

KOOL-AID STAND

Written by

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Based on, some stuff that really happened

1 OVER BLACK 1

Heavy, fast BREATHING, quick FOOT STEPS running, neighborhood CHATTER, neighborhood STREET SOUNDS, DOGS BARKING.

2 EXT. LOW-INCOME APARTMENT - DAY LATE MORNING 2

MAURICE "REESE" JACKSON (9), Black boy, grown out kinky hair, deep melanated skin, dressed in BLACK PANTHER BACKPACK, gray used and worn sneakers, dark grey screen tee that reads GAME OVER and has a gaming control picture under it and blue skinny jeans.

Reese hustles frantic to the front door of his apartment.

He lifts the tethered door mat that reads BLESSED and pulls out one SINGLE GOLD HOUSE KEY, he rushes to push the key into the lock and unlocks the front door.

3 INT. LIVING ROOM LOW-INCOME APARTMENT - DAY LATE MORNING 3

Reese rushes in the house, pushes the door tight, locks it and leans his back against the door.

Reese is PANTING, exhausted, with beads of sweat on his forehead, lets out a SIGH of relief.

LOUD KNOCKS on the door cause a flinch in Reese's face.

TYSON (O.S.)

Next time I see you, you better
have some money for me punk!

Reese pauses. He waits to move.

He creeps to peek out of the window and sees TYSON, 13, black boy, tough, bully, heavy set, dingy dressed, brown tee and black sweat pants, black shoes, holding a LONG STICK.

Tyson is walking away, then kicks a BASKETBALL sitting in the yard across the street as hard as he can.

Reese makes a tough face and moves his arms and STOMPS his foot as if he is bucking at Tyson through the door.

He immediately goes to the worn COUCH to pick up the REMOTE CONTROL with the back missing and two MISMATCH BATTERIES in the back covered by a piece of tape.

He points the remote to the black, 24" FLAT SCREEN TV. There is no power.

He changes the aim, then tries pushing the power button several times in a row. Nothing happens.

He takes the tape off the back of the remote and pulls the batteries out of the remote to roll them back and forth in his hands super fast.

He replaces the newly rolled batteries and pushes the power button. Nothing.

Reese looks around the whole living room, slowly, making a 360 turn observing the appliances.

He eyes the light switch next to the door. His eyes bug, he runs over to the switch then lifts it up. Looks at the light, nothing.

He FLICKS the light switch several times up and down, slow to as fast as possible. He is frustrated.

He realizes the electricity is off. Again.

He walks over to his VIDEO GAME CONTROLLER and snatches it out of the GAME SYSTEM in frustration and throws it.

He stares at the blank TV as tears form in his eyes.

His cracked CELL PHONE RINGS, MOMMY reads on the screen with a COZY PHOTO of Reese and his mommy.

Reese sits up, wipes his eyes, grabs the phone, then suddenly changes his attitude as if he was never sad.

Answers on speaker phone.

REESE

Hi, mommy!

RAELAUNDA (V.O.)

Hey baby, how was your last day before break?

Reese looks at the front door, thinks, then quickly answers.

REESE

Good. It was good. Half days are easy.

RAELAUNDA, 32, Black, hard-working, single mom, hair pulled back into pony, tired under the eyes, sweet spirited.

Raelaunda has a WHITE TOWEL over her shoulder and CELL PHONE to her ear.

RAELAUNDA

That's good to hear baby. The electricity is off for a couple of days. Sorry, you can't play your game.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

Reese looks at the game, then TV with a defeated face.

REESE

A couple of days?! So, you mean like 2 days?

RAELAUNDA

Yes, Reese. Hunny, I'm at work now making as much as I can to pay it.

Reese brightens up. Runs to the kitchen to get his clear, hidden MASON JAR piggy bank.

5

INT. KITCHEN AREA TABLE- CONTINUOUS

5

Reese begins to pour the money out on the table.

REESE

I have some money mommy. I can help!

Raelaunda tosses up her hand up to a coworker to indicate she is almost done talking.

RAELAUNDA

No, no Maurice. Save it for a special day. I left some flashlights and candles on the table. I'll be home about 7. There's a sandwich in the fridge.

Reese picks up the FLASHLIGHT, flicks it on and off. Places it back on the table next to the OVERDUE ELECTRICITY BILL:

AMOUNT DUE: 186.13.

Walks to open the refrigerator. Looks at the scant amount of food. He sees the Kool-aid PITCHER, THEN...

His eyes widen and his lips form the ooh shape as if he had a great idea pop up.

RAELAUNDA
(CONT'D)
Maurice, you hear me?

REESE
Yes ma'am.

RESTAURANT EMPLOYEE (O.S.)
Order's up! Let's Go Raelaunda!

RAELAUNDA
Okay, gotta go, lock that door and don't open it til I get home. Love you.

REESE
Love you too Mommy.

6 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

6

Reese hangs up, throws the phone to the side and hurries to the kitchen cabinet.

He stands up on his tippy toes to see in the cabinet. Sifts and searches, pulls a practically empty, folded BAG OF WHITE CANE SUGAR. Closes the doors.

He opens the lower cabinet, pulls out an empty PLASTIC BEVERAGE JUG with a lid, then hustles over to the drawer to sift again. Looking and looking. Nothing.

REESE
Aww man. We don't even have no kool-aid!

Reese goes to his money again, starts to count it, then lifts the electricity bill up to read it.

He walks to the refrigerator opens it and pulls out the JUG that has a small amount of red- kool-aid in it.

He scrapes up all of his mason jar money...PENNIES, NICKELS, DIMES, a few QUARTERS and TWO DOLLAR BILLS and puts it in a

ZIPLOCK BAG.

7 INT. LIVING ROOM LATE MORNING 7

He grabs the key, puts it in his pocket, looks out the window to make sure Tyson is nowhere to be found, then leaves.

8 EXT. LOW-INCOME NEIGHBORHOOD - EARLY AFTERNOON 8

SERIES OF SHOTS

- Reese is walking down the sidewalk, while looking over his shoulder every now and then.

- THREE YOUNG GIRLS are playing hopscotch on the sidewalk, they wave at Reese.

- Loose dogs walk throughout the street, BEER BOTTLES, trash, old furniture surround the street corners.

- Reese keeps walking to the corner liquor store.

END SERIES

9 INT. CORNER LIQUOR STORE -EARLY AFTERNOON 9

Reese goes to grab a BAG of 4 pound GRANULATED SUGAR, 2 bags of styrofoam CUPS, 3 packs of LEMONADE FLAVORED KOOL-AID and ONE BERRY flavored KOOL-AID.

Reese carries everything to the front and places it on the counter in front of the plexiglass.

The LIQUOR STORE CLERK, Early 30s, Black, Female, Dreads, Facial Piercings, dressed more hip and fly than most guys, monotone, dry personality starts ringing the items up.

Clerk stares at Reese with a sense of urgency to complete the sale, then finishes the last item.

CLERK

\$8.46

Reese takes out his plastic ziplock bag of money and pours it out for the clerk to count.

Clerk is annoyed and rolls her eyes and counts the money.

Reese waits with patience as the line forms behind him.

CLERK (CONT'D)

You are short 1.79.

Reese looks at the Clerk in shock, then looks back at the line. THREE PEOPLE wait impatiently.

REESE
That's all I have.

CLERK
Well, it's not enough. You have to
put it back.

Reese gathers the items slowly and defeated.

MALIKA (Early teens), black caramel skin, tall, beautiful,
pulls out two dollar bills.

MALIKA
Here.

Malika taps Reese on the shoulder and he turns around and looks her up from the shoes to the face in slow motion, his mouth wide open, stunned by her beauty.

MALIKA (CONT'D)
Here! You want it?

Reese snaps out of it. Takes the \$2.00, with his head downwards still looking bashful and low.

REESE
Uhhh, thank you.

He grabs the BAG from the Clerk while side-eyeing her and walks towards the door.

Tyson enters with one other TEENAGE BOY, Black, all black tee and black basketball shorts. They are looking at the Teenage Boy's phone laughing.

Reese tries to sneak by Tyson to get to the door and he bumps him then drops his bag.

TYSON
Oh, look at this little midget!

They laugh. Tyson reaches to take Reese's bag of things.

CLERK
Hey! Leave him alone. I don't play
that shit in here.

Reese runs out while they are scorned by the Clerk.

Tyson turns to get him and he is not there.

TYSON
I'll get him later. Watch.

He stares at the exit, then keeps LAUGHING at the video on the phone.

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INT. KITCHEN

10

SERIES OF SHOTS

- Reese is pouring water into THREE PITCHERS
- Stirring kool-aid with water and sugar
- Writing out KOOL-AID STAND SIGN
- Dragging the TABLE through the door to set up outside

END SERIES

EXT.- SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF REESE'S APARTMENT - MID AFTERNOON

A piece of cardboard box that reads: REESE'S KOOL-AID \$2 is taped on front of a BROWN CARD TABLE. Three PITCHERS of kool-aid sit on the table, one mixed flavor and two lemonade flavors. A bag of cups lie next to the pitchers with the zip lock bag to put money in.

SLIM (Neighborhood alcoholic), (30s), Black, drunk, dirty clothes, torn shirt, pants falling off, holes in his shoes and nappy hair and dirty skin walks up to the table.

SLIM
Ohhhhh, ohhh, you got some fresh
kool-aid lil homie? Let me get some
of that! I got a little shot of
vodka I can splash in there.

Reese protects the items to make sure he doesn't touch the cups or pitchers. Points at the sign.

REESE
It's \$2.00 Slim...you got \$2.00?

Slim counts CHANGE in his hand.

SLIM
Come on young homie, let me get the
family discount.

Reese reluctantly looks at him with pity.

REESE

Fine, give me that.

Slim is hype, does a little crackhead spin dance and drops the change on the table, takes the cup from Reese and POURS his Vodka in. Stirs with his dirty finger and SIPS it.

SLIM

Ahhhh, refreshing. Thanks lil Reese.

Slim dances off. Reese looks disgusted, but motivated to sell more.

REESE

COME GET SOME FRESH KOOL-AID!

TWO BOYS from the neighborhood walk up in ATHLETIC WEAR, ROME (13), Black, athletic, funny, loud, roaster, instigator and CARLOS (13), hispanic, quiet, tall, nice, Rome's friend.

ROME

Ahh hell naw!(LAUGHS) You trying to make that money back Tyson jacked your ass for the other day.

They both laugh, Carlos doesn't want to laugh, but fits in.

REESE

Naw, I just want to make some money for break.

Carlos looks and gets some MONEY out of his pocket.

REESE (CONT'D)

So, are yall gonna buy some?

ROME

Hell naw! (Laughs) I can make my own damn kool-aid!

Rome SLAPS a cup off the table. Reese looks at it spill.

ROME (CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

Let's go Los!

Rome is walking off BOUNCING the basketball. Carlos follows, then turns around.

CARLOS

Let me get one bro.

Reese has a slight beam light up in him.

REESE
You want the lemonade flavor?

CARLOS
If it's the best kind you got.

Reese pours a big cup and hands it to Los as Los hands him the money.

ROME
Bring your ass on Los! Buying that nasty Kool-aid!

Los hustles to Rome.

REESE
Thanks bro!

Then a few others notice Carlos walking away with his drink guzzling it down and walk over to the table.

Tyson hides watching from around the complex.

MONTAGE

-A MOM (LATE 20s -Early 30s) buys a cup for her and her CHILD (11)

-The three hopscotch kids buy some.

-2 TEENAGERS buy some

END MONTAGE

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EXT. SIDEWALK TABLE - LATER

12

THREE PITCHERS of kool-aid sit half-full and one almost gone.

TANK, Local Gang leader, (Mid-Late 20s), BLACK, Big Homie, dressed in the flyest gear, tattoos on his face and arms, gold chains.

TANK
Lil Reese! What's up lil dude? What you doing on my block selling shit?

Reese, scared, head low, but studies him and looks at his pockets.

REESE
Umm, um, I am selling Kool-Aid.

TANK

(Laughs) What the fuck you selling
Kool-aid for? We can make our own
kool-aid foo.

REESE

Umm, I gotta get our electricity
back on. This is how I can make the
money to help my mom.

Tank shows him DRUGS and WAD OF MONEY. When pulling up his
shirt to get it we see a GUN in his waist band.

TANK

You know you can make some real
money with me.

Reese stares, puts his head down.

REESE

Naw, man.

TANK

What you say?! (Firm) Look at me
when you speak lil dude.

Reese jumps in his skin, slowly looks Tank in the eyes.

REESE

My mama'll beat my ass if I did
that.

Tank puts everything back in his pockets looks around.

TANK

Always look a man in his eyes. Show
them you ain't scared lil dude. How
much is yo Kool-aid?

Reese looks up at the sign that says \$2.00 clear as day, then
back to Tank.

Reese, emphasizing the eye contact this time.

REESE

(Clears throat) Umm, \$2.00

TANK

Aight, let me get a cup then.

Reese hurries with some excitement that Tank wants his kool-
aid and pours just a little extra for him.

Tank unfolds one \$100.00 BILL and one 50.00 BILL and slides them to Reese.

Reese's eyes are bugged as he hands the cup to Tank.

Tank sips the Kool-aid.

TANK (CONT'D)

Okay, I see you.

Tank leaves, then Reese immediately and excitedly starts packing up and counting his money.

REESE

I DID IT! I did it!

Tyson is creeping up behind Reese while he packs up his things. Tyson snatches one of the last cups on the table and gulps the kool-aid, then spits it out.

TYSON

This kool-aid tastes like piss!

Reese has his head low then looks at the table and then Tyson. He is scared, but he is also fed up.

Tyson walks up to Reese and snatches the bag of money out of his hand.

TYSON (CONT'D)

(Laughs) You better give me THE MONEY! You little midget!

Reese stands there trembling in fear, but mostly anger. The Neighbors and Kids playing begin to gather in a square around Reese and Tyson similar to a boxing ring 12 people in total.

Tyson walks backwards throwing up his arms laughing and waving the money to tease Reese.

Reese puts his head down slowly and defeated.

Tyson backs into Tank by accident while teasing and quickly turns around stunned that he accidentally bumped Tank.

TYSON (CONT'D)

My bad Tank, my bad. I didn't--
(mean to)

Tank spins Tyson around and shoves him towards Reese. They stand face to chest.

TANK

(FIRM) Hey lil homie, pick yo head
up and handle yo business!

Reese balls both of his fist up slowly, looks up and slowly
scans the crowd all SHOUTING and waving their hands, he
yells...

REESE

(LOUD) AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

Reese swings his right arm as hard as he can.

FADE OUT.

PUNCH AND SWING SOUND of a hit.

FADE IN:

The ziplock bag of money flies to the ground.

(O.S.)

Reese and Tyson RUMBLING, CROWD
YELLING, KICKS, PUNCHES, SOUNDS
slowly fade...

RINGING SOUND with BLURRED VISION of the crowd from the
ground up as Reese stands over Tyson with his ziplock bag of
money and a small scratch on his face with dirty clothes.

REESE

This money is for my mommy! (Beat)
Punk.

Malika stares at Reese. Reese begins to walk over to her and
pulls out \$2.00 from the ziplock bag and hands it to Malika.

Malika smiles and Reese smiles back with confidence then
walks towards the house.

Reese sees Tank, lifts his head a little higher, then pulls
his shoulders back.

Tank gives Reese a head nod of approval then Reese walks into
his house unlocking the door with his single gold key.

FADE OUT.

EXT. SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF REESE'S APARTMENT - EARLY EVENING¹³

Tyson lies on the ground curled up and holding his stomach
and face with a bloody lip and nose.

FOUR NEIGHBORS stand around him with their PHONES out recording him and TALKING about what just happened.

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INT. REESE'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

14

Reese is sitting at the table sipping a CUP of kool-aid, counting his money with a couple scratches on his face and a grin.

Reese picks up the battery operated candles and turns them on, sits them on opposite sides of the past due electricity bill and sits the ziplock bag full of money on top of the bill.

The front door opens. Reese perks up completely. Raelaunda walks in with her WORK APRON still on, OLD PURSE, KEYS and gray JACKET draped over her arm.

Reese hurries to Raelaunda with a burst of energy almost tackling her with a tight hug.

RAELAUNDA

Oh! Hey baby, wow. This is a real hug. I haven't been gone that long.

Reese pulls Raelaunda by the wrist towards the kitchen table where the electricity bill and the money are.

REESE

Mommy! Mommy! Look, I helped out! I was able to earn a lot of money! I made Kool-aid!

Raelaunda lifts up the ziplock bag, inspects it then looks over at Reese who is jumping up and down with excitement still.

Raelaunda begins to scold Reese with a firm tone.

RAELAUNDA

Wait a minute, what happened to your clothes? Why do you look so--? Where did this money come from Maurice?

Raelaunda takes a knee to look him in the eyes. She studies his clothes, face, the money again.

REESE

I made a kool-aid stand. I made a kool-aid stand and they loved it. I got money for our bill. We almost have enough for lights.

Raelaunda stares at Reese and fights her tears back as long as she can, pulls Reese in tight and hugs him for dear life.

Raelaunda pulls back from Reese slightly to reach into her apron and pulls out her TIP MONEY from the day, a little under \$40.00. She sits it on the table next to the ziplock bag.

RAELAUNDA

You're my light. I have enough
baby. Love you little man.

REESE

Love you most mommy.

They embrace one another with a tight hug.

FADE TO BLACK.