Pre-Assessment: Stay Cool

UNIT: Detective Series

TRANSCRIPT

Stay Cool by Jacob Kramer.

Somehow, September was even hotter than August this year—it was only 10 AM, and already it was 90 degrees. As Fela stepped out of his mom's air conditioned car, it felt like opening an oven door. The hot air blasted his face and sweat immediately started beading on his forehead. He could see heat waves rippling off the pavement in the parking lot at the soccer field.

"Fela, drink some water before you go," said his mom.

"Can't right now," said Fela. "I gotta to help out the team! The Panthers gotta to win this one!"

Fela walked quickly over to the soccer coach's van to help unload the gear for the game. Usually, Fela would jog or run everywhere, but during the first game, he had sprained his ankle. For this game, he was helping out as the equipment manager. It wasn't as fun as playing, but Fela loved helping out. It felt really good to make sure everyone had what they needed. He knew his job was going to be important in this extreme heat.

"Hey, Tonio!” said Fela, greeting his best friend. "You ready for the match?"

"You know it! I've been working on my footwork. Fake left, fake right, then bam! Right down the middle!" Tonio started to lift the big water cooler onto the table.

"Wait, let me get that," Fela said, taking the water cooler from Tonio and putting it on the table. It was heavy, and Fela wobbled on his ankle, but he managed to get it onto the table.

"As the equipment manager, it's my job to get this stuff ready for you guys," Fela said.

"Thanks," said Tonio. "Just take care of yourself, too. We want you back on the field with us."

"Maybe in a few weeks," said Fela, "Mom says my ankle still needs more rest."

More teammates began to arrive, and coach Lindemann gathered the team up into a huddle. As the coach started talking to the team, Fela handed everyone a cup of water. He was so focused on making sure everyone had some, he forgot to get a cup for himself.

"You ready to bring the heat?" the coach asked the team.

"Yeah!" cheered the Panthers.

But Fela was stuck on the word ‘heat’. The heat was already here all around them.

Fela raised his hand. "As your equipment manager, I need to remind you: It's super hot today. I want to make sure that everyone's drinking water. That means you, Jay. I know you forget sometimes. If we're gonna bring the heat, everyone's got to stay cool!"

"I like that," said coach Lindemann. "Thank you, Fela."

The game was on! From the first minute, it was an even match. The Panthers were doing way better than last time, making smooth passes and pushing down the field towards the goal. Fela was busy filling little cups of water, and passing them off to his teammates. As the game moved up and down the field, Fela tried to follow, hobbling on his weak ankle. Fela gritted his teeth and wiped the sweat from his eyes.

"Fela, do you want to take a break?" asked coach Lindemann.

"Not right now," Fela replied. "I gotta take care of the team!" He knew his job was important. Without him, the players were at risk of overheating. And if that happened, there was no way they could win. The players moved faster and faster in a blur of blue and yellow. Fela struggled to keep up.

"Jay! Hey, Jay! Here you go." Fela reached out to hand Jay a cup as he ran by. Fela wiped the sweat from his eyes, but the field was still blurry. He wobbled on his feet.

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Fela awoke in the shade. The concerned faces of his teammates looked down from above.

"You OK?" asked Jay. "You were handing me some water and then boom! You hit the ground. They had to call a timeout."

"I guess I'm fine. My ankle hurts a little, and I have a headache."

"Looks like you got heatstroke," said coach Lindemann. "Too much sun, not enough water."

Fela shook his head. "I can't believe I messed up such a simple thing. All I had to do was give you guys water."

"Don't worry about it," said Jay, holding out a small paper cup. "We're just glad you're OK."

"It's fine," said Tonio, "We needed a break anyhow. Here, have some more water, and you can borrow my hat."

"Thanks," said Fela. "I guess when I said everyone needs water, I should have included myself."

"That's right," said coach Lindemann. "Sometimes, in order to take care of other people, you have to take care of yourself as well."

The referee blew her whistle and the Panthers returned to the field. Fela watched the rest of the game from the shade of a big tree. He still handed out water to the team, but he took lots of breaks in the shade.

After the game, Tonio came over, struggling with a big folding table.

"Oof, man I'm beat, that was a tough game. Can you give me a hand moving this thing back to the van?"

Fela started to get up from his seat in the shade, but then he thought better of it.

"You know, I really would like to help, but I'm still feeling cooked," he said, "Why don't you ask Jay? It seems like he's still got some energy."

"Oh, yeah, of course!" said Tonio, "I can't believe I even asked. What was I thinking? Here, take my sunglasses. Rest up. Stay cool."