

TONY TV

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. TV STUDIO - DAY

"SUPER" TONY ACONI (69), a tanned, muscular, perfect specimen of manhood in a garish track suit stands before a wide eyed audience.

A cameraman tracks his every move.

TONY  
So ladies and gentlemen, that wraps  
up another Super Tony Aconi show.

He flashes perfect teeth.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Or as we prefer to call it here,  
Tony TV.

He gives the audience a wink.

Female sighs ring out. A MIDDLE AGED WOMAN in the front row faints.

TONY (CONT'D)  
And remember, fitness is a way of  
life, one that requires discipline  
and dedication but also yields  
enormous benefits.

He holds his arms outstretched, inviting the audience to behold his magnificence.

TONY (CONT'D)  
As you can see.

Whoops and claps erupt throughout the studio.

TONY (CONT'D)  
All you need to be like me are  
Super Tony Aconi's home workout  
DVD, book package and my own,  
special range of patented vitamins  
and minerals. All available through  
this network. Hurry while stocks  
last.

He places his hands together as if congratulating himself.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Remember, don't grow old, grow  
young. Thank you so much, I love  
you all.

The audience claps.

The Middle Aged Woman wakes up.

MIDDLE AGED WOMAN  
(Screams) I love you too.

A chorus of females cry out, all professing similar sentiments.

Tony bows, blowing kisses as he backs away. A curtain closes in front of him.

One figure, KYLE KEMP (45), a ferret like, bespectacled man rises from his seat. A press card sticks out from his hat band.

He weaves between the excited audience members, sneaks onto the stage and with a furtive glances left and right slides under the curtain.

CUT TO:

INT. DRESSING ROOM -DAY

BARBARA ACONI (60), candy floss hair and pearls with her beauty troweled on strokes a small, dozing poodle in her lap.

Tony admires himself in a full length mirror.

BARBARA  
Great show.

Tony looks at his wife.

TONY  
Always are my dear.

BARBARA  
We're almost there Tony, top syndicated show with sales overtaking all our rivals.

TONY  
Marvelous.

There's a knock at the door.

Barbara frowns.

BARBARA  
Any idea who that could be?

Tony shrugs.

The door opens.

Kemp's bespectacled face pops through the gap.

He looks at Tony.

KEMP

Mr. Aconi

He noticed Barbara.

KEMP (CONT'D)

Mrs. Aconi.

He removes his hat.

KEMP (CONT'D)

I'm Kyle Kemp.

Barbara sighs.

BARBARA

The freelance journalist. I know who you are. You've been chasing my husband for months. Didn't I make it clear he wouldn't be granting you an interview?

Kemp holds the hat contritely in front of him.

KEMP

I just spoke to your husband back stage ma'am. He said he would be happy to give me a few minutes.

Barbara glances at her husband.

BARBARA

What have I told you Tony? Let me handle this type of thing.

Her mascara eyes narrow as she regards the journalist.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

You have a reputation Mr. Kemp, not a good one. You're a scandal monger and a muck raker. Please leave.

Kemp places a palm to his chest.

KEMP

Not true ma'am, I assure you. I'm here on behalf of Fabulous People Magazine. (Looking at Tony) This would be a great honor for me sir.

Tony straightens.

TONY

Of course it would be my fine fellow, someone of my stature.

He waves him in.

TONY (CONT'D)

Come.

Barbara snorts.

Kemp gives a low bow in her direction, closes the door and scampers inside.

Tony takes a deep breath and starts on some knee bends.

TONY (CONT'D)

Now Mr. Kemp, ask your questions.

Kemp takes out a pencil and pad.

KEMP

Well, I think what everyone wants to know is ...

TONY

My inspiring story?

Tony pauses for a moment in the squatting position.

TONY (CONT'D)

Of how a small, skinny Italian kid from Brooklyn grew up to be the best loved celebrity on TV?

He straightens up.

TONY (CONT'D)

That is a tale.

He launches into a series of side twists.

KEMP

I'm sure it is.

Kemp scratches his temple with the pencil.

KEMP (CONT'D)

But what I really would like to ask is how ...

TONY

How I did it? It all began when I saw my first Charles Atlas advertisement you see. In just seven days...

He waves a hand in the air.

TONY (CONT'D)

You know how it goes. Well, that inspired me, and like Atlas, by the time I was twenty I had carved myself a perfect, muscular body from the granite of hard work, will power and determination.

He smiles.

TONY (CONT'D)

As you may know I was voted best physique four years in a row by Muscle Magazines. They stopped running that competition because of me.

He laughs.

Kemp manages a smile.

KEMP

Amazing.

Tony stops his side twists, places both hands together and starts squeezing the palms together. He does this for two second bursts at a time.

TONY

Keeps your Pecs like rocks this one.

KEMP

I can see. So, might I ask you ...

TONY

To get back to my story? Of course. Well, I knew then I wanted to devote my life to the world of health and fitness. But I didn't know how exactly. I started my own gym, but (a beat) it wasn't quite me. I'd already developed my own system by that time you see, one that didn't require fancy equipment.

He looks at Barbara.

TONY (CONT'D)

And then I met this beautiful lady.

Barbara waves a hand as if to bat the foolish comment away.

BARBARA

Tony, please.

She adjusts her hair do.

The reporter turns back to Tony who is now doing neck rolls.

TONY

Barbara had heard of me and came to see me at my office. She suggested we start our own fitness industry. Seemed like a tall order but she was full of ideas. I borrowed a few thousand from an aunt, Barbara got some money from her family and the rest is history.

KEMP

That's a very inspiring story.

TONY

It is, isn't it? Now, if that's all, it's time for my run.

KEMP

Mr. Aconi, there is something else I would like to ask you.

TONY

Tony, please. Everyone calls me Tony.

Kemp gives a small cough.

KEMP

I was wondering if I could ask you about your age.

TONY

You may.

KEMP

Well, some reports say you're sixty nine years old.

Tony nods.

KEMP (CONT'D)

Very true, I turn seventy in a couple of months.

Kemp ticks off something on his little pad.

KEMP (CONT'D)

Which brings me to my next question.

Tony grins, nodding knowingly.

KEMP (CONT'D)

How do you maintain such an incredibly youthful appearance?

Tony's grinning and nodding grow more pronounced.

TONY  
Good living plain and simple.

KEMP  
Are you aware Mr. Aconi ...

TONY  
Tony.

KEMP  
Are you aware (a beat) Tony that many doctors and gerontologists have stated it's impossible for you to look as you do at your age? In fact some have pointed out that you actually look younger now than you did some years ago.

TONY  
Nonsense. Tony's patented and nutritional supplements and exercise regime are what has held the ageing process at bay, and yes, reversed it to.

He holds up a finger.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Don't grow old, grow young.

KEMP  
But Mr. Aconi, I mean Tony ...

Barbara's hand squeezes the poodle. The animal yelps.

BARBARA  
I think that's enough. Tony's schedule is very busy.

Kemp ignores her.

TONY  
I begin every day with a hundred push ups, sit ups and a quick warm up. That shocks the body into a youthful vitality, as you will read in my books. Next I commence what I call Tony Toning, which can erase all blemishes and lines from the skin.

He slaps his hands to his forehead and begins massaging.

BARBARA  
Tony!



TONY

Like so, and then I commence with  
the areas under the eyes.

He massages under his eyes.

TONY (CONT'D)

Then the neck, and finally the  
cheeks.

He runs a hand under his neck and then slaps both cheeks.

He freezes.

Kemp looks from Tony to Barbara.

The woman gives a nervous laugh.

The front part of Tony's face swings opens. Behind it is a  
mass of flashing lights and miniature circuits.

BARBARA

Oh dear.

She lifts the poodle from her lap and deposits it on the arm  
of her chair.

She reaches for the handbag by her feet.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Now you know our little secret.

The shock drains from Kemp's face and is replaced by a smile.

KEMP

I knew it.

The pencil breaks in his hand.

KEMP (CONT'D)

I knew there was a story here. I  
always could sniff out a scoop.

He laughs.

KEMP (CONT'D)

This one's going to put me on the  
map.

Barbara pulls out a cigarette and lighter from the handbag.

She lights the cigarette.

BARBARA

I'm good friends with the editor at  
Fabulous People magazine, Mr. Kemp.  
Did you know that?

(MORE)

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
I don't think she'd be happy if you  
reveal what you've just seen.

Kemp sneers.

KEMP  
Fabulous People? Is that who I said  
I was working for.

He shakes his head.

KEMP (CONT'D)  
I lied. This is more of a personal  
project.

BARBARA  
I see.

She takes a long draw on her cigarette, blowing out a cloud  
of tobacco smoke.

She looks at the android.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
Believe it or not, the real Tony  
was even more conceited.

She sighs.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
And he really did think he could  
hold back time what that ridiculous  
system of his.

Kemp nods, running a hand over his chin.

KEMP  
How long?

He turns, waving a hand at Tony.

KEMP (CONT'D)  
I mean, when did he ...

BARBARA  
Ten years ago. He had a massive  
heart attack after one of his  
famous beach runs.

KEMP  
Ten years, just when your TV show  
was getting big.

Barbara nods.

BARBARA  
I'd worked too hard to let it all  
slip away.

Kemp studies the android closely.

KEMP

This thing's amazing. Didn't even know anyone had this kind of tech.

He waves a hand across his face.

KEMP (CONT'D)

And looks so real. I mean at least when his face isn't hanging off.

BARBARA

Let's just say I have powerful investors, ones with the connections to make this happen.

Kemp reaches an arm out to the open face plate.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Don't close it. You'll reactivate him.

Kemp looks at Barbara.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

He doesn't know you see. We had to make him as believable as possible, taking every memory trace we could from his brain before the synaptic connections atrophied.

She smiles.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

I sometimes forget myself.

Her eyes narrow.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

You have to keep this a secret.

Kemp shakes his head.

KEMP

Sorry lady, that isn't going to happen. You and your droid husband are going to make me rich and famous.

Barbara places the lighter back into her handbag.

KEMP (CONT'D)

Been a pleasure.

He puts his hat back on and starts to leave.

Barbara pulls a 22 revolver from her handbag.

BARBARA  
Not another step.

She raises the weapon; aims it straight at the reporter's chest.

KEMP  
Wait! Maybe I was a little hasty.  
Maybe we could, you know, work  
something out.

The weapon doesn't waver in the woman's hand.

BARBARA  
How so?

KEMP  
Well ...

He scratches his nose.

KEMP (CONT'D)  
For a start I could write Tony's  
biography. Just tell me what to  
say. We'll make it a glowing  
tribute.

BARBARA  
The authorised Tony Aconi biography  
is coming out next month. Advanced  
orders are already into six  
figures.

Kemp frowns.

KEMP  
Okay, how about this? Lots of  
journalists have rubbished the  
Super Tony Aconi method. I could  
become its champion. I write up an  
article saying Tony and his methods  
are legit and the greatest thing  
ever and you get it published in  
Fabulous People Magazine and all  
the other rags you got pull with.

Barbara studies him for a moment.

KEMP (CONT'D)  
What do you say? I could make you  
look real good.

The woman looks the reporter up and down.

BARBARA  
Yes, you could.

She smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. TV STUDIO - DAY

Tony stands once more before cameras and an adoring audience.

TONY  
But don't just take my word for it.

He wraps an arm around Kemp. The reporter's now dressed in T-shirt and shorts.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Look at this guy. He came to interview me a few months back and was so impressed he signed up for my full package. Within a month he lost thirty pounds in body fat, in two had the metabolism of a twenty five year old and in three had developed a thick coat of muscle all over his body.

He nods to Kemp who obligingly flexes his impressive biceps.

TONY (CONT'D)  
This guy also used to wear glasses, but because of the rejuvenating properties of my supplements now has twenty-twenty vision.

The audience claps.

Tony leads Kemp to the edge of the stage.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Please, tell the audience. How do you feel?

Kemp smiles at the waiting crowd.

KEMP  
Like a new man.

FADE OUT: