

WE'RE IN A CULT
DRINKING THE KOOL-AID

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COLD OPEN

EXT. CULT FRONT YARD - DAY

The camera shutters and shakes a little as if a documentary is filming. Suburban homes line the peaceful street.

DAVIS-OLY (30s) wears a tracksuit with a short genderless haircut. He stands at a small table with cups and brochures. Two cute LITTLE GIRLS approach him.

LITTLE GIRL 1
What are you doing?

DAVIS-OLY
Why hello there. I'm Davis-oly a member of Heaven's Ascension. We just moved in and we're looking for new members to transcend the cosmos. Does that sound like something you might be interested in? Or maybe your Mommy or Daddy?

LITTLE GIRL 1
What's he talking about?

LITTLE GIRL 2
They're a cult.

DAVIS-OLY
No, no, NO! We're not a cult. We're just friends that say and think the same thing.

LITTLE GIRL 1
What's a cult?

LITTLE GIRL 2
Weirdos that live together, and drink blood. See the cups of blood?

DAVIS-OLY
That's Kool-Aid.

He hands them cups, they refuse.

LITTLE GIRL 1
Never heard of it. This is our street.

LITTLE GIRL 2
And Target!

DAVIS-OLY
Target?

LITTLE GIRL 1
We were here first.

She points to a small lemonade stand.

DAVIS-OLY
Oh cute you're selling lemonade.

LITTLE GIRL 1
It's not cute it's a business. How
much are you charging? What's your
bottom line?

DAVIS-OLY
Oh the drinks? They're free.

LITTLE GIRL 2
Free? No one will buy ours if you
do that.

The little girls rip the banner off the stand.

LITTLE GIRL 2 (CONT'D)
Don't mess with little lemonade!

DAVIS-OLY
Girls, let's try to get along.

LITTLE GIRL 2
If we can do it to the Girl Scouts
we can do it to you!

The stand tips over the drinks spill staining his clothes.

DAVIS-OLY
You ruined my sacred vestments.
Come here!

LITTLE GIRL 2
Those are just couch clothes.

The three begin wrestling in the grass.

MOM
What are you doing!

A MOM (40s) grabs a little girl's hand.

LITTLE GIRL 1
But they're stealing our business.

MOM
I'm your business. I buy
everything. You've never had one
real customer.

LITTLE GIRL 1
No that one time we --

MOM
Go home! And don't ever go near
them again.

LITTLE GIRL 1
Fine.

The little girls pout and march away.

DAVIS-OLY
They're just kids. It's nothing
really I'll clean this all --

The Mom slaps Davis-oly hard, and spits in his face.

MOM
Keep your cult away from my family!
She storms away.

TALKING HEAD DAVIS-OLY

DAVIS-OLY
We're not a cult. Why do people
keep saying that?

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - NIGHT

MI (50s) (pronounced me) in a white robe stands before forty people dressed in identical tracksuits.

MI

And it is on this night we give
thanks to our true creators above.

The crowd nods to a painting with a three armed purple alien.
People hand out paper cups of Kool-Aid.

Police barge in. A large barrel of Kool-Aid topples over.

COP

Drop those! Don't drink them!

Everyone panics and runs in all directions.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - NIGHT

People in the tracksuits are lead out handcuffed.

INT. MI'S BEDROOM - DAY

Mi sweating profusely watches the TV.

TV

That was the scene last night as
police arrested over forty members
of the extremist cult group
Heaven's Ascension. They were about
to drink Kool-Aid laced with poison
when authorities arrived.

MI

Poison? Who put poison in it? The
first time I don't buy the juice,
and this happens.

TV

The leader of this group, a Joseph
Martin, also known as Mi, is still
on the loose. If you see him --

KNOCK at the door, Mi jumps.

ADDISON-OLY (O.S.)
It's time.

MI
Time? Time for what? Who is it?
Tell them I'm not here. You don't
know me.

ADDISON-OLY (O.S.)
It's morning. Time for prayer. We
thought you could lead us.

MI
Okay. Give me five minutes.

ADDISON-OLY (O.S.)
Do you need help with anything?
Maybe putting on your robe?

MI
No. I'm good, go away.

He turns off the TV, and falls back into his chair. It begins
to vibrate. The room is filled with high-end expensive items.

INT. CULT LIVING ROOM - DAY

ADDISON-OLY (30s) infatuated with the Mi, desperately tries
to jimmy the locked door. It flings open knocking her down.

MI
What are you doing?

ADDISON-OLY
If you gave me a key to your room --

MI
Don't ever go in there.

ADDISON-OLY
Without you?

MI
At all!

Mi stands at the only piece of furniture, a podium. He gazes
down at the doe-eyed followers. Davis-oly, SLOANE-OLY (60s),
and OLIVER-OLY (20s) sitting on the floor.

They all wear the same tracksuit and haircut. Just slightly
different, like a copy during a paper jam. Addison-oly claps.

ADDISON-OLY

I humbly welcome the man that
brought us the knowledge --

MI

What are you doing?

ADDISON-OLY

I normally start things off every
morning, and thought it best that I
as second in charge of this --

MI

You're not in charge.

ADDISON-OLY

Not formally. More just guiding --

MI

Just, Sit down.

ADDISON-OLY

Yes, of course, if that's what
you'd like. Quiet everyone.

Mi nervous stares at a blank piece of paper on the podium.
Davis-oly gazes at Mi with reverence.

DAVIS-OLY

(whispers to camera)

I could listen to the savior for
hours. Sometimes he doesn't even
talk. Does it all through thought.
At those sermons I don't always get
everything he says.

MI

(stuttering)

Children I am here. We are all here
... all of us ... In this room
today. Yes we are ...

He pulls out a few hidden pamphlets for christian churches.

MI (CONT'D)

(reading)

The one true god -- good measure of
our profits in the universe above --
Only through the holy book at the
price of nineteen ninety -- whoops
went a little far there.

He shuffles through the pamphlets.

MI (CONT'D)
 On Thursdays all are welcome for
 Bible study -- I mean bi -- bi --
 bipolar terrestrial skies above ...

He looks around the room, at the four of them.

MI (CONT'D)
 Maybe I should wait until everyone
 is here.

ADDISON-OLY
 This is everyone.

MI
 Everyone? Didn't there used to be
 more of you?

ADDISON-OLY
 They left.

MI
 They did too? Was this the other
 night? What did they drink?

ADDISON-OLY
 Mormonism.

MI
 Mormonism?

SLOANE-OLY
 They converted. Those Mormons are
 surprisingly pushy.

MI
 Down to four. This can't be
 happening.

Mi distraught puts his hand on his head in despair.

ADDISON-OLY
 We're your most devoted followers.

MI
 You have no idea.

OLIVER-OLY
 What?

MI
 First Arizona, and now here in the
 east. What has happened to my
 flock?

DAVIS-OLY

What happened in Arizona? Is my friend Philibert-oly still there?

MI

Why is everyone leaving me? We need more to ascend to the next stage. We're just too small.

ADDISON-OLY

Just wait, we should have more when colleges get out in a few months.

Mi lost in grief.

MI

No, that's too long. Maybe we should just give up and start over. Someplace warm, like Arkansas. With a new name. Heaven's children of dirt, or something?

ADDISON-OLY

Don't say that.

MI

Either we expand. Or we are finished. Like the great dinosaurs.

TALKING HEAD DAVIS-OLY

DAVIS-OLY

We can't start over. I have nowhere else to go. My family said never to come back, after what I did. I've already maxed out my credit cards purchasing the leader's books. With each one I rise higher. I currently have over twenty. I just wish they weren't all the same one.

Behind him a large stack of books, all with the same title.

INT. CULT LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mi puts away his papers.

ADDISON-OLY

We'll never stop believing in you.

DAVIS-OLY

It shouldn't be hard to get new recruits with the leader here.

MI

(panicked)

No! You can't tell anyone I'm here.

DAVIS-OLY

Why?

MI

Why? Why... Why! Because they wouldn't be here to learn the teachings, but to meet Me. As Mi I am very important they have to be worthy to meet me.

DAVIS-OLY

You're so right. Sometimes we would go years without seeing you. But we still believe.

MI

Years? Really?

DAVIS-OLY

Oh yes. I count the days.

ADDISON-OLY

Let me cheer you up with a backrub.

She stares seductively at him, repulsed he recoils away.

MI

No you must go. You must all go out and find some new members. And remember avoid the nonbelievers' radio, TV, and newspapers. Don't tell anyone I'm here. Nobody. Not a soul.

DAVIS-OLY

Yes sir.

MI

And pick up some hair dye while you're out.

He rushes into his bedroom, slamming and locking the door.

EXT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Davis-oly and Addison-oly are next to a small stand with flyers and Kool-Aid. People walk past trying to ignore them.

DAVIS-OLY
Hello, would you be interested in --

Addison-oly jumps in front of Davis-oly.

ADDISON-OLY
Join our religion, the one true belief. We're open to everyone. As long as they're interested in only believing what we teach.

DAVIS-OLY
Learn how the profits will take us away on their asteroid.

ADDISON-OLY
Come see what the other religions have wrong!

DAVIS-OLY
Hello miss would you --

ADDISON-OLY
Come live with me in our awesome house?

The woman runs away in fear.

ADDISON-OLY (CONT'D)
Fine! We didn't want you anyway!

DAVIS-OLY
You're not helping.

ADDISON-OLY
You were loosing her.

The annoyed MANAGER steps out.

MANAGER
What are you two doing? I told you not to come here anymore. I'm calling the police!

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Davis-oly distraught trudges through the alley.

DAVIS-OLY
I can't do anything right. No one's
ever going to take these

He tosses the phonebook thick stack of flyers.

LLOYD
Hey! I'm not trash buddy.

Davis-oly looks down at LLOYD (30s) homeless, too smart for
his own good, emerge from the trash.

DAVIS-OLY
Whoa, I didn't see you there.

LLOYD
Sure, like everybody else.

DAVIS-OLY
You were covered in trash.

LLOYD
These are my most important
possessions.

DAVIS-OLY
It's a cardboard box.

LLOYD
If you're here to belittle me you
can leave.

DAVIS-OLY
I wouldn't, let me make it up. Here
have this, it's very good.

He shoves a cup of Kool-Aid in Lloyd's hand. As Davis-oly
looks away, Lloyd tosses it in the dumpster.

LLOYD
Ugh, yeah thanks. You got any
change?

DAVIS-OLY
No, we're a little low on money.
For some reason our jobs don't work
out.

EXT. DRIVE THROUGH WINDOW - DAY

Addison-oly in a fast-food uniform hands a bag to a car.

ADDISON-OLY
Here's your order. And how happy
are you with your current religion?

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - NIGHT

Davis-oly and Addison-oly carry metal siding

SLOANE-OLY
(whispers)
I got the steel pipes.

DAVIS-OLY
We want copper wire.

SLOANE-OLY
Now you tell me.

INT. CULT KITCHEN - DAY

Davis-oly eats two popsicles. Addison-oly puts down a
toothpick. Sloane-oly whittles a popsicle stick.

DAVIS-OLY
(mumbling)
How many more toothpicks do we have
to make? My mouth is numb.

EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Lloyd picks up one of Davis-oly's discarded flyers.

LLOYD
You throwing out coupons?

DAVIS-OLY
Oh no, it's for our group.

LLOYD
You're not a Jehovah's Witnesses?

DAVIS-OLY
Those blasphemous devils. Oh no.

LLOYD
Thank god.

Davis-oly leans in extremally close to Lloyd.

DAVIS-OLY
We're a new religion and looking
for members. I think you'd be
perfect.

Lloyd tries to withdraw, but is blocked by trash.

LLOYD
I'm not really the religious type.

DAVIS-OLY
You want to be? It's very different
than most boring faiths.

LLOYD
That's okay I'm in a good place. I
have no rent, bills or anything to
worry about.

DAVIS-OLY
Neither do we. Everything is taken
care of by our savior.

LLOYD
For free?

DAVIS-OLY
Always. Why not come and visit? I
can show you around.

Lloyd looks at the flyer and at Davis-oly's dumb grin.

LLOYD
I think I'll --

MANAGER (O.S.)
They're here! I found them!

The Manager in rage runs toward them. A sirens WAILS in the
distance. The van SCREECHES to a stop, the door flings open.

ADDISON-OLY
Hurry get in. The cops are here.

DAVIS-OLY
What did you do?

ADDISON-OLY
Nothing, really. I just tried to
convince people to join, and drink
the free juice. It's a simple
misunderstanding.

DAVIS-OLY
It doesn't sound that simple.

ADDISON-OLY
Never mind we need to go now!

LLOYD
They're not after me.

MANAGER
Over here! One's trying to hide in
Trash! Get Him!

DAVIS-OLY
They are now.

Davis-oly pulls Lloyd into the van.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. CULT BATHROOM - DAY

Lloyd steps out of the shower. A tracksuit lays on a bench.

LLOYD
Where are my clothes?

DAVIS-OLY (O.S.)
We're cleaning them.

LLOYD
I didn't ask you to do that.

DAVIS-OLY (O.S.)
They're already in the machine.

INT. CULT HALLWAY - DAY

Lloyd opens the door, Davis-oly holds a pair of scissors.

DAVIS-OLY
Looking Good. How about a haircut?

Lloyd stares at Davis-oly's peculiar haircut.

LLOYD
I'm good, thanks.

DAVIS-OLY
Okay, but if you change your mind
let me know. I cut everyone's hair.
I'm very good. Let me give you the
tour.

LLOYD
Tour?

INT. CULT KITCHEN - DAY

Davis-oly leads Lloyd into the kitchen, it is a mess dishes
piled up in the sink.

DAVIS-OLY
We each are assigned a job around
the house.

Sloane-oly dishes out disgusting gruel.

DAVIS-OLY (CONT'D)
Sloane-oly cooks all our meals.

SLOANE-OLY
You hungry? I can make you a bowl.
I got this recipe when I was in
Jonestown.

LLOYD
Maybe later.

INT. CULT HALLWAY - DAY

Oliver-oly in a hurry carries a laptop past Davis-oly and
Lloyd.

DAVIS-OLY
This is Oliver-oly. Lead of online
recruiting.

OLIVER-OLY
You can call me Oliver.

DAVIS-OLY
No, Oliver-oly. You can't ever drop
your oly. It was given to you by
Mi.

LLOYD
By you?

DAVIS-OLY
No Mi. Mi is our savior. Who's just
over -- Oh wait. I'm not supposed
to say he's here. Which he isn't.

LLOYD
What?

OLIVER-OLY
Nice to meet you. I have to go do --
recruiting.

Oliver-oly promptly goes into the closet.

DAVIS-OLY
He's really helping us reach a
younger demographic.

TALKING HEAD OLIVER-OLY

OLIVER-OLY

I'm the only one here that knows how to use a computer. They think I'm recruiting. Really I just watch Netflix all day. After college I saw what I had in debt. You know how long that will take to pay off? My plan is to stay here a few years until I'm legally pronounced dead.

INT. CULT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Oliver-oly's muffled LAUGHS can be heard.

DAVIS-OLY

It's great having someone that finds recruiting so much fun.

LLOYD

Right.

INT. CULT BEDROOM - DAY

Davis-oly shows Lloyd into a room filled with bunkbeds.

DAVIS-OLY

This is the followers sleep room.

LLOYD

Wow, so many beds.

DAVIS-OLY

I know. And one day we'll get to sleep in them.

LLOYD

You don't sleep in them?

DAVIS-OLY

No, we sleep on the floor. We haven't earned the beds yet. But I hope to soon.

EXT. CULT BACKYARD - DAY

Davis-oly proudly displays the unkempt in disarray yard to Lloyd. A dead bird floats in the pool.

DAVIS-OLY
I like to come here to relax. It's
my little sanctuary.

LLOYD
(whispers)
I've seen cleaner dumps.

An empty can is thrown over the fence into the yard.

DAVIS-OLY
Our leader always says the way to a
clear mind is a clean home.

Davis-oly grabs a rusty rake.

LLOYD
And where is this leader?

DAVIS-OLY
Oh he's somewhere doing important
things, can't be disturbed.

INT. MI'S BEDROOM - DAY

Mi wearing a shower cap reads a hair dye box. His feet bubble
in a foot bath.

EXT. CULT BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Davis-oly rakes up dead leaves and trash.

DAVIS-OLY
In the beginning there were
dinosaurs.

LLOYD
Oh were you a fan of dinosaurs as a
kid, because I was a --

DAVIS-OLY
The dinosaurs were given a paradise
where everything was there for them
to take and eat.

LLOYD
Like each other.

DAVIS-OLY
But they were blasphemous and did
not respect the creators. So they
sent an asteroid to destroy them.

Davis-oly smashes the pile with the rake.

LLOYD
We still aren't sure, but that's
one idea and --

DAVIS-OLY
Humans rose out of the ruin. But
they too are on a brink of
destruction.

Davis-oly rakes out a few leaves from the pile.

LLOYD
Wars, famine, global warming.

DAVIS-OLY
What? No something bigger.

LLOYD
Obesity?

DAVIS-OLY
Being unfaithful. The creators have
sent another asteroid to banish us
as nonbelievers.

He moves a can toward the leaves.

LLOYD
An asteroid to earth?

DAVIS-OLY
Yes, but there is a second one
coming to take those that are
worthy. And our leader. He will
guide us, and the creators will
take us to their home world to be
made into our true form.

Davis-oly picks out a few bottle caps from the pile.

LLOYD
Uh-huh.

DAVIS-OLY
Only if we follow him will we be
saved. Now do you see why it's
important to join us?

LLOYD
And you believe all this? You've
never thought they might be
changing your mind?

Davis-oly stops and gazes at Lloyd for a moment.

DAVIS-OLY
Of course they've changed my mind.
They've opened it to what's real
and what we must do.

LLOYD
You eat gruel and sleep on the
floor. Does that seem right?

DAVIS-OLY
Oh yes, because I have not made it
to striped belt yet. That's when
you get more perks.

LLOYD
Where do you even put a belt on
this outfit?

DAVIS-OLY
(laughing)
Oh the belts are metaphorical
silly. We don't actually wear them.
That would be ridiculous.

LLOYD
Yes, that out of everything would
be absurd. I'm going inside to --
use the bathroom.

INT. CULT KITCHEN - DAY

Lloyd flings open a cabinet and frantically looks through it.

LLOYD
Where is it? Where did they put it?

He grabs a bag, and shoves things in it.

LLOYD (CONT'D)
This will have to do.

DAVIS-OLY
What are you --

LLOYD
This isn't what it looks like.

DAVIS-OLY
Give me that.

Davis-oly rips the bag out of his hand.

LLOYD
I was going to give it --

DAVIS-OLY
This won't do, no not at all.
You'll need more than this.

Davis-oly begins filling the bag with random items.

LLOYD
What are you doing?

DAVIS-OLY
What ours is yours. Take everything
you need.

LLOYD
You're not mad?

DAVIS-OLY
We've moved past possessions. We're
not fulfilled with them. You're
doing us a favor. And soon you wont
want them either.

LLOYD
I don't think that is --

DAVIS-OLY
Here you'll need the book by our
leader, a ketchup packet, oh a can
of chicken --

LLOYD
That's not really --

Sloane-oly steps in.

SLOANE-OLY
Oh are we trick or treating? I have
some real goodies I keep hidden.
You like magic mushrooms?

EXT. CULT HOUSE - NIGHT

A window flings open. Lloyd drops the bag into some bushes.
He slips and falls out with a THUD. A bright light shines on
him and a siren BLARES.

COP
(megaphone)
Freeze!

Lloyd puts his hands up.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

A COP puts Lloyd in handcuffs.

COP
It's a good night when we catch you
in the act.

LLOYD
Sure, right. I did it, just get me
out of here.

COP
What's wrong with you?

LLOYD
Nothing, nothing. Can we please
hurry?

Davis-oly runs up to the cruiser.

DAVIS-OLY
Lloyd? No!

COP
Sir we caught this man breaking
into your home. Would you like to
press charges?

DAVIS-OLY
No.

COP
No? He took all this.

DAVIS-OLY
We gave this to him, it was a gift.

COP
You gave him. A butter knife,
blender, coffee stirrer --

DAVIS-OLY
Actually there should be more. It
might be on the ground. Do you have
a flashlight?

Sloane-oly, Oliver-oly and Addison-oly stand at the door. The
Cop looks at them all dressed alike.

COP
Actually there is something else
big -- real big going on. We have
to go and handle. I'll just get
these off your friend.

He immediately takes the cuffs off Lloyd.

LLOYD
What are you doing?

COP
You're free to go sir. No crime has
been committed.

LLOYD
Go back in there? With them?

DAVIS-OLY
Come back inside.

LLOYD
You can't leave me with them.

COP
Here's your bag.

LLOYD
I won't go back!

Lloyd looks around frantically. He grabs the bag and hurls it
with all his might, cracking the windshield

COP
Now you've done it!

The Cop slams Lloyd's head onto the hood of the car.

COP (CONT'D)
You're going to lock up.

LLOYD
Yes.

DAVIS-OLY
No!

Lloyd overwhelmed with joy.

LLOYD
I'm free!

For the full script please email gregpgleason@gmail.com