

RECEIPT FOR TWO

A Slice of Life/Romance 1-Character Solo Monologue in Hinglish

Genre: Slice of Life/Romance	Format: 1-Character Solo Monologue (Single Actor)	Runtime: 4 - 6 Minutes
Cast: FORMAT: 1-Character Solo Monologue (Single Actor) Character: Nervous Coffee Shop Baker (Female, 24-30)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Aaj bakery band ho chuki hai. Front café ke glass par amber light halki si gir rahi hai, aur andar kitchen mein bas under-cabinet lights ka garam sa glow hai. Main akeli hoon. Flour-dusted apron pe haath poochti hoon, cozy sweater ki sleeves thodi aur neeche kheenchti hoon, aur loose bun se ek do baal forehead par aa gaye hain. Counter par pastry tools bikhre pade hain, mixing bowl mein cream ka last swirl, aur mere saamne ek pastry box khula hua hai — bilkul waise hi jaise mere dil ke andar kuch khul gaya ho.

Har Thursday woh aati hai. Hamesha same time, same corner table, same soft smile. Main usko dekh ke bas itna hi bolti hoon, "Aapka usual?" Aur woh haan mein sir hila deti hai. Main uske liye cinnamon tart extra carefully pack karti hoon, box par ribbon thoda aur neat baandhti hoon, aur khud ko samjhaati hoon: yeh customer service hai. Bas. Simple. Professional. Lekin sach yeh hai ki uske aane se bakery ki hawa thodi aur warm lagti hai. Mere haath thode aur careful ho jaate hain. Meri awaaz thodi aur soft. Aur jab woh receipt lete waqt thanks bolti hai, toh mera poora din us ek second mein phool jaata hai.

Aaj maine uske liye ek naya dessert banaya. Strawberry cream tart. Uski favourite chai ke saath match karega, aisa mujhe lagta hai. Shayad maine thoda zyada acha bana diya. Shayad maine isliye banaya kyunki usne kal nahi, par usse pichhle Thursday ek baat boli thi — "Mujhe aapke yahan ka dessert din bhar yaad rehta hai." Bas itna sa sentence. Aur main us din se apne aap ko convince kar rahi thi ki main bas ek baker hoon. Ek good baker. Nothing more.

Main pastry box band karti hoon, receipt printer ke paas jhukti hoon, aur register ke neeche kuch chamakta dikhta hai. Ek folded receipt. Main usko uthati hoon, brow furrow hoti hai, aur jaise hi unfold karti hoon, meri saans ruk jaati hai. Receipt ke peeche, neat handwriting mein likha hai: "One more chance?"

Mere haath kaanp jaate hain. Main ek pal ke liye bilkul silent ho jaati hoon. Phir khud hi hansni nikal aati hai — chhoti si, shocked si, aur thodi embarrassed bhi. "Oh." Bas itna hi nikalta hai mere munh se. Phir main note ko dobara padhti hoon, jaise words badal jaayenge agar main unhe enough baar dekhoon. Par nahi. Wahi likha hai. One more

chance.

Ab suddenly sab samajh aata hai. Thursday ka extra wait. Uska thoda lamba hello. Meri tarah uska bhi receipt ko carefully fold kar ke wallet mein rakhna. Woh bas customer nahi thi. Ya shayad main bas baker nahi thi. Hum dono ne ek dusre ko safe naam diye the, taaki dil ko jaldi na pata chale. Aur ab, is chhote se receipt ke corner par, woh sab jo unsaid tha, ek line mein aa gaya hai.

Main note card uthati hoon, pastery box ke upar rakh deti hoon, aur softly bolti hoon, "Okay. One more chance." Phir khud hi blush karti hoon, jaise koi mujhe dekh raha ho. Lekin koi nahi hai. Sirf bakery kitchen hai, warm light hai, flour hai, aur meri dhadkan hai. Main receipt ko apne apron ke paas press karti hoon, jaise usse bhi thoda warm rakhna ho.

Aur pehli baar, mujhe yeh customer service nahi lagta. Yeh lagta hai jaise kisi ne meri taraf se bhi order place kar diya ho — ek dessert, ek note, aur ek chance. Main pastry box ko band karti hoon, front window ki amber light mein uska reflection dekhkar muskurati hoon, aur dheere se kehti hoon, "Thursday ko, same time. Is baar main sirf dessert nahi dunga."