide after moving himself into a mortal body via the "Soul" potion.

## NOTES ON PLAYER POWERS:



**Edgar's Mice:** Of the potions, only "Death" and "Life" have any perceivable effect on the mice.

A mouse fed any amount of the Death potion will die immediately (not in forty minutes as a human would). This is true even if the mouse is possessed of a single instance of immortality.

If a mouse is fed the "Life" potion, it becomes immortal. This effect will not be immediately clear to players, but should be made obvious if a player character attempts to, e.g., injure or kill a mouse which has been fed the immortality potion (the mouse will heal quickly from injuries and never die). If the mouse is possessed of multiple instances of immortality, these instances are "stripped" via the Death potion as per the immortality rules for humans..

**Edgar's Homunculus:** Though Edgar constructed the stitched-together body he's brought into the cave specifically for Lily, a user of the Soul potion can in fact seat any soul in it. This includes the soul of Stephan, Alexander's dead lover, and the soul of any of the player characters.

If the soul of a living person is moved into Edgar's homunculus (or into any other body), their current body becomes inanimate immediately, and acts for all intents and purposes like a corpse.

Whatever else is true of its appearance, Edgar's homunculus has the classic visual signs of a Frankenstein monster -- it is patched-together, scarred, and obviously unnatural. Other details of the body's appearance may be left to the discretion of Edgar's player.

**Alexander's Potion-Switching Power:** Alexander may switch any vial with any other extant vial, including vials that are empty, vials that are in his possession, or vials that are held by other players. Victims cannot "feel" the switch and are, under all circumstances, fooled for several seconds; they should not be allowed to "interrupt" or otherwise invalidate his use of this power. However, the switch will always come to light a few seconds after it's made. Therefore it behooves Alexander's player to switch vials a moment before his intended victim drinks.

**Alexander's Immortality:** Alexander's immortality works identically to an instance of immortality provided by the "Life" potion -- though neither Alexander nor any of the other player characters know how he acquired his particular instance of this power.

**Vesper's Pocket-Watch:** In the cave, Vesper should be the only character with a means of keeping time (if, e.g. Alexander or Edgar are wearing watches, they should be asked to remove them before the game begins). Moreover, Vesper, though her pocket watch may be visible, need not share the time with other players. Thus, the power of Vesper's watch is, in fact, twofold; not only can she slow time to a small extent in the cave, but she can (perhaps more powerfully) conceal the true time in the cave from others.

**Vesper's Favorite Color:** Vesper's favorite color should be whatever color the "Sight" potion is. The written materials describe that color as red; however, if for some reason a red drink can't be procured for the game, changing her favorite color to a color you do have on hand is encouraged. In the original runs of this game, Vesper's favorite color was purple.

## A NOTE ON STEPHAN McMAHON:

There's a chance that during the game, Alexander Clay's lover Stephan McMahon will be resurrected and placed in one of the bodies present in the cave.

If Stephan McMahon is resurrected and becomes a character in the game, it's suggested the Orchestrator step in and play Stephan, guided by Stephan's character sheet. The Orchestrator may also choose to keep a fourth player on hand to play Stephan, but it should be kept in mind that Stephan's resurrection is far from guaranteed.



## ENDGAME:



An hour after game start (or an hour and five minutes after game start, if Vesper Von Eternity chooses to activate her pocket watch power), you should call for Endgame and announce that the cave collapses. Anyone left in the cave after its collapse dies, unless they are immortal. If an immortal is trapped in the cave when it collapses, they are simply inconvenienced by being smushed under the rock.

## OPTIONAL GAME-LENGTHENING TECHNIQUE:



With certain casts, it's possible that all or most of the potions may be consumed or expended before the narrative resolves to anyone's satisfaction. In those cases, the Author recommends the Orchestrator add two or three further "Gift" potions to the spread, allowing players to replenish some of the potions they've expended and reignite character dilemmas. The extra "Gift" potions so suggested may be added pre-game into the initial setup, or provided by the Orchestrator partway through play as a result of an otherwise-unexplained "magical event."

All particulars of such additions or events are of course left wholly to the discretion of the Orchestrator.

## AN ORCHESTRATOR'S POWERS:



The rule set for Drink Me is (deliberately) quite sparse. This gives the Orchestrator a lot of power in certain situations -- namely, when the PCs do anything that isn't covered by the rules at hand. If the PCs, for example, get into a physical fight, ask for extraneous gear, etc., you have total control of how that plays out or ends. Keep this in mind while running the game!

