Fate & Will & Spirit & Kismat

A One-Act Play

CAST OF CHARACTERS

FATE - M, 35-45, slick Hollywood agent type

WILL - M, 22-30, preppy, horn-rimmed glasses

SPIRIT - F, 22-30, Boho-chic, long hair

KISMAT - F, 35-45, an Indian Goddess, and dressed accordingly

ETERNA - F, 20-30, a happy soul

TIME - The Present

PLACE - The cocktail bar at the Infinity Bar & Grill, a swanky lounge/restaurant

SCENE 1

An upscale bar. There are four lounge chairs and a cocktail table. FATE is sipping his drink, relaxing. WILL and his girlfriend, SPIRIT, enter and spot Fate. Will turns to Spirit.

WILL
(softly)
Oh, geez, it's him!

SPIRIT
Let's go before he sees us.

Fate looks up and waves at them.

FATE
Hey! You guys!

SPIRIT
(softly)
Too late.

FATE
Come over here and join me.

Will and Spirit hesitantly walk over to him. Fate gets up and shakes Will's hand.

FATE
How are you, Will? Hello, Spirit.

SPIRIT
Hello, Fate. What brings you here?

FATE
Where else would I be? Come, sit!

Will and Spirit oblige.

FATE
So what have you two been up to?

Before they can answer....

FATE

Wait! You two are engaged! Am I right?

WILL

Yeah, we're getting married.

FATE

(raising his glass)

Well, then, congratulations!

SPIRIT

Thank you. We're very happy.

FATE

I'm sure. You two are meant for each other. When is the wedding?

WILL

We were thinking about...

FATE

New Year's Eve? How romantic!

ETERNA, a cocktail server, comes by.

ETERNA

Good evening. Welcome to the Infinity Bar and Grill. I'll be your server, Eterna. Could I get you something to drink?

FATE

They'll each have a glass of champagne.

Eterna looks over at Will and Spirit.

WILL

Uh...

SPIRIT

I'd like a Chardonnay.

ETERNA

I'm sorry. We're all out of Chardonnay.

SPIRIT

A Pinot Grigio, then.

ETERNA
We're out of that, too. Sorry.

FATE
(to Eterna)
Champagne, it is.

ETERNA
(to Fate)
Could I get you a refill, sir?

FATE
Not right now, thanks.

Eterna leaves.

WILL
We've never been here before. I hear the food is excellent.

FATE
It's very good. You'll love the crab cakes.

SPIRIT
I'm not sure that's what I'm in the mood for.

FATE
You'll change your mind.

SPIRIT
Maybe I won't.

WILL
Darling...

SPIRIT
Maybe I'll have pasta instead. Or fish.

FATE
Nah, it's crab-cakes for you. And you'll love them.

SPIRIT
I'm not ordering crab cakes.

FATE

Oh, yes you are.

SPIRIT

Oh no, I'm not!

WILL

Guys, please, stop!

SPIRIT

You think you know everything that's going to happen, don't you?

FATE

I don't think I know. I know I know. It's the block universe theory. The block is filled with everything that's ever happened, is happening now, or will happen. It all exists simultaneously.

SPIRIT

But it's a theory, right? You can't prove it.

FATE

I'm proving it right now. I know everything that's going to happen to you and Will, because it's already happened. I know what wedding gown you're going to wear. I know the caterer you're going to choose. I know the vows you're going to make. I even know what song you're going to pick for your first dance.

SPIRIT

Yeah? And what song is that?

FATE

"As Time Goes By."

SPIRIT
(suddenly deflated)

Oh.

Will takes her hand.

WILL

It's okay, darling.

SPIRIT

You know, Fate. I feel sorry for you. Always knowing what you know. How boring your life must truly be, being so...predictable.

FATE
But on the other hand, I don't have the stress of what uncertainty brings. I'm always prepared for everything that's going to happen, good or bad. I take great comfort in that.

Eterna comes by with the champagne

ETERNA
Here's your champagne.

She puts the flutes down on the table.

Enjoy!

SPIRIT
I was wondering - how late do you serve dinner?

ETERNA
I don't understand. We never not serve dinner.

SPIRIT
Really?

FATE
It's always dinnertime here, don't you see? How long have you been working here, Eterna?

ETERNA
(thinks for a moment)
Hmm, you know I can't remember when I haven't worked here. I guess I've been here forever. Anything else I can bring you?

WILL
No, thanks.

Eterna leaves, just as KISMAT enters.

FATE
Ah, there's my Kismat.

Fate stands up. They kiss each other on the cheek.

Will, Spirit, this is my twin sister, Kismat. She's visiting from out of town.

SPIRIT
Hello.

Will rises to greet her.

WILL

Pleasure to meet you.

KISMAT

The pleasure is mine.

Fate holds the chair for Kismat as she sits.

SPIRIT

I love your necklace.

KISMAT

Thank you. It's called a Mango Mala. I am never without it.

SPIRIT

Well, it's stunning.

Kismat takes in the room.

KISMAT

This is a very beautiful place.

FATE

I knew you'd like it.

KISMAT

How do you all know each other?

WILL

Oh, we're old acquaintances. We run into each other now and then.

FATE

I tend to show up whenever something big is happening in Will's life.

KISMAT

Why, yes, of course.

FATE

Will and Spirit are engaged to be married.

KISMAT

What joy.

(to Will and Spirit)

Aap sada khush rah sakate hain. That is Hindi for may you be eternally happy.

WILL
Thank you. Where are you visiting from, Kismat?

KISMAT
The 11th dimension, although I do spend a lot of time in India. Where do you live?

WILL
(gazing at Spirit)
Wherever my Spirit moves me.

SPIRIT
You're so sweet.

KISMAT
(to Fate)
By the way, Albert told me to give you his regards.

FATE
How is old Albert?

KISMAT
Relatively well.

They both laugh.

WILL
You don't mean Albert as in Albert Einstein?

KISMAT
Of course. He is a dear friend of ours.

FATE
He really brought me back to the forefront of debate.

KISMAT
Dear brother, you've always been right up there along with the question of whether there's life after death.

WILL
Well, I certainly hope so.

FATE
There is. It's the same life you're living right now. Look, it's been proven that humans are biologically programmed to be the way they are. Belief in free will is simply an illusion. The brain knows what to do before the person takes the action to do it.

SPIRIT

But take nature versus nurture. Aren't all humans products to some degree of their environment?

FATE

You mean can humans overcome their genes and their circumstances to determine the trajectory of their own lives? No, they can't. They are predetermined by external causes outside their own free will.

KISMAT

Schopenhauer wisely said "Man can do what he wills, but not will what he wills."

WILL

I need another drink.

Eterna comes by.

ETERNA

Hi. Could I get anyone a refill?

WILL

A double vodka for me.

SPIRIT

Just water for me.

KISMAT

Do you have Soma?

ETERNA

Is that a kind of beer?

KISMAT

No, it's a Vedic drink from ancient India.

ETERNA

Oh, then, I'm sure we do.

(to Fate)

Sir?

FATE

(holding his glass)

I'll have another.

ETERNA

My pleasure.

Eterna takes Fate's glass and departs.

WILL

So Fate, if you know everything that's going to happen, there's one thing I've always wondered. When will humanity end?

FATE

From what I've seen, it's looking pretty good right now.

WILL

No, I mean the actual date when there human beings become extinct?

SPIRIT

Why do you want to know that, Will?

WILL

Because I care about the people there who still believe in us.

SPIRIT

Yeah, I know. They're a dwindling number, all right.

KISMAT

(to Fate)

May I answer?

FATE

Of course.

KISMAT

Human beings as we know them will, one day, evolve to a level of consciousness where they will have no need of their physical being anymore, their new form invisible to the eye, but ever present to each other. And there they will remain in a timeless state of bliss for all eternity.

FATE

See? Everyone thinks of me in terms of their own lives. They never once try to imagine the wonderful endlessness of it all.

Eterna stops by, and drops off the drinks.

ETERNA

Are either of you the Fate party?

FATE

I am.

ETERNA
Your table is ready. I'll bring your drinks to you there.

Fate and Kismat stand up.

FATE
Well, it was nice to see you both again.

KISMAT
It was a pleasure meeting you.

SPIRIT
Same here.

WILL
Enjoy your evening.

They all shake hands, and Fate and Kismat leave.

SPIRIT
Well, that was unexpected.

WILL
I don't think so. But I'm glad we had this talk.

SPIRIT
Yeah, but he still kinda gives me the creeps.

Eterna comes by again,

ETERNA
Are you the Will party?

WILL
Yes, we are.

ETERNA
Your table is ready.

WILL
Thanks. If you could bring the bill?

ETERNA
It's already been paid for. The other party told me you forgot your credit card. Enjoy your night.

Eterna leaves. Will takes out his wallet, and searches for his credit card. After a moment, he shakes his head.

WILL
Damn that Fate!

SPIRIT
And I'm suddenly in the mood for crab cakes!