

Love is Blind
(A Romance Drama)

Prologue:

35 year old Anthony was living in New York. Up until now, his life had been a disaster. In his early years, he was an up and coming boxer until he got defeated in a semi-title match. After that, he switched his style to MMA (Mixed Martial Arts). His early success was pathetic. His life started to go down hill. Despondent, he turned to alcohol and drugs. He thought his only recourse was to work for the mob as a debt collector. He wasn't proud of his new profession, but he was good at it. One evening, tailing another low life like himself, he had him cornered in an upstairs apartment building. As he was giving him the usual beating, the guy confessed. I was just trying to provide for my two small children. Their mother left them to me at an early age. Without resources to take care of them, the government put them in an orphanage. I am ashamed to even go see them. I have heard lots of sob stories. I too am an orphan and no one ever took care of me. The guy takes out his wallet and throws it at him. Here take this. It is all I have. Then he moves to an open window, douses himself with lighter fluid and lights a match. Anthony tries to grab him, but he is already on fire and falls two stories down. Instead of hitting the pavement, he lands in an open trash container that immediately catches on fire.

On lookers pull him from the bin and put out the fire. Still, he is severally burned and hauled off to a hospital via ambulance. A family driving by is distracted by the body falling from up on high like a flaming inferno and they crash into another car. The two front seat parents are killed, but the backseat daughter survives. Her eyes got damaged and she became legally blind. She can see some light, but no detail.

The police had been notified of someone being beaten. They break down the door and arrest Anthony on felony assault and intent to cause bodily injury. He gets convicted and spends four year in prison.

Love is Blind
(Chapter 1)

After prison, Anthony tries to change the person he was. Working two jobs, one as a Sparkllets 5 gallon water replacement delivery guy, and another as a parking lot gate attendant. He is stationed in a booth collecting the drive out fees and monitoring the exit gate. He kind of inherited this job from the old guy who had decided to retire.

While sitting there, a young girl, who appeared to be in her late 20's, enters the booth bringing some food containers. I hope you like this, it tastes better than it looks. He takes the offered food and says, who are you? Alarmed, she asks, "Who are you! What happened to grandpa?" He decided to retire and left today. Why did you take my food? Because you offered it too me. It didn't take long for him to realize she was blind. I usually watch the soap operas with him. Sorry to bother you. You can keep the food. She gets out of the booth and walks to the street. He notices her white cane and also that it is raining rather heavily. He leaves the booth and approaches her. It is raining rather hard. If you want you can watch the soaps until the rain stops.

She returns to the booth and they both start watching. She starts asking him questions about the appearance of the actors. Is he handsome? Yes, kind of. After all he is a movie actor. What about the girl? She is beautiful. What is her hair style? What kind of earrings is she wearing? Are you going to constantly talk during the scene? I just like to know more about what is shown. OK, I can do that. How about you? Are you handsome? I have what they call a manly features. Not a cute face then? Not really, I guess.

Tony and Sonya



When the show is over she leaves the booth. He can see her walking with her white cane. The rain has stopped. The next day she returns to the booth and brings more food. She asks if he can open the window. She is sensitive to smell. He looks down at his feet where he has removed his shoes. Not really up on personal hygiene, he feels embarrassed. In between jobs he continues to practice his martial arts. Not that he thinks someday he will start up again, but it is a habit he keeps. She returns to his booth and brings more food. He had already opened the windows. I can tell that you must have changed your socks, but you must have worked on at a gym. Embarrassed once again, he vows to improve his cleanliness. He is starting to look forward to her visits. She may be blind, but that doesn't alter her overall look. She is quite beautiful and her openness is refreshing. Finishing another soap, she leaves the booth carrying a small bag of groceries that she had purchased earlier. As she walks along the wall, a driver comes close to her and beeps his horn. Startled, she drops the bag she had been carrying and a glass bottle breaks all over the cement floor near her. She slips and falls down spraining her ankle. Anthony rushes to her side and asks, "Are you all right?" Yes, I am OK, but when she tries to stand, she falls down again. I need to take you to the hospital. He asks another assistant to watch the booth while he is gone.

At the hospital they wrap her ankle. Now she can walk, but with only a hobble. Where is your apartment? Not far, just down the street a ways. Still, it is slow going and he can see that she is struggling. If you want I can carry you on my back. Are you sure? I have this mace can if you try any funny business. She shows him her bunny mace protector. Don't worry I am not that kind of guy. He says we are at an intersection. There is a beauty shop on the left. Go right then, it is not too far. When they arrive at her apartment entrance there are 20 steps up to her door. He continues to haul her up the steps, but he is breathing rather harshly when they get at the top. I thought you were the manly type? I didn't realize there were so many steps. I need to sit down and catch my breath. Anyway, you are safe back at your apartment. Can I ask you for one more favor? My kitchen floor is flooded and I don't know what happened. Can you take a look? Inside, he sees what she means. There is something stuck in the center drain. He pulls two things from the drain cover and the water starts to drain out.

He hands her the two items. What was causing that? Apparently, a couple of your panties plugged up the drain. Does one have squirrels on the outside. Yes. I was wondering where they had gone. That was a gift from someone. Thanks for helping me.

They continued to meet a couple time a week to watch soaps. Her apartment wasn't that far from the garage and sometimes he would just follow her to make sure she had no trouble arriving at home.

She had a job answering phones at a customer call center. A job that she was well suited for, even with her handicap. The manager told her she was up for employee of the week. A few days later he called her into his office. Here is the certificate I promised you would get. Also, here is a little gift from me. I would like to take you to dinner to show our appreciation on Tuesday. Oh, sorry, I can't accept that. I have another appointment for that evening. She felt very uncomfortable and said I should go out now.

A couple days later, as she was returning home, the manager was waiting near her apartment. I thought you had another appointment for tonight. I guess you must have canceled knowing that I might show up. He pushed himself into her apartment saying why don't you offer me some tea.

Inside she told him that she doesn't use her stove due to dangerous possibilities. That is OK, as he drank some of the juice she had offered. I think you should leave. What would your wife say? Not too much since we divorced. She charged me with domestic violence. He makes a move on her and she pushes him away. He slaps her across the face and she falls into the back wall. Suddenly Anthony enters the unlocked front door. A couple punches later and the manager is kicked out through the door with a bloody mouth. He bounces down all 10 steps and lands on his backside.

Sonya says, now you have caused me much trouble. I needed that job to sustain myself. Now what can I do? I am sure I will get fired. Don't worry, I can take care of you. Anthony had already begun to care for her. I don't need anyone to care for me. Please leave.

For several days, he did not see Sonya. She finally showed up at his booth. OK, I quit my job. You said you would take care of me. Here I am.

Love is Blind
(Chapter 2)

He walks her to her apartment each day after their soap opera. She asks if he would like to go to a concert. She had been giving tickets from a friend. You can take your girlfriend. I don't have a girlfriend. She was hoping he would say that. Maybe you would like to take me? He was hoping she would say that too.

Before their date, she goes to her local beauty parlor and gets a new hairdo. The patrons tell her that it is the latest Parisian style. Her normal look is good enough, but this one has lots of curls and is cut shorter. It gives her a more alluring cute like look. She chooses her dress with care. Even though she cannot see, she knows the style by feel.

When he sees her, he says wow. You look fantastic. This was the reaction she had hoped for.

As he watches the show, he takes side glances at her. He can see how delighted she is listening to the music. She has no pretensions and openly shows her joy. He had never met anyone like her before.

He goes to a pet store and buys a small puppy. He gives it to her. She is delighted. Now you will never be alone. What shall we name him. How about "Easy". Because he is so easy to love.

So for the next several weeks, they cautiously enter the beginning of a relationship. Anthony is afraid she might think he is just taking advantage of her handicap so he is slow to advance the relationship. As time goes on, Sonya can feel that his attention is genuine. She is the one who initiates more intimacy. You can call me Tony. I prefer Anthony. It sounds more elegant. OK, as you wish.

Tony has returned to the boxing gym where he had trained before. His old manager tries to persuade him to get back in the ring. Not as a boxer though, as a MMA contender. You have one of the most devastating punches I have ever seen. If you can improve your other skills, you might have a chance to earn some real money. Tony really does need to earn more money. He now has someone to provide for. He starts to get promotional fights. Sometimes the opponent only lasts for 5 minutes before he lands one of his knockout punches. He is moving up the ladder into higher ranks.

Sonya has started a group reading session with other blind girls. She has a collection of Braille books and loves to share with others. This is something that doesn't pay her much money, but it keeps her busy and happy.

While she is gone, Tony enters her apartment and does some renovations. He bevels down the edges of all her tables to protect her from accidental bumps. He installs no slip tiles all around her kitchen. He also installs a bay window that can be opened with a turn handle and lets in fresh air and more sunlight. Even though Sonya can't see much, she is delighted to feel the fresh air and sunshine on her face.

Tony brings her to an amusement park. Worried that she might not like the excitement much, he cautions her. Her reaction was, why did you wait so long to bring me here. I love it.

On one of their outdoors excursions, Tony takes her to a special place. It is now a lake, but was once the location of the orphanage he had grown up in.

They both pick up stones from the shoreline. Keep this stone and I will keep mine. When we are apart, I can always feel you are near me. He finds a small aquatic turtle that had flipped over and was trying to right itself. He puts it in a container with some lake water and brings it back to Sonya's home to recover.

He tells her his background story hoping that it will not discourage her from continuing their relationship. He tells of his former life of crime and the years he spent in prison. He doesn't mention the incident that caused her

family to lose their lives.



He feels he is indirectly responsible for her blindness. He vowed to somehow make it up to her. Sonya knew about his fighting ordeals. Each time he returned to her, she used her hands to check his face for abrasions. She also gave him a massage to ease his sore muscles. You are really good that this. When losing one of your senses, the others increase to compensate. That is why my sense of smell is so strong and my touch is so light. She also used her fingers on his face to feel what he really looked like. Before she became blind, she was in an art student in college. She was very adapt at making unique and special pottery. Even in her blind state, she can produce some works just with her memory and feel. A very unique talent. She produced a bust of Tony's face. When he saw it, he was amazed at the accuracy of the piece.

During one of her doctor visits, the Doc informed her that her eyesight was getting worse. If she had any hope of ever seeing again, she would need cornea transplants. Tony took notice of this.

Later, back home, he told her that he wanted to find a way to give her this operation. She said, I am happy with my life with you. Why go through the trouble and expense. I was told this would cost \$30,000 dollars. This is totally not necessary. Tony did not agree. He silently vowed to somehow arrange this.

If you go through with the operation we can open a shop for you to make pottery and brick-a-bract. You make the stuff and I will deliver it. Now you

are really dreaming. It was his desire to make that dream come true.

He went to the guy who had beaten him years ago in the ring. He was now a top level contender. Why have you come to me? I need some serious money. How much? \$30,000. OK, I can lend you that, but you have to agree to an underground fight with a guy who has never lost. In fact, he has killed more than one contender. I know of your ability and I will bet heavily in your favor. If you win, you will have enough money to pay me back and then some.

I accept your offer.

Tony arraigned for Sonya's operation. Where did you get the money for this? I have a promotional fight coming up and this is just seed money. This was a lie that Sonya was not aware of it. She just thought this was normal fight business.

Tony arraigned for the operation and left her at the hospital. He would return after the fight with the hope she could finally see his face for the first time.

The Underground Fight

Love is Blind (Chapter 3)

These underground fights, although illegal, draw a huge crowd. I guess everyone likes a blood sport. We aren't that far removed from the Coliseum and the gladiators of Caesar's time.

Besides Frankie, his former boxing opponent, there was a contingent of Mafia guys present. Frankie informed Tony that he had bet heavily on him against those mob guys. You had better win. Frankie knew Tony's potential, but the other guy had never lost. This was indeed a gamble.

Tony enters the octagon cage along with his opponent. They lock the cage entrance. There is no getting out of this.

His opponent is very stocky and solid. He probably outweighed Tony by 50 lbs. I don't know his name, but for the purpose of discussion, I will call him Brutus. A fitting name for the brute that he was.

There is no reason to delay. Tony initiates the first contact with a flying knee to Brutus's chest followed by a hard punch to the jaw that send him into the fence. Brutus shakes it off as if it didn't really phase him. A couple punches later and Tony gets knocked to the floor. Apparently this guy has a hard punch of his own. Two more punches and a knee to the ribs and Tony hits the floor hard. In his arrogance, Brutus turns toward the crowd showing off as if he can not be beaten. They tangle and end up wrestling on the floor. Tony applies a leg break hold and pummels Brutus while he is below him on the ground. Brutus retaliates with a kick to the chest and both are upright again. Tony takes a hard punch to the mouth and blood come flying out. He ends up on his back with Brutus pummeling him relentlessly. Tony tries using his legs like a crab but is still getting hit too much. He delivers a leg kick of his own to Brutus's chest and once again, both are back on their feet. This guy is really much stronger. He is throwing Tony around like he is a rag doll. Tony is taking a real beating. It looks like it will be over soon. Brutus is now holding Tony by the hair and looks around at the crowd just like a gladiator would do before delivering the fatal blow.



Instead, Tony delivers one of his hardest punches. It is not over yet. Brutus gets Tony in a kind of bear hug squeezing the air out of his lungs. Tony uses his fingernails and gouges one of Brutus's eyes. He then pounds down on the eye socket. Brutus lets go of Tony. Now Tony has the advantage. Brutus can not see clearly where the next punches come from. Brutus swings and misses. Tony nails him with a hard left hook. Then two rights and another hook. Brutus is momentarily dazed. Tony advances from across the ring and delivers a flying head kick. It is lights out for Brutus. Tony has one.

The Mafia hood who had bet against Tony told Frankie that you never told me this guy was that good. You better return my money or you will never see the light of day.

Frankie shows Tony the duffle bag full of cash. Instead of giving you this, I am giving you this high value diamond encased in this small crystal ball. It is worth 5 times more than the cash. I have arraigned someone to convert it for you. Take it with you and I will call when the exchange is set up.

Tony is waiting at the exchange spot when a truck comes out of nowhere with bright lights blaring and strikes Tony. He hits the pavement and doesn't get up. Two guys jump out of the truck and retrieve the diamond ball. One of the guys pulls a knife and stabs Tony twice in the gut. He was about to execute a fatal thrust when another car's lights show up. He leaves Tony on the ground and returns to the truck. As they drive by Tony is still aware. He sees Frankie in the passenger seat. He has been setup.

The doctor removes the bandages from Sonya's eyes. For the first time in a decade, she once again can see. A week goes by and she has not heard from Tony. Now that she can see, she returns to her former love of creating art pieces. She makes enough to show to a prospective buyer. He is impressed with her work and orders 50 pieces. This has allowed her to follow one of her former dreams. She opens her own small craft shop. She also starts volunteering at the local hospital giving massage treatments to patients. One of the patients is the guy who fell out of the window on fire the day her parents were killed and she lost her sight. He told her that he knows Tony and of the events that led to her families fatal car crash. He relates the details

of what transpired up in that hotel room.

The police showed up one day at her shop with a missing person's report. They asked if she knew where Tony was. Since she was not a wife or relative, they would not give her anymore information. It was her guess that Tony must have been ashamed of the events that led to her handicap and decided to remain gone.

It is ironic that Tony did not die on the asphalt. He ended up in the same hospital that Sonya volunteers at. She shows up one day to give him a massage. He now felt that he was not worthy of her anymore. At this time, he was broken, could not even walk, and had a facial scar as a result of his ordeal with Brutus. He refused to even talk to her afraid that she would recognize his voice. Maybe if she had looked closer at his face, she would have noticed how similar he looked to the bust she had made of him when she was blind. He avoided any direct looks. He was holding his rock that they had collected at the lake. He kept it hidden making sure that she would not see.

Two weeks later he had recovered enough to leave the hospital. He hobbles by her shop. He just wanted to know that she was OK and see that she was successful. He walked with a limp and still had to use a crutch. About the same time, Sonya took Easy out for a walk. She happened to go in the same direction he had just walked by. It didn't take her long to catch up to him. As she got close, Easy got loose from her grip and he bounded right up to Tony knocking him down. Of course Easy knew that was Tony. Sonya arrived and profusely apologized. I don't know what got in to him. He is usually not like that. She helped him up. Hey, didn't I meet you in the hospital? He just shook his head up and down and started to walk away. Sonya got a very strange feeling. Not sure why that was. Two days later, she returned to her shop. She noticed that the container that the turtle was kept in was gone. I was going to take it to a vet because it looked like it was sick. She started putting 2 and 2 together. Easy's strange behavior #1 and #2 now the turtle was gone. She asked her shop clerk, did you see who took the turtle? I didn't see, but there was a guy with a limp and crutch who was in here looking at your artwork. He bought something and then left. Sonya rushes out of the

door and looks up and down the street. She now knows that it was Tony she saw the other day. She is frantically looking all around while crying. Then she remembered the lake. She takes Easy with her in the car and drives there. Sure enough, there is Tony just releasing the turtle back into the lake water. The table where the two of them used to sit and talk was still there. It had Braille inscriptions carved into the table top. Easy runs to Tony before she does. His tail wagging, Tony scratches under his chin and pets him. Sonya rushes to Tony's side. Why didn't you let me know that you were still alive? I thought that since I was in such a weakened state and with this disfiguring scar you would not want me. Tony, I loved you when I was blind and I still love you now that I can see. Love is a feeling not an image. **“Love is not blind!”** (There you have it, the story's title). Well, almost. I should have recognized you. The bust I made when I was blind just using my hands on your face should have been clue enough. I've missed you so much.

Both had tears falling from their eyes as they hugged each other.

Originally I was going to end the story right here. I thought I needed to add one more chapter. Perhaps called: “Tony's Revenge” Frankie should have to pay somehow for his betrayal.

Here it is:

Love is Blind
(Chapter 4)

Tony and Sonya resumed their former relationship. Except this time Tony proposed marriage and Sonya accepted. No longer any barriers between them. Sonya continued making her pottery and Tony started to make the deliveries. Just like they had dreamed of before. This also gave Tony a chance to improve his mobility and regain his strength. Each evening, Sonya would perform her massage therapy and this benefited Tony greatly. After a year, he had almost returned to his former self. The betrayal from Frankie weighed heavily on his mind though. He didn't always want to rely on Sonya's income. He felt he needed to do something to contribute. The only thing he was good at almost got him killed. He talked to her one evening and told her about his desire to return to ring. She knew him well enough to

know that any resistance on her part would be met with silence? He would follow her, but would not be content. Instead of objecting, she decided to help him. One of the things she had learned from her years of being blind was that when you lose one sense the others get amplified. She told Tony that she had a plan to give him an advantage if he still wanted to return to the ring. She started to aid him in his training. Each time she would fasten a blind fold over his eyes and instruct him to listen and feel the movement from an opponent. She used one of those padded cushions for him to practice his punches. He still had his devastating punch. That had never left him. It was his mobility that had suffered. With the continued blind folded training, he was starting to get it. He could sense where she was and feel her own movements. After a time, he could always hit the target without seeing. The next thing he needed was endurance training. He went back to the gym where he had first started. His old trainer was still there. Why do you want to do this again? You are not the same guy you were five years ago. I can tell your movements are severely limited. You are right about that, but I have a new style. I am not going to blindly wage in anymore. It was ironic that he would use the term blindly. Just give me a chance. Al (as in Albert), set him up with some sparring partners. Each time facing one in the ring, Tony just stood there until his opponent got within range. With his new found sense, he just waited for an opening and delivered his crushing blow. Most opponents only lasted five minutes before they were rendered senseless. His trainer was duly impressed. I can set you up with some real fights if that is your desire. Go for it. I am ready.

Tony knew that each fighter had his strengths and weaknesses. He studied fight films of each of his future opponents until he found both. If a fighter was the strong aggressive type, he employed more defensive tactics keeping out of range of the most powerful punches. He waited until he saw an opening. He had his eye on Frankie. The move that ended his first bout with him began with a fake to the left followed by a sharp right. If he could reach that level again, he believed he could survive Frankie's tactics. Frankie had advanced to the point where he was the #1 contender for a title shot. Tony was advancing too. He now had bouts that paid serious money. If he continued, he was sure he would meet Frankie again. After each fight, Sonya would check his body and face. She didn't need touch and feel to see the

harm that his body was taking. At one point, she urged him to quit. We have enough money to live prosperously already. Why do you need to put yourself in such danger? Until I square things with Frankie, I can't sleep in peace.

After Tony's latest victory, he was indeed in a position to challenge Frankie. His manager had already promoted the fight and it was all set. A week before the fight, one of the mob henchmen approached Tony. Frankie is our golden boy. We would not like to see our goose with the golden egg upended. I have already lost to him once. What are you afraid of? How about we pay you to take a fall? It will be a handsome amount and you will avoid getting seriously hurt. This guy had witnessed Tony's defeat of Brutus. His first thought was to tell this guy to take a flying FUCK, but he held back. I think I have earned this shot and no amount of money will deny me this chance. I just have one piece of advice for your bosses. If you don't want to lose a bundle, don't bet on Frankie.

The night of the fight was here. He had trained everyday with Sonya with his blindfold on. He had improved greatly from his first trials. He felt he could beat Frankie even if he wore the blindfold. Without it, this was a whole new ballgame.

This was no underground match. It was the real deal. Network coverage, sponsorship, extreme hype. At the weigh-in, Frankie taunted Tony with lots of crude remarks and jabs. Tony ignored all of them except one. Frankie said, after I get through with you, your girlfriend would be better being blind again. Then she will not have to look at your battered face. Maybe I will give her a shot at dating me. Tony took notice of Frankie's confidence. He didn't need any more reasons to want to beat him. Still, this just added to his desire to make him eat his words.

The initial spectacle was over. They were both in the ring and waiting for the announcer to finish his introduction. Frankie had the moniker of being called the "Flash", due to his phenomenal speed. Tony had been christened, "The Bone Crusher", due to his hard punch.

The bout began. Tony knew that Frankie would attack first. He was of the

aggressive type. Tony kept his distance, even though his mobility was not what it use to be. With his new found sense though he managed to avoid even the slightest brush with Frankie's fists. This went on for most of the first round. The crowd started to boo. Frankie was affected most by this. He felt that Tony was making a fool of him. This was what Tony had been waiting for. Impatient, Frankie advanced and tried his signature move. This time it did not work out as before. Tony easily ignored his fake and ducked his follow-on punch. Then he connected with what was probably the hardest punch he had ever thrown. Frankie was propelled backwards across the ring, bounced off the ropes, and fell flat on his face not moving. A crushing knockout. The fight was over. Tony won in the first round at 1 minute and 30 seconds. A new fight record. He never even got one scratch.

He looked into the crowd and saw the hood who had offered him money to take a dive. Tony was rewarded with a thumbs up from the guy. At least this time he didn't have to worry about being whacked. He felt completely vindicated. Frankie had almost taken his life, but Tony took the one thing Frankie valued the most. A shot at the title. His legacy will be the one who got knocked out in record time. The next day, the boxing news called him "A Flash in the Pan". With that added humiliation, Frankie quit the ring.

Tony made more money on this one fight than all the money he had lost before. His manager was elated. I'm going to set you up for a title shot. Don't bother. What are you talking about? This is your golden opportunity. My golden opportunity is waiting for me back at my house. I had promised my wife that, win or lose, this would be my last fight.

He was now happy to just be Sonya's deliver guy. No more destroying his body. When he returned back home. Sonya had already heard the news on TV. What now champ? No champ for me. I am retired. He put on his blindfold. What are you doing? It is time to really celebrate, after all "Love is Blind" as he grabbed her hand and headed for the bedroom.

OK, now I can also sleep in peace.

The End