

Love With a Price

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Introduction

They knew each other when they were kids, friends in secret. Grew up and fell in love. But, their families are rival gangs. Will their family accept or will they die?



Chapter 1

1976

A cute little girl, with brown hair and blue-green eyes, and around the age of seven, spotted a boy that she has never seen before. He also had brown hair except his eyes were dark brown, almost black. She went up to him but as she did, the boy backed away.

"Why are you scared of me?" she asked.

"I'm not scared." the boy replied.

"Then why are you backing a way from me?"

"I'm not supposed to talk to you."

"Why?"

"Because, my father does not like your father and told me to not associate with anyone that is related to him. And that's you. You're his kid."

"Oh. Why does your dad not like my dad?"

"I don't know. Maybe because they're always fightin'"

"Can I know you're name?"

"Why?"

"So, that way I can tell my friends and cousins to not talk to you."

"HUH, how did you know my name?" Angie asked in awe.

"Because my dad told me and you are seven."

"How old are you?"

"Ten, I'm almost eleven."

Bruce went home and wondered for the rest of the day why he couldn't play with Angie. He had always thought that she was mean and rude and spoiled, but after today he wanted to be her friend.

"Father, how come I can't talk to Angie?"

"Why do you ask?"

" 'Cause I met her today." he said as he looked at his father. "It was an accident." he added quickly.

"Because, we are rival gangs and as gangs we don't associate with anyone from that gang. Ok, son."

His dad asked sternly as he looked down at Bruce.

"Ok, Father." And with that he walked away to go to his room. Bruce had other ideas though. He thought that tomorrow he will go back to the spot that they met. Hopefully she would be there.

"Dad, can I play with Bruce tomorrow? I know that his dad told him not to play with me, but you didn't say that I couldn't play with him. So can I?" Angie asked as she looked up to her dad, hoping that he would say yes.

"Um, you can't play with him, sweetie, Ok." He told her as he saw that his answer did not please her.

"The reason for that honey, is that.... um..... how do I put this? His father and I are rival gangs. So, that means we don't talk or play with each other. Get it now?"

"No, but if you don't want me to play with him then I won't."

"Now, that's my good girl." he said as he ruffled her hair.

The next day

Bruce waited patiently for Angie to come out. He's been there for nearly an hour and it was killing him. He had already planned out how they would meet everyday and what they would do and how they should do it. But, if she didn't like what he wanted to do then he would let her choose. Mother, always said that if the girl doesn't like it then let her choose, and that is what he was going to do.

"Finally, you're here!" Bruce exclaimed as he saw Angie coming from behind the fence. "I've been waiting for an hour now."

"What do you mean?" she asked all confused.

"I figured out a way so that we could play together." he said proudly. "I take after my Father."

"But, my dad just told me that I couldn't talk to you or play with you. I asked him yesterday."

"So, what. We're part of a gang. Gangs are bad which makes us bad. So us seeing each other in secret is part of our life."

"Really! I never thought about it that way. Ok, what do you want to do?"

"You want to climb over the fence and come to my side and go to the lake?"

"Yes!" And with that she tried to climb over the fence but she couldn't since she was short. "Help me. Bruce climbed over the fence and went to her side.

"Why don't we just go to your side and you could show me it." Bruce told her with a smile as she turned around to hug him.

Chapter 2

1980

Bruce heard a commotion as he walked down the street that led to his house. He took a left instead of going home. He was going to see who was making the noise and what were they doing. As he got closer the noise got louder and then he heard a girls' cry as he heard a punch land somewhere on a person. He raced to the fight, but what he saw made him made. Three boys were beating up a girl who looked way younger than them. Bruce went and pulled one of the guys away from the girl and saw who the girl was. I was Angie. They were supposed to meet tomorrow not today and here she is was getting beaten by a group of boys.

Bruce took Angie's hand and led her out of the circle and put her in with the crowd as he took his jacket off and threw it at her. Bruce went straight towards the guy he pulled and gave him a nice jab to the face, then he grabbed him and doubled him over so that he could knee him in the face. The other guy went after Bruce and kicked him in the back, he fell forward and hit his face on the pavement, causing his nose to bleed very bad. But he wouldn't allow that to stop him. He pushed himself up and grabbed the guy by the legs twisted him around so that his face was on the pavement and drugged him across it. Then the last guy knowing full well what could happen to him if he fought Bruce, he ran away leaving his friends behind.

Bruce turned around and looked for Angie, hoping that maybe she had left and smiled when he saw that she did, except she took his jacket.

"What was this! Uh!" Bruce's father exclaimed. "You, fought the guys who was beating up Angie. I thought I told you to not associate with her in any shape, size, form, or fashion."

"I just wasn't goin' to let them beat her, Father. I wasn't right. I don't care if she was from our rival gang. Any guy who hit a girl or woman is not a man at all, and I would try with all of my power to stop them. Don't you agree?"

His dad looked down ashamed that he let his pride get in the way of seeing what was really happening. "You're right son. Anyone who lays a hand on a girl or woman is not a man at all and they were wrong. I'm sorry. If you want you can go over right now and try to explain to Anthony of what really happened. Ok"

"OK." Bruce said as he left to grab his bike to go and check on Angie

"Tell, me, now, of what really happened and what did they do to you. Plus, how many times have I told you to not go over the fence."

"Lots of time, Dad. I was wrong and you were right. I shouldn't have gone over the fence. I just didn't expect to be ambushed and beaten." Angie said as her mother was dabbing her face to get all the blood.

"They even busted your head open, Ange. I'm going over there right now to have a talk with Mr.

Billy right now." Just as he said that their door bell rang. "Honey, can you get that as I get my gun?" asked his wife.

When his wife opened the door she gasped as she saw Bruce standing there with a basket that said to get well and some flowers in his other hand. She saw that he looked uncertain and scared.

"May, I come in, please. I... um... have your daughter some things that I want to give her and to also explain to your husband that the boys who did this to her are in some serious trouble, ma'am."

"Sure, you can come in. I'll just go tell my husband that you're here. Oh, you can set the flowers on the dining table and wait right here."

"Yes ma'am."

When she left Angie quickly went to the front door to see Bruce.

"Wow, you risked coming here. I'm amazed. By the way what do you mean by they are in serious trouble?"

Bruce smiled as he answered. "They have to deal with me and my father. Did you see what I did to one of the guys?"

"No, I left because I didn't want to be noticed anymore. So what happened." as soon as she said that she noticed he had a nice big cut on his face and reached to touch it. Bruce pulled away and gave a small "AH" he grabbed her hand and handed her the basket.

"I'm supposed to be touching you and asking if you're ok. Not the other way around. So, how many injuries did you get. I see that they busted your head, and that you probably have an splitting headache. You have a black eye, and a pretty bad nose, oh wait, that was there before." Angie reached up to give him a playful slap on his face.

Chapter 3

"What's going on here?" Angie's father boomed as he came in and saw that Angie slapped Bruce. "Nothing, Dad. It's just that I wanted to slap him, because of what happened to me." she replied "Yes sir, she did, even though I was the one who helped her." Bruce added as he looked sternly at Angie.

"Yeah, you probably only did it so that way, I wouldn't hunt you or your guys down." Anthony scoffed.

"Sir, actually I did it because it was the right thing to do. I don't know about you, sir, but I don't like it when guys hit women. Rival women or not."

"Well done. You're not so bad after all. Now, what did you come here for?"

"I came to give a basket to your daughter and some flowers for your wife. I also came because, Angie has something of mine."

Angie looked stricken as she tried to remember what it was. Anthony turned around towards his daughter and gave her look, that meant 'What is he talking about.'

"What do y-you mean?" Angie stuttered

"My jacket, that I let you borrow, so that you could wipe the blood off your face." He answered slowly to let them know it wasn't anything bad.

"Oh, right! Your jacket, sorry. Can we wash for you, then give it back?"

"No, you can not wash it for him. Just give it to him so that way he could leave." Anthony butted in sternly.

"Yes, Dad." Then Angie left and went to her room and found his jacket and put a note inside one of the pockets. "Here you go. You may leave now."

"Yes ma'am." Bruce said as he ducked his head and walked out.

Meet me outside by the gate by six o'clock am.

You betcha that I will, Bruce thought as he headed home. He couldn't wait for six already. Funny, he thought, even though he is fourteen and she is eleven, they have a very good friendship. In fact he feels more like a big brother to her.

Angie kept on glancing at the clock. She couldn't wait to see Bruce again. Ever since she was seven she had liked him, now it feels different. Her like for him as friend as turned into a crush. Plus his heroic act did not help and he got her all of her favorite candies in the basket and her favorite flowers.

Five A.M.

"I don't know." his wife answered in return.

"I'm going to go and check it out." Then he left the kitchen and saw through the windows that she was sneaking out. "What is she doing." he whispered as he followed her.

"So, what did you want to talk to me about?" Bruce asked as she climbed over the fence to meet him.

"I honestly don't know unless you give me a hug."

"What for?"

"Because, I want to thank you for saving me yesterday, without parents around."

"Oh, no problem. Besides, you're like my little sister, which by the way I don't have one.

"I know that you don't have one, you big oaf." and with that she leaned in to give him a hug and realized just how much taller he is to her. "Now, how tall are you?"

"Ha, I'm 5'9 and you are 4'11."

"How did you know."

"You told me."

"TOLD YOU!" Anthony screamed as he popped out of nowhere, surprising them both. "How long have you to been hanging out? One year, one and a half?"

"Uh, Dad, you just stepped in at the wrong time." Angie tried to explain herself.

"The wrong time you say. I was here for the entire exchange. And, YOU, BOY, don't you have anything to say for yourself. You've been taking my daughter and probably kissed her already, just to leave her when she feels like ya'll are more." He accused.

"No sir, nothing like that, sir. To be honest it was my idea for us to meet and to hang out. Plus, she more like my little sister." Bruce said trying his best to protect her.

"So, answer me if you claim to be the man you think you are. How long has this been going on for?"

"Four years, sir." Bruce replied.

"Four years. Uh, I could I have been so stupid to not have seen this. You, young lady what do you have to say for yourself."

Angie hung her head down low. "Nothing, Dad. I have nothing. Just don't punish him, he saved my life yesterday."

"Yeah, don't punish him. I'll punish him alright, and you too. You, boy are going to follow me and Angie, you're going to boarding school until you graduate high school." He grabbed Bruce's arm and drug him towards the gate and just punched him as Angie cried. For her sake he didn't hit him as much or as hard as he wanted to do, but he made sure that he remembered this day. After that he grabbed Angie as she turned around to say good-by to Bruce for the last time.



Chapter 4

1988

"I want all of the seniors to welcome our new Freshmen's. You all should meet at the front to meet them and they will have your name or your nickname on them. That means for the rest of the year you are a signed to them. Thank you for your time."

"Ok, boys and, girls," Bruce added with a smile. "You heard the lady. Let's get a move on."

The entire class room was filled with sounds of chairs screeching and sliding against the floor as they chattered.

Today was Angie's first day at college and she wanted to make it perfect. She didn't know who her 'mentor' was except it sounded like a nickname. Tiger. She knew it belonged to the guy and that meant she had a guy to watch her. She was the only one from her school to choose St. Teresa. She chose it because it brought her back home.

She looked around campus as she saw that the seniors were coming out to find their person, when something caught her eye. She saw a man with a scar along his face and a pair of dark brown eyes, that she thought she would never see again. He grew way taller than she expected and he also had a

mustache and looked ripped. His hair got darker, but that didn't stop her from knowing who it was. He Bruce.

Bruce looked around searching for his name, looking for his person he was in charge of. When he saw his nickname, Tiger. But, when he looked up to see who was wearing the sign, he saw that it was a her, and that she looked very familiar, but very beautiful. She smiled at him as he came towards her.

"Hi, I'm Tiger." he said as he extended his hand to shake hers.

"Hi, I'm Angie." She said with a smile as she saw the shock on his face. She grabbed him in a hug and he in return squeezed her back. "You're squishing me." She mumbled against his chest.

"Oh, sorry" and he immediately let go. "It's really you! It's been eight years. Man, you've changed so much. You've grown taller and beautiful, if I might add."

"Yes, you might add. And you, you've gotten taller and more better looking also."

"Yes, I have."

"So, how are we going to do this. I mean the last time we spoke you got beaten and I was drugged off to boarding school."

"You could just hang out with me, here at college. Make friends with some of the senior girls and tell your dad that one of them is your 'mentor'."

"Wow, you just blurted that out. Been thinking about it."

"Ya, bet. Naw, I just made it up." he said as he ruffled her hair and led her towards college.

Next week

"Why do they call you, Tiger?" Angie asked one day at lunch.

"Well, when it comes to games, I'm a little bit fierce, and this scar helps, also the ladies seem to like me."

"I can see that. A girl has flirted with you everyday now, and you just turn them down. How, interesting."

"I know right. Maybe, you can lure them away from me." he teased her.

"Maybe." she added wishfully.

"So, how's college doing. Is it good to you." her father asked when she visited them on Saturday. She only gets to see her family on the weekends and holidays. Which are way better than boarding school.

"It's going great, Dad. I made some friends with the seniors and freshmens."

"Good. You haven't, uh met any guys yet, have you?" he asked uncertainly.

"No sir. Not really. I mean we talk every now and then, but not really."

"Good."



Chapter 5

Over the periods of months that Bruce and Angie spent together, in secret again, they did lots of fun stuff together. They had hangouts, parties, and little trips on the weekends with their friends. But, the more time Bruce spent with Angie he kept on liking her more and more. Knowing that it was bad.

"Angie, I have something to tell you."

"What is it?"

"I know that we've been friends since childhood and I told you many times that you are my little sister, that has changed. I like you more as a friend and you are not my little sister anymore. I guess what I'm trying to say is that....., I love you. There, I said. And I know that you're dad and my would not approve but, I can't help it. Now, will you please say something." He said hoping that she would say something that would save him.

"I have loved you since I was ten. In fact, I never stopped loving you."

Bruce's dark brown eyes filled with passion as he gathered her in his arms and kissed her lightly then passionately.

"You do know that we have to tell sometime or another, right?" Bruce asked, being the responsible man he was.

"OK, but I would like to tell them together."

"How will we do that?"

"I don't rightly know. But what I do know, is that we have two months before school gets out." And with that he grabbed her kissed her again and just hugged her.

Two months later

"Dad, I have something that I would like to tell you. Mr. Billy sent a note this afternoon and asked you to meet him at the gate. Says that he wants to talk." Angie lied to her dad

"I wonder what he wants to talk about?"

"I don't know, but you better go check it out."

"OK."

"Father, Mr. Anthony sent a note asking to meet you. Something about ending this feud."

"Ok, but this is a set up, I'm telling you. I don't trust him"

"What do you want, Anthony?"

"What do you mean 'What do I want'? You were the one who called me. Not me."

"Lie." he turned around towards Bruce and pointed. "I told you."

"Told her what?"

"Guys. If I may explain this." Bruce cut in knowing that if he didn't that he would never get a chance too. "Angie and I have something that we would like to tell you." he gulped as he continued. "Now, before ya'll get mad, we could've just eloped, end of story. But we didn't. We wanted to tell ya'll personally and together. Angie and I are in love."

"WHAT!" both dads exclaimed.

"What do you mean by in love?" Anthony asked, Bruce, fiercely.

"That at college, we met, became friends again, and then fell in love."

"What do you mean 'became friends again'?" Billy asked his son confused.

"What, do you meant that he has never told you. They were friends for four years, before Angie went to boarding school. That day I gave him a pass, but not anymore." Then Anthony busted through the gates and swung at Bruce. Bruce did nothing, but Billy lunged at him, but Anthony was stronger and pushed him off, knocking him to the floor. Then he went back to beating Bruce, Angie came forward and put herself between Bruce and her dad. Anthony not knowing what exactly happened hit Angie real hard. After that Bruce stepped forward and hit Anthony. Knocking him out.

Angie looked at Bruce and saw that he was badly beaten and took him through the fence and ran with him out of her turf and went towards the college.

Chapter 6

Three days later

"What do you want to talk about?" Anthony asked Billy.

"That you shouldn't be mad at my son or your daughter. I mean he did have the courage to tell us that in person and that he did have a point. If they wanted to they should have just ran and eloped."

"But, we're rival gangs. And our two kids falling in love is just like Romeo and Juliet. And you know how they ended."

"I know, maybe this was a sign that we should stop this feud and move on. Take down this gate and rule this part of town together."

"I guess you're right. I mean what were we really doing in the first place. Right?"

"I don't know. The only thing we did was that we had a disagreement over something thirty years ago and that ruined our friendship. Now, for the thing about our kids."

"Yes, I know. I shall give my blessing as long as you give yours. But, how will we find them?"

"I know where they are at, my friend."

"I got a letter from my dad saying that it was safe for us to come back home." Bruce told Angie

"Really! Do you think that maybe, it has something to do with the fact that they have accepted our love?" Angie asked in awe.

"Yes, Father said so in his letter and for me, if I want to make our love official, then I would have to speak with your father."

"Do you think it's a trap set up by our parents?" she asked, scared for his life.

"No, I don't think so. Come on, pack up the rest of you clothes at your dorm and meet me in thirty minutes."

"OK." Then she went toward him, stood on her tip-toes and kissed him lightly. "I can't wait for that conversation"

"You and me both." he said in a gravelly voice.

"Did you tell the kids?" Anthony asked Billy.

"Yep, and they are on their way right now as we speak. He asked if we could meet at a diner or something so that way we could talk and eat."

"OK."

"I think that I see them!" Angie cried out excitedly.

"I know, I see them too."

"There they are." Billy said to Anthony as they got up to head outside to greet them. When they saw that they were walking out of their cars, Billy and Anthony both saw a car heading their way and was

"Look out!" Anthony yelled at them, but it was too late.

"What?" Angie asked as Bruce jumped on her to push her out of the way of the moving car, but it was too late. They both got hit by the car and was thrown brutally after the car. The car speed up as they got closer to Bruce and Angie. Bruce covered Angie so that way she would land on top of him. The hit of the car and the fall was too much for her, even if she landed on top of Bruce. Once, Bruce hit he pavement she fell from his grip and landed hard on her back, breaking it and and busting her head wide open. Bruce landed on his face busting it up way worse than anyone could imagine, breaking his ribs and puncturing his lungs. Bruce lived long enough to pull out a ring from his vest pocket and found Angie's left hand.

"Now....., we..... are..... engaged." And with that he took his final breath.

Three months later

"Honey, you finally woke up." Angie's mother exclaimed.

"What do you mean 'finally woke up'? Where's Bruce?" Angie asked, fearing the worst.

"He died as soon as ya'll became engaged. I'm so sorry."

Anthony walked in and ran to Angie with tears in his eyes because he saw that she was weeping. "My baby girl, woke up."

"Again, what do you mean 'finally woke up'?" Then she gasped. "Why can't I feel my legs?"

"Baby, you were in a coma and you..... are paralyzed from the waist down." Anthony wept and held Angie and his wife.

"Can I join in?" Billy asked.

"Yes, Bill you may. From now on, you are family. Get that, YOU are family." Anthony said.

"I think that it should be the other way around. Since, Angie was engaged to my son." Then Billy started to cry as he hugged Angie, knowing that their would be a long road ahead of her.