

L.O.V.E.

Written by
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INT. APARTMENT / BATHROOM - NIGHT

KEISHA HAWKINS, late 20s, black dress, walking the tightrope between strong black sista and the angry black woman stereotype, hops into a high heel, applies lipstick.

ANTHONY "TONE" HAWKINS, late 20s, do rag, suit and tie, having a mid life identity crisis, bursts in, knocks her lipstick into the toilet. Keisha shoots him a death glare.

TONE

My bad. You look good.

KEISHA

Try knocking next time!

TONE

Keep your voice down, woman! You tryna get us evicted?

KEISHA

I will not keep my freaking voice down! I do that crap all day long for scared white people buying into dated stereotypes! At home I'm being as loud, as black, as proud, and as "ghetto" as I want to be!

Someone knocks on the apartment door.

LANDLORD (O.S.)

I know you're in there! Get your asses out here and pay me my money!

KEISHA

(English accent not
unlike Julia Child)

Just one moment, please!

Tone gives her a look. Wow. Keisha shushes him, motions for him to zip up her dress. They both dart out the door.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Tone slides down a fire escape, catches Keisha, high heels in hand. They run, stop to catch their breaths.

KEISHA

Best date night ever.

TONE

Just you wait. Got us tickets to the opera. I know you been on that shit so Tone made it happen. Chea!

Tone flashes the tickets and a smile.

KEISHA

Ah, babe.

They share a passionate kiss.

TONE

Told you, Key, I got you.

An OLD GUN (think Henry Louis Gates with a Glock) steps out of the shadows.

OLD GUN

You know what it is!

Tone's suddenly enunciating like the mind-screwed brother from **Get Out**.

TONE

Please don't! I'm not gang affiliated! I don't even wear primary colors! I wear black! Sometimes grey!

Tone takes his do rag off, hands over the tickets. Old Gun looks confused. Keisha looks embarrassed.

OLD GUN

The opera? You serious, nigga?

TONE

They're really good seats.

Keisha facepalms.

OLD GUN

Cash, nigga. Run that shit!

TONE

I'm broke... I spent my last dime on those tickets.

Old Gun sighs, turns to Keisha, who shrugs.

KEISHA

He's... not good with money.

TONE

Keisha!

KEISHA
What? It's true.

Old Gun snatches Keisha's purse, finds wads of cash inside.
Tone turns to Keisha who feigns surprise.

 TONE
You said you were broke!

 KEISHA
Well I am now!

 OLD GUN
Nice ring.

 KEISHA
My grandmother gave it to me. Well,
to my mom, but that's a long --

 OLD GUN
-- Take it off.

Keisha gives Tone a knowing look. In the blink of an eye she
throws her high heels at Old Gun, runs.

Tone and Old Gun look stunned.

 KEISHA
 (over her shoulder)
Love you!

Keisha rounds the corner like Flojo, disappears.

 OLD GUN
Damn, dawg.

 TONE
So can I get the tickets back or...

 OLD GUN
Hell naw. Real talk? I love that
opera shit!

Old Gun runs off, sings opera. Tone sighs.

**CUT TO MAIN
TITLES.**

INT. HOUSE - DAY

A nicer place than before. Newer furniture. New, but generic
art on the wall.

Keisha's dancing to reggae, putting the finishing touches on breakfast. Bacon and eggs. Tone drags in, still upset.

KEISHA
Morning, babe!

Tone grunts, sits at the table.

KEISHA
I made your favorite.

TONE
(hopeful)
Reese's Puffs?

KEISHA
No, eggs and bacon. How the hell is cereal your favorite?

TONE
You knew who you married. Which is more than I can say.

Keisha drops the plate on the table.

KEISHA
I'm not going to apologize for being fiscally responsible.

TONE
You lied to me. And... These eggs are cold. Is this bacon or charcoal?

KEISHA
It's... edible.

TONE
Look at it. It's so black it's about to sing a Negro spiritual.

KEISHA
It's the thought that counts.

Keisha massages Tone's shoulders. He grimaces.

KEISHA
You said you love my massages.

TONE
Guess I lied. You have raptor nails.

KEISHA
I try to make things up to you and this is the thanks I get?

TONE
You call this making things up?

Keisha dumps the plate in the sink.

KEISHA
What did you have in mind?

TONE
You know...

Tone makes a slurping/clicking sound.

KEISHA
Since when do I --

Keisha makes the same sound.

TONE
Since my birthday.

KEISHA
I passed out on your lap.

TONE
Not how I remember it.

Tone makes the sound again.

TONE
Thought you were gonna drown.

KEISHA
Anthony, that never happened!

TONE
Don't use my government name!

KEISHA
Don't use -- I've got more street
cred and actual credit than you!

TONE
Maybe if you actually used it instead
of hoarding every last cent, we
wouldn't have to hide out from the
landlord like crack fiends!

KEISHA
This "hoarder" is keeping your phony
gangsta ass off the streets!

Tone recoils. He angrily grabs his things. Keisha gathers hers. They exchange glares, race to pack their things.

They look up, find a REALTOR and another COUPLE staring at them in shock.

How long have they been there?

Are... Keisha and Tone at an open house? Yes. (O_O)

REALTOR
Please don't rob us.

TONE
We were just...

Keisha and Tone fight over who opens the door first. Tone wins, slams the door. Keisha slams the door multiple times behind him, gives the Realtor and the Couple a "please don't call the cops" smile, exits.

HUSBAND
(to Wife)
Would you ever...

He makes a slurping/clicking sound.

WIFE
In your dreams.

REALTOR
I'll try anything once...

Husband smiles at the Realtor. Wife hits his shoulder.

EXT. TRENDY COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Keisha, dressed in the ugly coffee colored company uniform, checks the time on her phone, rushes in.

INT. TRENDY COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Keisha enters, passes a JAVA ADDICT at a table cutting up coffee with a credit card, snorting it through a straw.

NOKIA, Asian, 20s, model employee, writes "Chad the Impaler" on a cup, hands it to a HIPSTER with a smile.

NOKIA
Thank you!

Her phone rings. She answers, talks like she's straight outta Compton.

NOKIA
 (into phone)
 At work. Where you think? She-it.
 They start drug testing ain't gonna
 be no one left.

Keisha crosses to her.

NOKIA
 (into phone)
 Call you back. What time I get off?
 Just gonna have to wait and see ain't
 you? Bye, nigga.

Nokia puts the phone away.

KEISHA
 Hey.

NOKIA
 What's up, girl? Test come back
 positive?

Nokia grins. Keisha rolls her eyes, laughs.

KEISHA
 No, Tone and I got into a big fight.

NOKIA
 Good for you. The only thing better
 than break up sex is make up sex.

KEISHA
 What about regular sex?

NOKIA
 What's that?

KEISHA
 He was blowing through money. I had
 to lie, right?

NOKIA
 Well...

KEISHA
 You're my best friend, Nokia. This is
 the part where you lie.

NOKIA

I'd never lie to you. Unless someone paid me. Like this company. "No ma'am, there's no sugar in this."

Nokia rolls her eyes. Keisha shakes her head.

NOKIA

You've only been married like six months. There's gonna be hiccups. But you're gonna get through this.

Nokia dances, sings, as if in a musical --

NOKIA

(singing)

**Marriage is a compromise
It's time for you both to realize
Trust and honesty are the best keys
To avoid bitterness and anarchy!**

KEISHA

Are you high?

NOKIA

(singing)

Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!

Nokia dances out the door with a coffee cup. Keisha looks up, sees a BEWILDERED CUSTOMER.

CUSTOMER

Is she coming back or...

Keisha shrugs.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

WORKERS burn the midnight oil in the Amazon-esque building.

An INTOXICATED SAFETY INSPECTOR stumbles around in the background.

Tone, hard hat, safety glasses, behind the wheel of a forklift, talks to FRED, 50s, cool cat.

TONE

How you gonna lie to your man then
leave him at gunpoint?

Fred chuckles.

FRED
Not the ride or die type is she?

TONE
Usually she is, but she wouldn't give up her grandma's ring for anything.

FRED
So what did he take?

TONE
Keisha's cash and the opera tickets.

FRED
Opera? For real?

TONE
They were good seats, Fred! Anyway, I said some things to Keisha... Not sure I can take 'em back.

FRED
Son, you listen to me. If you want Keisha back you got to --

A bell sounds.

FRED
Break time!

Fred races off.

TONE
Good talk.

Tone gets his phone out, finds Keisha's name. He puts the phone away. Goes on break.

INT. TRENDY COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Keisha, phone out, finger hovering over the call Tone option. She puts it on a counter, stacks chairs on a table.

EXT. TRENDY COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Keisha yawns like a bear, locks up. Headlights blind her. A car horn honks.

KEISHA
Oh damn!

Keisha runs for her life. The car follows. Tone leans out the car window.

TONE
Key, it's me!

Keisha stops. Tone exits the car. They meet each other halfway.

TONE
You part gazelle, girl?

Keisha shrugs. They lock eyes. Here goes nothing...

KEISHA
Tone, I'm sorry... TONE
Key, I messed up...

They both laugh.

TONE
Ladies first.

KEISHA
No, you.

Tone takes her hands.

TONE
I been so damn selfish, immature. I should've ran things by you first before running out and buying a bunch of stuff I don't really need.

KEISHA
Like the flat-screen?

TONE
Didn't say that.

KEISHA
Them rims?

TONE
Don't hate on the... Yeah. And I do love your massages. You got raptor nails though.

Keisha playfully claws at him.

KEISHA
I'm sorry I lied to you.

TONE
And?

KEISHA

Left you at gunpoint... I grew up pinching every penny, but that's no excuse. So...

Keisha gets down on one knee.

KEISHA

Anthony Hawkins -- Tone -- will you open a joint bank account with me?

Tone kneels in front of her.

TONE

I'd love to.

They share a passionate kiss. A gun CLICKS behind them.

OLD GUN

You know what it is!

Keisha and Tone, lips still locked, slowly rise. Old Gun shakes his head in disbelief.

OLD GUN

Yo, y'all again? You know how dangerous it gets out here at night?

KEISHA

I have an idea.

TONE

How was the opera?

Keisha shoots Tone a look. *Really?*

OLD GUN

Shit was fire!
(down to business)
Cash! Run that shit!

Keisha and Tone nod to one another, run to the car.

Old Gun sings opera as he fires at them.

EXT. OPEN HOUSE - NIGHT

If this place looks familiar, it's the same open house Keisha and Tone were in earlier.

They hold hands, stand in front of the door.

KEISHA
You sure about this?

TONE
Never been surer of anything in my
life. Well, there is one thing.

They kiss, unlock the door and --

INT. ~~OPEN HOUSE~~ KEISHA AND TONE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hear a slurping/clicking noise...

A man in a COOKIE MONSTER costume lies on the kitchen
counter. The Realtor's head pops up. She spits out blue fur.

REALTOR
Hey...

Keisha and Tone look stunned.

NOT COOKIE MONSTER
The more the merrier! Cookie, cookie,
cookie!

CUT TO BLACK.