

# Kazek

## THE COSSACK



THÉO TRIFARD

AN EROTIC ROMANCE

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# **Kazek the Cossack**

**An erotic romance**

Translation by Jill Trifard & Nicky Rebelo

NOVEL

*“To Essex Bomb, Nicky, Anne and Pascal,  
Jules and Salome.”*

Any resemblance to actual persons, gods or  
destinies is purely coincidental.  
No animals other than the author were harmed  
during the writing of this book.

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## Kazek, Comtesse et le Destin

We're at that time of transition, that moment when it's difficult to tell whether the afternoon is ending or the evening's beginning, whether glasses are half full or half empty, and whether dogs wag their tails because they're happy or they're happy because they can wag their tails.

Countess Belton is a slender woman with exquisite delicately tanned shoulders, a figure-hugging dress, a Louise Brooks haircut and green almond-shaped eyes. Alone or in company, she always seems to strike a pose. Radically feminine, she won't reveal her age or her weight. Countess is her real name, it was chosen by her mother on a whim. The moon's her friend, or at least that's what she believes. She's not unfaithful, she's true to herself and her true self is not to be faithful. Her husband accepts this and so do her lovers. She often lapses into reveries, sometimes entering forbidden territories and then she forgets where she is or what she's doing. Everything about her is a mystery, it's something she cultivates and uses to her advantage. Today, strolling through the Luxembourg gardens in Paris, her senses tell her she is on the verge of something important.

Pieter Kazek is a man in his forties. His face attests to a life lived to the full. Ruggedly handsome, he exudes a restless virility. Kazek has come to the park to enjoy the fresh air. This is his favourite bench. His friends, they are but a few, call him the Cossack. He claims to be a Slav and a fatalist; actually he was born in Clichy and regularly challenges the hand that's dealt him. He blinks frequently. It could be a tic or perhaps he's checking that he's still alive. He believes that love is no more than a dangerous game; of course he could be lying to himself. Like an animal sensing a kill, his heart beats faster as he tracks down his prey.

Destiny, now, he's a bit of a geek. Invisible to humans, he carries in his hands a games console from which he never parts. Superstitious as hell, he has a phobia of stepping on cracks in the pavement, which gives him the loping gait of a gangly adolescent. His critics complain that he spends all his time playing on line, but they are wrong. He's not playing, he's observing. Observing and programming. He's a master of this game or at least that's what he believes. Friends with the angels, he's a manservant to the gods and obeys their commands. Their divine will demands a vision of Kazek and Countess that has been forged from moments of extreme doubt, from interludes of blissful happiness, from transgressions requiring confessions. The gods treat Destiny like a toy, but for humans he's a lifebuoy.

The atmosphere is electric, a majestic portent of things to come. Today, our two heroes will open a door to the unknown and meet under Destiny's guidance. Is it possible that the three of them – Destiny, Countess and Kazek – are aware that here in Paris, as dusk turns to night and the moon lights up a cerulean sky, everything apart from a few taboo words will be set down in the pages of a novel in which they have the starring roles?

Countess is in the habit of coming to these gardens when she visits the capital from her home in Chantilly. What made her stop at this particular bench on this specific day? She stares at the new moon as if hoping it can provide the answer. Kazek is blinking rapidly. Sensing his eyes on her, Countess turns to face him.

And zap! With his attention firmly focused on his programming, all the while executing a few awkward dance steps, Destiny hits the 'Action' button on his console. At once the Cossack rises from the bench and addresses her hesitatingly:

"Excuse me, Madame, I...I don't mean to disturb you but I'd love to stroll through the garden with you on my arm. I've no idea why but it's essential that you accept. I'm bored, I guess, and I fear I'm going to do something stupid."

"Something stupid?"

"I missed an appointment and fell asleep on this bench. I often come here to collect my thoughts and

sometimes to reflect on my past. I dreamt about my mother. When she was bored, she'd repeat over and over again 'It's a mystery, a mystery'. I saw in my dream, blurred and dappled, a curtain being drawn, a window being closed, a light being dimmed. Yes, that's it! Order and chaos, beauty and nothingness. But forgive me, I'm rambling. Allow me to introduce myself. I'm Pieter Kazek, also known as the Cossack. Will you accept my company for a few hours? Please say yes!"

Destiny sighs with relief: "Ouf! She hasn't slapped his face. He's not bad this Kazek. I feared the worst. Just a couple of carefully aimed smiles and this one will be in the bag."

Kazek waits for her reply. She gazes directly into his eyes, watching him, unable to suppress her curiosity. The fact is, he's very attractive, this Cossack. Sure, he blinks a lot but his eyes have nothing to hide. His elegant turn of phrase is matched by his dress, a crumpled grey suit, white shirt, black sneakers, unruly hair in need of cutting.

Remaining silent is often the best option. The air is filled with tension. They're united by a tiny ray of hope, as slim as a comma, as thick as a regret, as intangible as a wish. Slowly, Kazek extends his arm and Countess takes it. She doesn't say a word, everything has already been said. They stroll in the moonlight, a couple from a different era, trapped in the waves of desire that wash over them, courtesy of Destiny's console.

"Do you believe in happiness, Monsieur Kazek?"

"This evening perhaps, it may be possible."

A street vendor approaches, a bottle of wine in one hand and plastic glasses in the other. The transaction is quickly completed.

"Cheers, Madame. To our meeting!"

"Cheers, Monsieur, how fortuitous."

"Are you expected somewhere tonight?"

"I'm as free as the air. And you?"

"I was free...and then our paths crossed."

A divinely well-hung angel flies past. *Pfoui-pfoui-pfoui* go its wings in the sky. Kazek may have felt its presence. In any event, he recites a mantra that brings a smile to Countess's lips:

"An angel that chose to change its face to make a change became so changed that strangely all the other angels exclaimed that an angel changed in this way would never change back and never again would any angel choose to become so disarranged. An angel that chose..." With each repetition, the mantra acquires an erotic musicality. Countess and Kazek exchange a thrill of desire and continue walking, exploring the garden, which is about to close. The park keepers are blowing their whistles and calling out to people, telling them to hurry.

Inspired by a sudden impulse to seize the moment or maybe courtesy of a crafty Destiny, Kazek and Countess, laughing playfully, duck down out of sight behind the

statue of a little-known god. From their hiding place they hear the park gates close and contemplate all that the night has to offer. Kazek is careful not to disturb the magic. Like two magnets that attract and repel, they exchange fleeting kisses, subtle caresses, whispered entreaties. It's a night of desire and sensuality. A sleepless night under an indigo sky. As the moon sets in the distance, Kazek begins the Surrealist game of consequences and Countess joins in.

Kazek: "Early morning telegram – Stop."

Countess: "Sleepless night for closed park – Stop."

"As the moon goes down, the sun comes up – Stop."

"The sparkling fragrance of dew-kissed plants – Stop."

"The high-pitched creak of rusty gates – Stop."

"The keepers' angry blasts on their whistles – Stop."

"The delight of a black coffee brought by a behemoth – Stop."

"Countess's whispered farewell to the moon – Stop."

Kazek is at peace. He continues to blink, but more slowly now. A wave of pleasure floods through his veins. Countess savours the chills of the new morning but something troubles her. Is it the instant complicity between her and Kazek? Close by, Destiny wires desire. He's as happy as a teenager having spotted a few hairs on his chin. Executing some disco moves, he yells to the heavens: "Step one, my masters, mission accomplished!"

Countess: "Tell me, Monsieur Cossack, I'm curious.

What do you get up to when you're bored?"

"Me, when I'm bored? Well, today I'm imagining your lips pressed to mine."

"Ah! And what if I said yes?"

"Then come to me."

"Where?"

"Here, in a few days, I'll introduce you."

"To whom?"

"To a *porte cochère* of my acquaintance."

## Beware of the gods and other deities

Meanwhile, at this very moment, up in the celestial sky, the gods and other deities prepare to observe this titillating encounter. They appear from everywhere, making themselves comfortable in the clouds while surreptitiously glancing at one another.

“What are you doing, Shiva?”

“I’m dusting my cloud, Ganesh.”

“What time does the fun start?” asks Chronos.

“It’s already started,” replies Jupiter.

“Aeolus, stop breaking wind!” yells Seth.

“Ja, ja, ja.” Thus spoke Zarathustra.

Jehovah denounces God: “He’s back on the booze!”

“Who gives a shit?” laughs Bacchus as he skillfully opens an amphora.

Afraid of triggering the gods’ anger, Destiny tries to hide behind his old games console. Perched on their clouds, the grumpy deities are ready to pounce if he makes the slightest error. It’s early in heaven. Goddesses are bathing in the fountain of youth, while others enjoy a glass of wine or perhaps something stronger.

“What do you think of Destiny?” Ramses asks Christ.  
“It’s bizarre, but he’s trampling on the spacetime continuum.”

Buddha laughs, “You and your parables that no-one understands.”

“Shiva to Destiny, Shiva to Destiny, are you receiving me?”

“With difficulty, my Lord, my console is slow, the game’s about to begin.”

“Destiny, I can hardly hear you.”

“I said the game is beginning my Lord. I’m trying to control it.”

An angel flies past at breakneck speed, laughing and zigzagging around the clouds. “Woooo, woooo.”

“Into the broom cupboard, Destiny!” shout the gods in unison. “Into the broom cupboard!” From Earth, Destiny yells back, “Hang on, it’s about to happen, give me a minute!”

“One minute!”

Every one hundred years or so the deities embark on a game. The purpose being to assuage their desire to make mischief. They get Destiny to choose a couple of humans, send them down a road littered with ambushes and obstacles and watch them lose their way. Loyalty, frivolity, sensuality, insanity, scandals. Everything counts and nothing is sacred. It’s rumoured that the game has been rigged since the beginning of time. In fact, by



having fun at the humans' expense, the gods are seeking revenge for their own sexual deficiency, their inability to climax. Consumed with jealousy, they lose control and give in to their frailties. Destiny alone resists and tries to guide the humans along the programmed path.

"Is this couple the best choice?" asks God.

"Uh well, my console, it isn't reliable, God, there's a risk."

"Make it work, we're not wasting good money on a new one!"

It's rumoured up in heaven that God and his money are rarely parted.

The timing is important. Aeolus holds his breath, Chronos stops tick-tocking and Buddha loses his smile. Below them, on Earth, a life-changing encounter is taking place.

"Three, two, one, zero! Hurrah, hurrah!" shout the gods. "Long live Countess, long live Kazek!"

"Shh." Shiva calls for silence, his ten index fingers pressed to his lips. "Shh, Countess is whispering."

\* \* \*

Countess: "Monsieur, I remember our first rendez-vous and the many which followed after that secret night in the park. It created a desire, a suspense, an expectation. I remember walking breathlessly to the *porte cochère*, stumbling in the dark. I remember that second of hesitation before we kissed, your manly gestures, your

experienced caresses, your hands on my breasts. My god they were sensitive. I remember your warm breath on my cheek, so powerful that I felt dizzy, your nibbles, your kisses. You held me by the neck as if you wanted to drag me to your lair like a starving male that had caught his prey. I remember my burning body, locked against yours as if you had captured me and made me your willing slave.

*"Take me, Sir, I beg you, take me now!"*

I remember your stifled moans, drowning in pleasure as I felt you climax. I remember our final kiss, your lips dancing on mine, your whispered words as you repeated your address, *'Write to me'*.

I remember you striding away like a gangster on the run, your shadow slowly disappearing into the night, hidden from my desires. Tell me, my Slavic Cossack, please tell me, will we meet again?"

"Wow, awesome!" says Ganesh to Shiva as he hoovers his cloud with his trunk.

## Kazek's first letter

**M**y dear Countess, a lunar cycle has elapsed since our first meeting. I've spent several nights on my bench hoping you would return but you never did. No matter, the wait has strengthened my desire. I am seated before a blank page, like my young self at boarding school trying to compose a letter home. It wasn't long before I was expelled, leaving me to complete my education on the streets of Clichy, as good a school as any. My page is covered in ink stains, as is my shirt. Where shall I start? Perhaps I should thank you for a magical evening and announce that I plan to write often. I have so much to say and as much to hide. I don't have the skill or the words to describe our encounter. To discipline my thoughts, I'm using a fountain pen that I specifically purchased shortly after we met. I'm not sure why, perhaps a muddled impression that it would improve my prose. So far all it has done is pepper my shirt with indelible stains.

Obviously, I want to see you again, physically I mean. I can't forget your silky skin, your perfume, your impassioned kisses. You have been blessed by the gods,

Countess, or perhaps by fate. My ancestors were Slavs, I believe in these things. I have to confess I'm becoming obsessed. I fear compromising my freedom and my convictions. My independence is my religion and I obey a set of rules known only to me. I must be careful. If I'd had the choice, I would have followed more traditional, less challenging paths. But fate has driven me to embrace life and all it has to offer.

I'm at home listening to Gainsbourg sing *En relisant ta lettre*, as I too re-read the letter I received from you. A new ink stain appears on my cuff, a timely reminder not to make any more blunders. I'm ashamed of my limitations, my poor writing skills, but at the same time I relish the challenge. My quest fits in a box, I am searching for the key. You're a libertine, I'm an anarchist, where should I begin? Do you have a partner, a husband? Are you jealous, possessive? Are you... no, that's enough of my questions. *Pour vivre heureux, vivons cachés* – to live happily, live hidden. We have time, or at least I hope we do. Patience is not one of my virtues.

A second letter will follow, with fewer blots, apologies for my carelessness. Welcome to the world of Kazek, a Cossack world of fire, vodka and fantasy. Take care, Countess, some of my doors open onto labyrinths. I'm more rough than romantic. You've been warned. The two of us will go far, I can feel it, I know it. An exotic journey, from sensuality to spirituality, is written in our stars.

In future dress in your finest lingerie, Countess, before sitting down to read my letters. Let's believe in fate and live our fantasies at the throw of a dice.

A thousand kisses.

## The postwoman

**M**y mysterious Countess, I received your letter today. The arrival of this first missive was memorable to say the least! Shall I relate the adventure that it triggered? Perhaps you'll enjoy it, who knows? We Cossacks love stories that are disconcerting, passionate, excessive. Are you familiar with the legend of our unbreakable skulls? It's said that in the remotest steppes, in the freezing dawn, the only blow capable of fracturing a Slav's cranium is his penis with its morning erection. I admit that may be a slight exaggeration.

The postman kept me waiting indoors till late morning, which is unusual for me. I'd rather be outdoors, strolling in the street or sipping a coffee on the terrace of a bar, watching the world go by. But yesterday, a few days after we'd met, I was stuck at home, thinking about you, Countess, about fate and my bank balance. I was waiting for a contract, which I had to sign and send back in exchange for a substantial cheque. Money isn't important to me. Of course, like most people, I need it, but it's liquid in my pocket. It oozes out of my account and

floods my statements. However, this big payment would allow me to avoid the surly concierge and the zealous bailiffs. I could also afford a few new stain-free shirts.

Frustrated and exasperated, with nearly half of the day already over, I waited for the mail to be delivered. Hearing the *clack* of the catch on the building's entrance door, the screech of the heavy door's hinges and the flutter of letters dropping in the mail boxes, I entered the hall to check my mail, head down, eyes to the floor. Looking up, I discover not the wrinkled face of my usual postman but a beautiful young woman with fiery red hair. It's August in Paris, with its ballet of temps in the public services. She's singing a Gainsbourg song "*The story of Melody Nelson, whom apart from myself...*" I smile and take over, "*...no-one ever took in their arms.*" She turns to me and returns my smile. I observe her discreetly while continuing to approach my mail box. Click, clack, I open it abruptly and of course it's empty, no contract, no cheque, not even a flyer.

"Mr. Kazek?"

The young postwoman hands me a letter. Weird, she knows my name. Blushing slightly, she stares at me with an intangible air of seduction, an impish glint in her eyes. I receive only one letter, but my god it smells good. Its vanilla and pepper scents, tinged with a whiff of lust, spread throughout the hall. The missive is an invitation to decadence with elegance, forbidden fruit, sleepless

nights. This perfume, it's yours Countess, I'm certain. I would give my right hand for it to be the case.

"Monsieur! Monsieur! This letter is for you."

With the indecision of youth, my pretty postwoman seems reluctant to continue her round. Her cap perched precariously on top of her billowing red hair, a thin white shirt allowing a glimpse of her pert breasts encased in a lacy bra, a skirt much shorter than uniform rules allow, an impudent doe-eyed stare, she seems fixed in the moment, a seductive *carpe diem*, aware of participating in a sexy scenario in which she has a starring role.

"Your letter smells very nice, Monsieur... Is it from your lady friend?"

I look at her again. At her freckles. What an enchanting creature! Her smile is enigmatic, her eyes are half closed. She remains at my side. A conscious or unconscious decision?

"You're very curious!"

I raise the letter to my nose, all the while continuing to watch her, my senses on alert. Despite many conquests, I'm not a professional womanizer, seducer or philanderer. Also, I've loved all the women who accepted my advances, or at least I hope that's true. And now, under the aquamarine gaze of my tender postwoman, once again I'm falling in love.

"You're very curious, aren't you?"

"My curiosity has no limits, Monsieur."

Everything in the hallway sharpens our desire. The letter waiting to be devoured, its captivating scent, our two bodies drawing nearer, the danger of being discovered. I bring the letter closer to her breasts and become intoxicated by the floral scent of my mischievous postwoman, blended with the spicy perfume of my flamboyant countess. I caress the envelope, slide my lips across the paper, balance it in my hand, draw it across my cheek, my stubble scratching the surface. I find the flap, hesitate to tear it open. But the letter, sooner or later, will have to reveal its secrets. Aware that someone could enter the hallway at any time, I take a step forward and draw the letter across her soft skin, listening as her breathing grows heavier. She leans against the wall, to the right of the mail boxes, her gaze locked on the envelope in my hand. I know that my postwoman says yes to forbidden games, she's not a tease. My god she's sexy. I draw her into my arms, trembling slightly. I kiss the envelope, my lips brushing the corner of her mouth. Our bodies are touching now. She stares into my eyes and I drown in a sea of blue. I inhale, she exhales, sex is in the air. I start to ease open the envelope. Her lips moisten the letter, bringing it to life and releasing its hypnotic scent. I hear a murmured 'Yes', which seems to come from the envelope. We say nothing. Our eyes are fixed on this letter, which separates and binds us. I feel her hand descend and pass fleetingly over my virility. Hidden beneath her skirt, she

caresses herself, the hand of an expert. Time stands still as she fondles me with her other hand. Her nails scratch my chest. Our bodies become as one, no penetration is needed. I stroke her breasts, pinch her nipples. The fear of being discovered adds a sense of urgency. The feeling is so strong, so sexy, delicate *interdit*.

With our senses in turmoil, the sound of our breathing is broken by a cry, a tiny animal, a bird that takes flight, such a moving orgasm. Through the fabric of my trousers, my postwoman takes me in her hand. I climax like a teenager, feel my legs give way, grasp her sex as if to prevent myself from falling. Her moan is like her laugh, infantine, crystalline.

From here, things go very quickly. We're embarrassed. Your open letter in my hand fills the hall with its spicy perfume, damp from our pleasure, limp from our desires.

"Goodbye, Monsieur Kazek, and thank you."

"It's for me to thank you, my lovely postwoman."

A smile. The front door opens. An intruder enters, my upstairs neighbour.

"What's your name?"

"Geraldine, Monsieur, Geraldine. *A bientôt!*" she replies, a twinkle in her eyes.

The story ends with the outraged stare of the upstairs neighbour, transfixed by the stain on my trousers, in the worst possible place. I am light-headed, experiencing the shame I last felt when I was a teenager. As I re-enter my

apartment I can't help laughing out loud, for the first time in ages. I need to have more experiences like this!

## Countess's first letter

**M**y mysterious new lover, thank you for your two letters. Forgive me, Monsieur, for taking so long to reply but I'm averse to punctuality and besides it's a woman's prerogative to keep a man waiting. Your letter arrived at the manor house on Tuesday afternoon. Actually, it's a restored hunting lodge that commoners with airs of nobility prefer to call a chateau, probably because of its small keep or donjon. My mother's an example, she was always desperate for a title. It's rumoured that in exchange for the right to get around France's strict naming laws and to register my name as Countess, she slept with several town hall employees. It escapes me why she wanted it so badly. Perhaps a well-hidden lover, a nobleman who ousted my father? I've often wondered but never dared ask. Whatever the case, I feel at home in the manor house. Its elegant rooms and refined decor suit me.

It intrigues me how you obtained my address. I'm experienced at keeping my private life private, protecting my personal information, avoiding stalkers. Are you a magician, a thief, a spy? Perhaps your postwoman helped

you? Or did you follow me after our 'private conversation'? You'll tell me one day, *n'est-ce pas?*

You claim to be unskilled with words, and yet I find that between the ink stains, it's with a certain style that you lay yourself bare. I'm not a literary critic, but I confess to liking the old-fashioned tone of our correspondence, the use of '*vous*' when we address each other rather than the more familiar '*tu*'.

You speak of freedom and jealousy. It's the story of my life. Perhaps because I'm a Scorpio destined to sting my lovers and devour my husbands. I have only one husband and I love him, so I am always hungry. I'm attracted to men who make me laugh or, like you, unsettle me. I'm fascinated by you. Your virility and vulnerability, your ability to punish and soothe, to dominate and submit. In answer to your questions, yes, I am a jealous person. I hate the idea that my lovers could experience greater pleasure with someone else or find the happiness that I can't offer them. I'm not faithful but I expect the people I care for to tolerate my escapades and bring me coffee in bed, filter coffee mind you, in a mug, with half a spoon of brown sugar, a drop of milk, and a kiss, why not?

You think me unfair? Who said that love was fair? Another ambiguous answer to your questions. It's how I am. It's how you are too. Yes, I'm as jealous as a tigress and no, I don't want to know if you have other adventures. I liked your story about the postwoman, but what

an airhead! A ginger nymphomaniac who thinks she can do what she likes. I hope her route is changed and she forgets your name! Just wait until she gets trapped in my net, I'll teach her the error of her ways. I'm a huntress and I don't like sharing. No, that's not strictly true, it depends on the circumstances.

This morning I was thinking about our instant attraction. I fear things are moving too fast, that we will be burned, bored, ignored. An encounter in a park, an insane stroll, a sleepless night, a closed *porte cochère* and now this wild correspondence. I feel quite breathless! Is it too early, though, for pointless questions? For you, dear Cossack, the situation is far worse. You've gained two mistresses in the blink of an eye. A countess and a postwoman to satisfy and delight. Are you up to the challenge? Does it turn you on?

You ask if we will continue this correspondence. Yes, pray let us pledge to delight each other with an exchange of audacious, salty, peppery, spicy prose. '*Hahaha! Pray let us pledge to delight each other...*' It sounds so Victorian, narrow hips and laced corsets, the age of gallantry and all that.

A period out of time. I find myself, a modern woman and committed feminist, one unafraid of straying from the beaten track, drunk on freedom, now pinned like a voodoo doll, held fast like a fridge magnet. I'm in uncharted territory. How can I regain control? What

happens next? It's a mystery, a mystery, as your mother would say. In answer to your question, of course I want to see you, to touch you. Your letters only serve to stimulate my hunger. Forget SMS express, WhatsApp or Twitter, let's leap into the unknown.

Rendez-vous Monday, eleven thirty, in front of the Hotel du Nord. We'll spice up this adventure with bursts of madness, tears of pleasure and nuggets of treasure. Our relationship, Monsieur Kazek, is purely sexual. Let's not hide our desire behind polite nonsense. A seducer and a seductress, we're both self-indulgent lovers, slightly crazy but passionate and full of life. Our war has already begun, an erotic battle of equals. How exciting!

I have read and re-read your two letters, turned them over between my fingers and thrown them away several times, only to pick them up again. I too am impatient and not as naive as you suggest. I fear we will be unable to control our desire.

*Enchanté*, Monsieur Kazek, I am delighted to have met you and am ready for the next instalment Monday, eleven thirty, on the Saint-Martin canal. I look forward to seeing you.

Don't be late!

## Chance or Fate?

**D**estiny hammers at the keys of his games console. '*See you tomorrow, see you tomorrow*'. But I'm not ready! Restart, for goodness sake! How can I repair it? I spent all night on Goddle, looking for a solution, but there's no user manual for this bloody game! I can't let these two get out of my sight. Kazek, the fake Cossack, who plays at being a rogue and a philanderer who's seen everything and forgotten nothing. He's the type to fly into a demented, jealous rage like a Russian bear with a bad hangover. As for the Countess of nowhere and her noble titles purchased with her favours, I'd say she's not keen on competition. She obviously does whatever she likes and then cries when she doesn't get her way. I am their Destiny, the one pulling the strings, but they have to be connected. I can't control everything. If a man is determined to plough his own furrow, I can't stop him, I have to adapt. If another is desperate to hang on to life, despite his fate being sealed, I'll give him another year. It's nothing compared to eternity. Our lives, or rather yours, are written at birth like a music score. Of course, I'm talking about humans, not



gods, goddesses or angels. Let me explain. Our fates are determined by an algorithm similar to that of a GPS. A disembodied voice announces, *At the second roundabout, take the first exit*. It doesn't issue an order or force you to obey, it simply makes a suggestion. If you ignore the suggestion and miss the exit, it sends a series of clicks to warn you that you have taken the wrong turn. It's up to you to listen and understand them, accept you made a mistake and turn back to get on the right road. Life's the same. I offer several choices. You may opt to ignore my advice and follow your own route, whatever you choose... Woops! God's headed this way. He's my boss, I depend on him for my job. Looks like he's in a bad mood... and he reeks of alcohol. I didn't hear him descend from his throne. I had better keep my head down to protect you and bring this tale to its conclusion. Do me a favour, try not to go off the beaten track!

"Who are you talking to, Destiny?" God shouts.

"To myself, God, just to myself."

"You're lying!"

"No God, not at all! It's my console, it's obsolete, I need a new one."

God (laughing): "Dick."

Destiny: "Pardon?"

God (laughing even harder): You're a game boy addict. Hahaha!

Destiny: "Oh boy, he's already pissed."