



California Kool-Aid



Spring break was finally here. Kelly was in her senior year and it was time for some family fun. 1981 would be a year to remember. Ronald Regan had just taken office. He had just painted history by appointing Sandra Day O'Connor as the first woman ever to our nation's highest court. Overseas, and a little more exciting, six hundred thousand had crowded the streets of London to witness the Prince of Wales and Lady Diana exchange wedding vows.

Better yet, and back on the home front, the Bullock clan had just embarked on another day long road trip. It meant 14 straight hours together in the yellow and white full-sized family van. The destination was sunny California to visit cousins and friends. Behind the wheel was none other than Robin - our road loving and travel happy mother. As usual, hard working Burt was left behind to turn the pie machine and bark out orders back on Barbur Blvd. Ironically, older brother Scott was already in the gold rush state and would miss out on all this first hand fun.

It was still early in the day but Salem, Corvallis, and Eugene were now all behind us. Grant's Pass and Medford were now just ahead. Kelly and her good friend Anne Engelerdt had both set up camp on the first row seat. Dave, John, Lori, and Mark were fighting it out for the best seats in back. Matt was roaming all over but mostly up front. It was now getting close to lunch time and in line with road trip tradition -- the car was richly packed with all kinds of grub. The edges of the customary cardboard box were bursting with sandwiches, cookies, hard boiled eggs, and a big jug of bright red Kool-Aid. Pesky little Mateo had already made his mark on the goods.

He was now standing up front between the two bucket seats facing his audience and begging for more. As he pleaded for food, he was working the crowd. Each plea was coupled with his favorite facial expressions and bodily contortions. He gained more energy and passion with each egg and sip of Kool-Aid that came his way. Matt continued to scarf and entertain and scarf and entertain. Then came Kelly's big blunder and dreaded mistake. She thought a few tickles and jabs might add to the fun. Tickle, jab, tickle, jab and soon the little entertainer started to gag. All could see what was about to take place but Kelly was the first to react. She turned Matt away to protect what was hers. Now facing the driver, Matt unloaded all of the goods. Boiled eggs and red Kool-Aid all over mom's face.

As our driver filled with understandable fury, little Mateo could only utter an apologetic and petrified "oops". Mom still fuming pulled off at the next rest stop to visit the restroom and clean up. She returned a few minutes later still steaming and muttering about the absence of soap. She hopped back in the car and it was back to the road. Silence did reign for a few moments more but life with go on -- just not with boiled eggs and red Kool-Aid in that famed family box anymore.