

**The Last Cake in the World**  
**by Shubhra Agarwal**

INT. ROOM - DAY

PROTAG (F, 26) is sitting at her desk, back facing the camera. She is on the phone but she's frozen. Can hear the waves hitting the walls outside.

PROTAG (V.O.) (STATIC OF THE RECIEVER)  
*The ocean has come back again. I  
can hear it growling against the  
walls. It doesn't know I'm here,  
blue with wounds.*

She puts the phone down and it disconnects. She continues to stare on.

PROTAG (V.O. CON'D)  
*Everything we worked for is  
gone, yet I can't imagine  
leaving this room. I can't  
imagine it being taken over by  
the sea.*

She looks at the window which is all taped up. A beam of sunlight streams through. The locks click and the door opens.

ALKA (26, F) enters, drenched and covered in grime.

PROTAG turns back to her desk and continues building a device. PROTAG holds her breath. ALKA passes by her wordlessly.

(NOTE: this is the moment PROTAG decides to pretend like nothing's happened, because she doesn't know how to deal with reality)

PROTAG takes a moment to collect herself and then leans back in her chair. Her head rolls over the backrest as she pulls her stylish sunglasses down.

PROTAG  
You smell like shit.

ALKA starts removing her dirty overcoat. Can see the cuts and grime on her shoulders.

PROTAG makes a face.

PROTAG  
Try not to make a mess when  
you're washing them.

ALKA says nothing. PROTAG continues working on the electrical wiring of the object she's building. Her hands are shaking even if her voice is steady.

PROTAG

Some tech lingo

ALKA comes back, having changed into home clothes. PROTAG notices the massive bandage wrapped around her forearm and finally meets her eyes with quiet alarm.

ALKA

We have to evacuate.

PROTAG

I'm going to finish soon. Then let's talk.

ALKA

(stares)

PROTAG

This project is much more important than you think-

ALKA

It's over, \_\_\_\_\_. And you already know it.

PROTAG

Stop doing that. Stop being so-

ALKA leans back and chokes out an ironic laugh.

PROTAG gently touches ALKA's bandage.

PROTAG

When was the last time you said something nice to me?

PROTAG's eyes are hidden through the sunglasses, but her lips purse and we can see the sudden sadness hit her. For a moment they both are silent, reveling in each other's comfort.

ALKA

When I complimented your Instagram thirst trap...

PROTAG

(surprised) That was like, three years ago.

ALKA leaves and disappears into the corner.

ALKA (MUFFLED VOICE)  
 We're going to leave a lot of  
 this stuff behind. Let's start  
 packing the essentials and-

PROTAG turns on a beautiful, mysterious tune. She gets up  
 and starts dancing slowly.

She calls out to ALKA.

PROTAG  
 Come dance with me.

ALKA doesn't. PROTAG scoffs and sways to the music, her  
 tense body melting into it. From certain angles we can see  
 her hardened, devastated expression beneath the protection  
 of sunglasses.

ALKA walks by with stuff in her arms. PROTAG pulls her  
 into a dance. Alka is stiff (unresponsive) and PROTAG uses  
 her arms like a puppet.

Long and slow dance ensues.

In an attempt to be sensual, PROTAG goes behind her and  
 puts her hands on ALKA's waist. Then her arms go around  
 her stomach and pull her into a back hug, turning into a  
 tight, desperate grab for comfort.

PROTAG rests her head on ALKA's shoulder, sunglasses  
 sliding down. We can see her eyes full of pain, fear,  
 loss.

(NOTE: PROTAG tried to change the mood but ALKA didn't  
 relent to this manipulation, so PROTAG had to give up).

ALKA  
 This is unlike you.

PROTAG  
 Alka...

ALKA  
 The last settlement collapsed  
 today.

PROTAG  
 I know...

ALKA  
 I was there.

PROTAG  
 I know.

ALKA

I saw people die. Running over each other, like insects. So much happened..

PROTAG

But you're here now. Safe with me. Even if its for a little while.

ALKA

How long will you keep lying to yourself?

ALKA removes PROTAG's hands and turns to face her. She kisses her palm and holds it to her face. PROTAG exhales. ALKA reaches up to remove the sunglasses, revealing PROTAG's vulnerability.

ALKA hands the sunglasses to PROTAG.

ALKA

You know what your problem is?

PROTAG looks up.

ALKA (CON'D)

You don't know how to talk about what's happening because you never went outside.

PROTAG

I don't need to go outside to know.

ALKA

(shaking her head) Your genius is such a waste.

PROTAG shoves her hands off her.

PROTAG

How can you- Without me you guys wouldn't have access to the satellite. Without me you wouldn't have the tech to-

ALKA

(disappointed) You could have done so much more..

PROTAG makes a hurt-angry expression.

PROTAG

I need this to cope.  
(gesturing to room)  
You know that.

PROTAG readjusts her skirt to cover the big scar on her thigh, but this action goes unnoticed by ALKA.

ALKA

People don't have the *luxury* to cope. You need to grow up.

PROTAG

I don't have to live by your standards.

ALKA

My standards? The world has gone to hell-

PROTAG

I don't have to play a hero in your eyes.

ALKA

For god's sake, this isn't about us. This is-  
(sound of a huge wave outside interrupts her)  
(sarcastically) Did you ever even look outside? Do you even know what color the ocean is?

PROTAG leans towards the taped up window, listening to the waves lapping against the wall.

PROTAG

(whispers) Of course I do...

ALKA

(ignores her) It's *brown*. And you have the audacity to procure *cake*. It's a waste of resources and god knows how much of a fortune you spent on it. What is even the point of it? What? Wanted to flaunt something? *I have so many connections that I don't need to care about anyone but myself.*

PROTAG

(quietly) It's your birthday.

ALKA is stunned. She sinks to the floor, putting her head in her hands.

PROTAG gets up with the cake and hands her the cake.  
(NOTE: PROTAG wins this round)

Solemnly, ALKA takes it and starts to eat. PROTAG lies down on the bed, her face near ALKA's head.

ALKA

This is the worst cake I've ever had.

PROTAG

Don't be too mean. It's probably the last.

ALKA nods and offers the last bite to PROTAG. PROTAG shakes her head. ALKA takes the last bite and gets up to put the plate away.

PROTAG

We might not like each other but a part of me will love you forever. You know that, right?

ALKA stops in the middle of the room. A pause. She looks up and exhales. (Some sort of foregrounding/shadow will hide a part of her face)

ALKA

What are you trying to say?

PROTAG

You knew this was going to happen sooner or later.

They share a mutual look full of regret and pain.

ALKA

You're seriously doing this. Right now. Today of all days?

PROTAG

We should have done this long ago. I just didn't have the courage in me-

ALKA

Do you think you can survive without me? After three years of-  
(gestures to the room) Three years of this *insane shit*. How can you just throw it all away? Throw us away? That's absurd!

PROTAG (CON'D)

The world is going to rebuild itself from the ground up. I think this is a good time for us to part ways.

ALKA rubs her face.

ALKA

I have so much left to say to you and..

PROTAG

You could have come home more often.

ALKA

You could have come out more often.

PROTAG shrugs.

Footsteps outside. A loud knock on the door.

OUTSIDER

General \_\_\_\_? Alka? Our group is leaving in twenty minutes.

ALKA

(to PROTAG, tentatively) You'll be coming with us, right?

PROTAG

It's a new era. Let's not make the same mistakes as before.

ALKA opens her mouth to say something but PROTAG brushes her off with a forced chuckle:

PROTAG

(joking) Let's plant more trees this time, or something.

ALKA

(loudly, to Outsider) Got it.

ALKA leaves the frame. Comes back with a ring that she slowly slides across the desk to PROTAG. PROTAG looks at it and shakes her head. ALKA makes a fist around the ring and pulls it back to herself.

OUTSIDER

Alka, we need some help out here!

ALKA

(loudly, to Outsider) Coming.

ALKA turns back to PROTAG. She looks unsure of what to do. PROTAG is in the middle of putting her sunglasses back on. She nods to the door. ALKA hurries out.

PROTAG follows her at a slower pace. Just before the main door shuts, she catches it and pulls it open again.

She stands at the threshold, gravely looking outside. The wind moves her hair and the ocean becomes louder. Lighting also changes accordingly. The shot lingers on her face for a while.

**FIN.**

[Roll Credit Shots: interior shots of wind disrupting the stillness of the room]