

PODCAST Episode 443

📅 Sun, Nov 02, 2025 8:59AM ⌚ 1:12:09

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Disability community, vision loss, skateboarding, blindness journey, adaptive technology, foundation, inclusive community, overcoming challenges, personal identity, advocacy, support network, resilience, documentary, blind kid, skate park., Documentary premiere, November 28, Open Space, The Blind Kid, Facebook page, \$10 tickets, Foundation donation, Q&A panel, Instagram, skateboarding, community event, vision loss, special sauce, podcast episode, Canadian Assistive Technology.

SPEAKERS

Steve Barclay, Rob Mineault, Lis Malone, Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo, Ryan Fleury

R

Rob Mineault 00:30

Hey, and welcome to another episode of AT Banter. See, we didn't, we didn't do the cowbell warning. We didn't do the trigger warning.

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 01:18

It's actually that's one of my triggers. I'm from, I grew up on a farm. Okay, thanks for bringing me back.

L


Lis Malone 01:25


No, that's my trigger. I'm allergic to dairy.


R


Rob Mineault 01:30


Hey, this is, of course, the podcast where we talk with advocates and members of the disability community to educate and inspire better conversation about disability. Hey, my name is Rob Mineault, and joining me today, Mr. Ryan Fleury. And, hey, look who it is. I have to rub my eyes. I cannot believe them. I have to clean my ears. I cannot believe them either. It's Miss Lis Malone.


 Lis Malone 02:00
Hi, boys, I know you missed me.


 Rob Mineault 02:02
Yeah, we did. What's been going on?


 Lis Malone 02:06
Oh, I've been a busy girl, so I'll just leave it at that. And apparently I've also been a very sick girl. So if I'm a little loopy, I'm gonna thank the makers of NyQuil, yeah, for making such a snazzy product.

 Rob Mineault 02:23
Yeah? So what you're sick is that it?

 Lis Malone 02:25
Yeah? Flu, baby.

 Rob Mineault 02:28
Well, it is the season.

 Ryan Fleury 02:32
And if NyQuil wants to sponsor at banter, please reach out, let us know.

 Lis Malone 02:36
Or at least send me some free medication. I'm happy to work on trade. So, yeah.

R Rob Mineault 02:43
So how long you've been sick for?

L Lis Malone 02:44
It's been, like a week and a half. Well, week and a half.

R Rob Mineault 02:48
That's long for the flu. Yeah, like covid or something?

L Lis Malone 02:52
No, it's not Covid. I think, I think Covid was easier.

B Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 02:57
Are you recording this from the bathroom?

L Lis Malone 03:01
Why? Oh, my God, is the echo giving it away?

R Rob Mineault 03:07
Well, hey, well, listen, we're happy to have you back, whatever. Your mysterious disappearance. And just for the folks in the audience, like she's not, she's not being, she's not being vague, like just because she's on a podcast and she just want to advertise what's been going on to, you know, hundreds and 1000s of people. She's not telling us either. So we actually have no clue where she's been, what's going on at all.

R Ryan Fleury 03:34
So there were efforts made on our part to find out what happened to Lis Malone, over the last few weeks.

L Lis Malone 03:43
Yep, no, is this when I get to sneak in a story?


R Rob Mineault 03:46
Yeah? Please do okay.


L Lis Malone 03:49
Me. Lis., East Coast time. Ryan, West Coast time, three effing hours. It's really simple, Ryan, it's your time plus three. Do not call me if it is past, if you've if you've already had dinner and you're done it's too late, don't call me.


R Ryan Fleury 04:16
I'm sorry.


L Lis Malone 04:17
You better call me when you're still hungry and jonesing for your meal, but you do not call me after you eat, because I'm already in. I'm in my like, third REM cycle by then. Ryan tried to call me while I was on my sick bed, and I was like, what fool is calling me at this freaking hour?


R Ryan Fleury 04:43
And in my defense, we were concerned because you weren't returning email. You didn't return the call or answer the call. She finally responded to a text message. Yeah, so we were concerned.


 Rob Mineault 04:57
Just glad we didn't do it like a welfare check and a state trooper didn't show up at your door.


 Lis Malone 05:02
Hey, listen, listen, listen, I had the flu, baby. That's all I can tell you, baby, I know.


 Ryan Fleury 05:08
All right, okay, are you good? Boo, lesson learned. Are you good?


 Lis Malone 05:12
I'm good.


 Lis Malone 05:13
Are you good Boo,?


 Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 05:15
Yeah, I'm good.


 Lis Malone 05:16
Okay, thank you.


 Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 05:17
Thank you.


 Rob Mineault 05:17
Brett, well, this is a great segue, because I was just about to do that anyway. So why the hell let's let's just do it now. Hey Ryan?


 Ryan Fleury 05:28
Hey Lis.

 Lis Malone 05:30
Hey Ryan. Hey Rob.

 Rob Mineault 05:35
What the heck are we doing today?

 Ryan Fleury 05:42
Oh, my goodness, what are we doing today? Today, we are very happy to have with us a guest who is not letting his blindness get in the way of pursuing his passion of skateboarding. Joining us is Brett the Blind Kid. Brett, thank you so much for being here.

 Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 05:58
Thank you so much for having me. Man, this is awesome. I love this already.

 Rob Mineault 06:01
Yeah, listen, we apologize. We're all punchy. Lis is back and doped up on cold meds.

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 06:08

It sounds like we're all sponsored by NyQuil here. You know, I've been looking for an independent sponsor, maybe element for the skateboards. I need a shoe sponsor. But you guys got me thinking about new levels. We can get NyQuil sponsors. Let's get it.

R

Rob Mineault 06:22

Totally I mean, at this point, we could probably get some weed dispensary sponsors as well.

L

Lis Malone 06:27

Just think of how much it was only after NyQuil and skateboarding,

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 06:32

yes, it doesn't go as well as you think. Mind blowing, trying to it doesn't he doesn't roll, doesn't roll.

R

Rob Mineault 06:39

Oh, yeah, fair enough. Okay. Well, listen, we are thrilled to have you. For the audience and just to give us a little bit of a place to start this madness, tell us a little bit about yourself and maybe a little bit about your vision journey, if you will.

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 06:56

100%. So I'm Brett, TBK is the short form of the blind kid. I got that name when I was 17. I'm 30 now, but, and, you know, we're still all kids at heart. I grew up in Manitoba. I live in the West Coast now. I live in Vancouver. I lost my vision when I was 16. It was a DNA mutation called Leber's Hereditary Optical Neuropathy, or LHON and it was just in the middle of history class, you know, just writing the notes on the overhead. Next thing you know, gone. And I thought it was just the overhead that was out of focus. Turns out, when the lights on, everything was out of focus. And, yeah, that's pretty much, that's pretty much the story, you know, you you'd hope it'd be a fun accident. That sounds bad. You'd hope it'd be like a fun accident, like a skateboarding and landed on my eyes or something. But no, man, just, just the DNA is not mixing up, right.

R

Rob Mineault 07:48

Wow, yeah. Well, you know what's interesting, you know, we've talked to to many, many people on the show, and the one thing that we've sort of taken away with, with vision journey and people losing their vision is that every, every single experience and and the way that people deal with it is always very personal and very unique. You know, no two stories are ever quite the same. So seeing that it, it happened so suddenly for you, can you talk us through what it was like in those first few days and weeks after this happened?

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 08:23

Yeah, so the very first thing that happened when it when it went away, is I looked at my friend beside me, and I remember she was wearing a Superman shirt, and I asked her, like, can you read that? And she's like, Yeah. I'm like, all right, guys, it's just me. Put the pencil down and stopped writing the notes, because it's history class. That just gave me the best excuse. It's not like, immediately, oh God, I'm blind. What's going you know, I just it didn't happen like that to me. I was I immediately just went at lunch. I walked to the eye doctor by myself, because I grew up in a small town, so I knew the way wasn't like, lost and scared or any of that. And I went to the eye doctor. I'm like, can I get an appointment? And she they're like, yes. And I'm like, okay, cool. They're like, come back at 2:30 and I'm okay, be back in a while. Instead of going, actually, can we do this right now? Which I probably should have done, in hindsight. And I went back to school and gave the teacher my note, and I'm like, Hey, I gotta go at 2:30 he's like, yeah, is everything all right? And I'm like, yeah, I just can't see that was like, the first like, Huh? So I walked back there, and she started doing the tests, look at the dots, and look at the lights, look at this. And I failed them all. And I'm like, perfect, just like school. And then when they did the, like, the letter test, I couldn't see the big ass E at the top of the chart even, like when they do the big one, I'm like, Nope, can't even see that. And so she started calling my mom, and I'm like, Oh God, now I'm in trouble, which was, like, such a stupid thought. But you know, you're a teenager, right? Like, used to when anyone calls your mom, you're in trouble. And she's like, go see this specialist. So I saw ophthalmologists, ophthalmologists, neurologists, like all of them. Went through this list and they I had no idea what any of it meant. And the next couple days it was, it wasn't anything like I wasn't really doing much. I wasn't just back to school. Did all the same stuff. I tried my best. I didn't skip class, I didn't skip school, didn't do anything. We just started seeing doctors and started seeing doctors and started seeing what was going on. The first thing they tested me for was mono. I'm like the kissing, okay? And I remember sitting there down in the test and I hate needles, by the way, I'm covered in tattoos, but I hate needles. You know, everyone knows it's different. And when I got the first one, I'm sitting there just shaking, got my headphones over my shoulders, and she's like, you can listen to your music if you want. And I'm like, thanks. Put my headphones in. And she's like, What are you listening to? Trying to make conversation, right? And I'm like, oh, Lil Wayne, you know, trash, I know I'm class act. And they're like, she's like, oh, I love that song. Starts jumping around. I'm like, oh my God, just give me the needle and you can jump around after, like, we'll get excited after together. But right now, let's do this. And it obviously came back negative, like, I didn't have mono. Mono didn't make me go blind. So that started like, a long journey of being sent off to different doctors and different people. And everyone said the same thing. They're going, your eyes look fine. I'm like, Yeah, I know I've heard that before. They're like, your eyes look fine. Because my eyes, technically, are fine. It's the DNA. It's the connection between that. So it took them quite some time, because in I guess maybe we just didn't have the best doctors in Manitoba, because I've heard of people finding out, like, in a week, it took

them, like, six to eight months for my diagnosis. And it ended up being, like, sitting in the doctor's chair and I'm going, oh, let's test him for this. And I'm like, Yeah, fine. Poke me again, you know? And he's like, if you get this one, don't worry. We're just doing this to take it off the table playing the elimination game. If it ends up being this, go buy a lottery ticket. I'm like, cool. And then they said about four to six weeks, we'll get back to you. Eight weeks later. And then it came back positive. My Mom and Dad came into my room and they're like, they never come into my room together. So I'm just like, oh, yeah, hey, we got the results back finally, didn't we? They're like, yeah. I'm like, positive. And they're like, yeah. So, you know, kind of cried for, I don't know, half hour. Like, well, what are we gonna then it's like, what are we gonna do? Like, it's already been six months. It's already been eight months. I'm already kind of past the whole devastation side of things. I was already skateboarding by that point, back on the board, but I didn't get back on the board immediately because it was winter. It was November 23 it was when I went blind. So it was winter in Manitoba. There was snow up to my knees. And that's that's kind of how first few days went, really. And other than walking around class trying to figure out how to find my locker and walking around the school, trying to figure out how to find my locker, trying to just live life normal, and I definitely didn't pick up the cane for quite some time. Purely, I think every blind person who goes blind doesn't go straight to the cane, get out of a embarrassment or not wanting to look different and all that, especially in high school.

R

Rob Mineault 13:12

When you finally did get that diagnosis, because you had already been basically living with vision loss for seven months already, was it almost just a relief to find out at least what the deal was?

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 13:26

Absolutely. And like, honestly, at that point, it was more just the upsetting part, like the whole like crying for a short period of time was just because the diagnosis was a forever diagnosis, not A, not A, don't worry dog, you can come back. We can fix it, because it's not something they can fix yet. So like, yeah, no, it's definitely a relief. So it's yeah, it was definitely a relief, really.

R

Rob Mineault 13:53

So when you lose something like that, it can really change your trajectory, but also it can really change the way that you see yourself, sometimes literally, but you know, oftentimes emotionally. What was your sort of process in the you know, say, the first year of your sight loss, in terms of, did you feel like you had to rebuild your identity and kind of find how you were going to fit into school and family life?

B**Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 14:21**

Man, you're asking the coolest questions. I have really not been asked in the right way, like this before. Also, I want the next one to be asked by Ryan, because he's got a sexy voice. I want to know about your microphone after too. So when I, when I, like, the first year, definitely had a lot to change. And I was in the transition, oh, that's like I was going through puberty, dude, like I was, what I could see, it was, it's chubby cheeks, braces, glasses, long, like Justin Bieber, flow hair, you know, like it was, it was 2011 it was, it was quite a change. And I definitely like both bits. Basically, exactly you're just saying. I changed a lot about how I looked. I started doing I did a completely different thing on my hair. I know that's not really the point, but like, dressing different, I started, kind of ironically, I started dressing better. I'm not gonna lie. It's kind of weird. But when it comes to the whole lifestyle I was, I wanted to be an electrician. I don't know anybody that's gonna hire a blind electrician, like I'm still there. Yo, is this red or is this black? Okay, that was red. I told you turn off the breaker, you know. But I definitely rewired my room after going blind to be to be honest. Like, and I still love wiring speakers up and all that stuff, but that came with still, like, trial and error, but when I had to change my whole lifestyle, everything I wanted to do, so I really was more worried about what I was going to do about work, and when it came to family, my parents had to learn more about it than I did. You know, I'm the kind of guy that just goes with it, just rolls with it, and just lives the lifestyle that's just the way I've always been. And it kind of just gave me a reason to it gave me an identity, in a way as well. So it was kind of gave me an easier way to live, if that makes any sense. But my parents, oh, man, I just thought they liked to party a little more that year, but it was just alone in the garage, and I'm like, Oh yeah, come up for a beer on a Wednesday, sure. But honestly, it was probably harder for my mom and dad than it was for me, and that's because I was living it. I didn't have a chance. I was going through it, and I just wanted to keep living as normal and normal, such a stupid word to me, but I wanted to keep living as much as me as I could. So I've kept trying to find the things that kept me me so, like skateboarding and stuff like that. But I also started going to the gym and started like taking like, taking care of myself better, in a sense, because I it's kind of that if you can't see yourself, you don't know what he looks like, so try and do your look your best when you're going now, if that makes sense too, sure that was kind of the angle I always took with it. But that also backfired to some of the teachers, like I'd have be walking around. Also, it gave me an excuse to wear sunglasses inside. That did not change at all. It was just me going, here, yeah, I can do and who are you to tell me I can't? But honestly, I know it was, it was a lot of change, and a lot of change for me. Like I went from what I could see wearing like collared shirts looking like I'm going to some prep school, I did not. I went to public school in the country, in Stonewall Manitoba, like I was wearing, like ties and collared shirts and knitted sweaters and like my and like my little like seeing glasses and that all changed to, like, just flannels and black skinny jeans, you know?

R**Ryan Fleury 17:31**

Well, it's something I wanted to ask you, Brett, is living where you did? Did you find people and resources, or were trying to pigeonhole you into a mold or into a box of blindness.

B**Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 17:44**

Oh, there was, yeah, man, there was very little resources. The amount of times like you should try CCTV. I'm like, that's not gonna work for me. I can't see that. They're like, Yeah, but let's go try it anyways. It didn't work, and they still like, let's bring it back to our school and see if it works for you. There, they made me carry this, like, 150 pound thing, whatever, flight of stairs myself. I'm like, Dude, you can't, like, you know what I mean? They were like, yeah, I don't help you. I can tell or, like, they give me a TA that was trying to, like, help me with things. And there she's talking to me all slow. And there were another TA that was like, didn't know how to use an iPad, so she's trying to hit it with her finger harder. I'm like, give me that back, please. And so, yeah, definitely. And people did not believe I was blind. Like, I went to a small school of like 400 people total, and my graduating class was like 90 people, and they, there was people that didn't believe me, thinking, I'm doing it for attention, because that's the kind of thing people did in that school, not faked being blind for attention, but just for attention. And there is even this one girl, I'm not gonna say her name doesn't matter. She got fat. But there definitely was this girl who was trying to, like, spread this whole thing. And then my best friend, the girl who was wearing the Superman shirt, actually, literally, she she put her straight like she let her know. And other than that, though, yeah, no, it was definitely a lot harder in a small town like that. It was easy because I got to know my way around town a lot better, because I knew I knew the way. It wasn't many places to go. But the hard part was the people.

L**Lis Malone 19:19**

Yeah, so if I get you a t-shirt that that reads, "don't assume that I'm high". Would you wear that in public?

B**Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 19:27**

You're so funny, because that's actually what started my clothing line, The Blind Kid. when I was 17, and somebody, my mom literally came home from work one day and said, You should start a clothing line called "visually impaired, not high", because, not even joking, her exact words, because I was in another town where all my family lives, and that was my cousin waved at me from across the street. Didn't see him, obviously. So he calls my mom. He's like, do you know where your son is? I'm pretty sure he's stoned walking around town. And she's like, Oh my god, no. He just can't see she wanted to, like, make me a billboard t shirt. Pretty much. But instead, I'm like, let's call it the blind kid, because that's what everyone around school is calling me.

R

Rob Mineault 20:05

So let's talk about this, the small town experience, then. Often what we hear with with folks that are in rural, rural areas like that, is that not only don't, don't they have access to resources, but really community, like peers or mentors that are also in the blindness community. How was that experience for you? Were there people or communities there that that made you realize that you weren't alone?

No man like, I actually even worse, I didn't even live in the small town. I lived in the country on the outside of the small town on a dirt road. So it's not even like, yeah, it's not even, like, I got lost in my backyard a couple times, getting off the bus, but called my dad, and my dad, you're gonna think this is hilarious. I'm lost in the backyard. He's like, Oh my god, I'm on the way. I'm like, Oh dude, I thought you're gonna think it's funny. Never mind, never mind. I'm good. I'm good. I think I found, I found something. Here's a tree. Yeah, that's my face. But there is no blind people in a small town. I was the first one to ever go blind or be blind in that school. There's a lot of things I got to kind of change around the school because it to make it work better for me, like painting door frames and things like that. But like, it's a darker color because the contrast I was able to use. But around town nobody, and the nearest city was half an hour away, and the once every two days on the school schedule, so sometimes only twice a week for like, an hour. They send out this lady from the Disability Education Board for Manitoba, and she would kind of teach me independence, teach me O and M, teach me, like, how to use some things. And like, they let me use a MacBook for an hour with voice over, like, that's it. You know me and, like, just things like that. Chopped me Braille, used a braille, and then realized that there's no Braille anywhere, unless I take elevators. And I'll tell you, there's no elevators in Stonewall, and so no man, there was not much. I got introduced to one blind person that first after a year being blind, and he wasn't really my kind of people, because I've always been the way I am now and the way I was when I went blind, you know, I've always been kind of just me. You know, they introduced me to this dude who's like, I make YouTube videos about my kittens, and I'm like, I don't think we're on the same page, and maybe, maybe we would have been if I got to know him more, but because I got nothing wrong with Mike. But I mean, like, it just wasn't really my kind of people, even if I could see and he see and he could see, it would have been my kind of people. You gotta have similar mindsets to connect and relate, even because you can't just be like, Okay, how long you been diagnosed, what you got, where you been how much can you see? Awesome. What else you want to talk about? So, right, yeah, no. It took, actually, a few years until I got to really meet more other blind people. I'm sure you guys know who Molly Burke is. She messaged me and told me about this camp called extreme mobility, and that's a camp in Southern California and in Colorado where they take blind people to go do extreme sports. And that's that made sense. And she literally said, they're looking for one more person, blind male or visually impaired male, high functioning in in between the ages of, like, 17 and 25 and I'm like, did they say my name? Like I'm coming. And I showed up that I got accepted, and then in between the time I got accepted and went out there, I broke my arm, so I had like, a big cast on when I went out there and I show up. But they're like, are you serious? I'm like, yeah, let's go. Let's keep going. Let's do it. The only thing I didn't do is wakeboard. I went surfing when jet skiing. Went to other blind people. Had a skateboard, you know? But that's where I got to meet like 20 other blind people, which was actually really cool for me, because I got to, actually, I'm still best friends of some of them. And, yeah, no, that's when it made a difference. But until then, no, a small town, no, there was, there was nothing. There was just me. And even then, I just still just had, like, some of the same old friends I had. We still go driving. They'd let me drive. I'd still go skateboarding, and they'd still, like, school me and skate, you know, and but I'd still do better than them in some, some, some trips kind of thing, you know, right? We're still drinking beers at the skate park. You know, it's nothing changed, really, other than the one that one dude couldn't see and catch high fives every time.

R

Rob Mineault 24:10

So you were, you were an avid skateboarder before you lost your sight?

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 24:15

Yeah, I was.

R

Rob Mineault 24:16

Did it sort of take on a new meaning for you after you lost your sight? What key purpose did it serve in dealing with your sight loss?

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 24:25

Rob, dude is the way you word these things. You're a legend. Like, seriously, I'm not kidding. Yeah, yes. It took on the meaning of making me realize it still let me be me. It was right. When I went blind, I was keeping an eye on this indoor skate park that was being built in the city, and as soon as I got finished, I'm like, get me and my boys are going, my dad's like, No. And I'm like, why not? He's like, you're gonna get hurt. I'm like, probably, but you let me go snowboarding. He's yummy. Say no to that too. I'm like, no and but when I ended up. Told him, like, I'm gonna wait until the snow dries. I'm still gonna skate, dude. So I waited until the snow almost dried, and I asked the janitor for his shovel at school, shovel the sidewalk and threw the board down as soon as I stepped on it, it was home. It made me realize, and I'm never gonna use the word normal, because I wasn't normal before, you know, but I don't think anyone is. It made me be me again. It let me be me again, being on the board. And I knew I had to do that every day I possibly could. You know, I had to continue that. That was the thing I knew I had to do, and I have since. So I did. I did end up getting hurt, but that was this year, you know, that was, like, 14 years later.

R

Rob Mineault 25:39

And it's interesting too. We've talked to a lot of people on the show, and that you have a lot of people will talk to us about their experience with vision loss. I think a lot of people in the able bodied community just think of all the negative connotations when it comes to vision loss. Obviously it's, it's a it's a very hard process to go through, and some people really struggle. But it's also it's a transformative experience. And what I mean by that is that there are also positives along with it, maybe not positives with the sight loss, but positives in the sense that it can put you on a track. We've talked to people who were not athletes at all, and they lost their vision, and then five years later, they're going to the Paralympics. It puts you on a different path, and that path isn't inherently negative, and it can really change your life in ways that that you don't expect. And what this, the feeling that I'm getting from you is that you know your relationship with skateboarding, had you not lost your vision, I'm sure that you would have been a fun hobby, but you may not have had the passion that you have

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 27:01

Absolutely correct. Man, it would have been, like, it would have just been something I did. And even then, it wasn't something I would have been doing a lot. It would have been probably just classic electrician going to work, going, like, just, it wouldn't have been my priority. Whereas now it's, I wake up in the morning, I think I want to go skateboarding. I go to bed, I dream of skateboarding. You know, if I don't land what I've been working on at the skate park all day, I'm waiting until the next time I get there, because I'm gonna stomp it first time. Like, that's all I care about.

L

Lis Malone 27:29

You know, when I was looking at your information Brett and getting ready for this interview, it made me it actually reminded me of - Ryan and Rob, you guys interviewed Christine Ha, correct?

R

Ryan Fleury 27:41

Years ago at some point.

L

Lis Malone 27:42

Okay, so I interviewed her years ago. And for anyone who isn't familiar with Christine Ha, she is the first blind contestant to ever win a major cooking competition. She won Master Chef. Yeah, I can't remember what season it was. I want to say like three or four or something, sorry, Christine, if I just completely butchered that. And she's she's really fascinating, great interview, but I'll get to the point. She was telling me a story about how when she lost her vision, she had a moment where she was into her in her kitchen, and she couldn't even prepare herself a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, and that she had to go to get adaptive training and learn, you know, you know, home skills and stuff like that. And then, yeah, look at it. And then she goes on to, you know, win, you know, Master Chef. But she had told me that she had started snowboarding, and that was something new for her. And she said, yeah. She says, I think was because now that I don't see, I don't see the bottom of the hill, and takes away a lot of the fear, yeah. And so that was and so that's just, it just reminded me of that conversation I had with her, and a lot of the things that you're saying about how the perceptions change and how you redevelop your skills, but then suddenly are able to pick up a whole new set of skills, just based upon how your complete perspective changes throughout the process.

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 29:13

Oh, 100%. There's a very good example of that is when I was skating about in 2016. I was filming a video, and the piece in the skate park is called a volcano, and it looks like an upside down funnel, whereas, like, it looks like a volcano, but made out of concrete. And I remember being able to see and looking at those and going, that's ridiculous. Like, no way anyone has those. And everyone who does, you're just out of this world, out of this world. You know, it's the coolest thing to think of seeing. And I know I'd always go by and go, neat. There is. I walked up, I was in a skate park, and I felt it. And even though it was there and I felt it, I'm like, Oh, dude, cool. I should try this. I went back, like, put my markers down, walked backwards from it, so I knew I was in the right line. And just. In for it, gunned it and, like, cleared it, did a six foot spine transfer Indy and landed it. Like it took me two tries. It was, like, it was crazy. And this is the same way with a lot of things. Like, last year, I went down to San Francisco with my skate sponsor, hippie Mike, and his son, Kaylin. And there's something called the EMB 6. It's a big six stair. Like, really is, like eight stairs, but it's six and it's got a really gnarly run up. You land on bricks at an uphill like, actual pros hit it. That's what goes in. Professional skateboarders, like skate videos, they're part and I landed that last year, and it sounds like I'm bragging, but it was terrifying, absolutely terrify. You even see the video where I'm like, I don't know if I should do this again after the second try, and then hippie just yells, do it? Stay on the board. And he's my favorite person in the world, other than my wife and son, but he's my favorite person in the world. Like he's, he's the reason I'm skating right now. I'm just snapping my femur in January. But he when he said that, I'm like, Yeah, you know, what? Do it? Stay on the board. That's all I got to do. And I was more surprised than anybody else. And I landed it. I stayed on the board. I stood up, and I literally looked down. You could say, not look down, you know, I you can see it in the video. I hear it in the video where I'm like, what? Oh, my God. I was more surprised than anyone else. But yeah, I know it's the fearlessness gets taken away. It's the fearlessness that comes with it, and I like to say it's the stupidity come that comes from me.

L

Lis Malone 32:51

Well, let me ask you, Ryan, is there anything that has changed with you in your vision loss? I'm just wondering Ryan, because Ryan had a had very sudden vision loss, like, like you. Brett,

R

Ryan Fleury 33:11

So yeah, the only difference is, it was a car accident that smashed my face and took it instantaneously. I think I've said this before. I think the way we come out of something like this really depends on the supportive network of people you have around you, and if you are confident in your identity, then I think it's probably easier to come through the other side the same person you were before the accident or incident, because I'm not the same person I was when I when I had sight. I'm a better person now because of my blindness, there's a lot of things I don't do now that I'm blind, and that's because I'm lazy and, you know, I'll be honest and say I'm scared or terrified. You know, I lived in Whistler for a year, and I skied and boarded when I had sight, and I've never done it since I lost my sight. Do you want to I've thought about it. But again, part of me is, I have thought about it same with, you know, mountain biking, you know, I've mountain biked and living in Whistler. That's kind of what you do. You off work, and you go skating, boarding or biking.

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 34:39

I'm dead serious. So if you do ever want to try it, I know the right people to take you. There's both people that are trained to to do this with people that I know, and I got friends that aren't trained that would be way more fun to go with.

R

Ryan Fleury 34:49

Yeah, and, you know, it is something I have thought about before, and it's just a matter of getting out of that comfort zone, right? It's like grabbing the cane for the first time and walking out the door. Yeah, it's like, it's terrifying, that first step, second step, third step, but you have to start somewhere. And a lot of that, I think, comes from the group of people you have around you, the supportive network. You know, I had a had a mentor who kind of similar to you, Brett, who was a blind guy. He played guitar. I play guitar. He lost his sight in a car accident. I lost my sight in a car accident. He was about the same age when I lost my sight that he lost his sight. So, you know, we got along really well, and we could share the experience. But after that, I, you know, I wasn't living here in the Lower Mainland at the time. I was up in Kamloops. No, I lived there too, yeah, and there wasn't a lot of resources. And so, you know, again, I think it really depends on the environment you're in. If, if you had stayed in Manitoba, like you said, you wouldn't be the person you are today or where you are today. No, and if I was still sighted, I would not be who I am today, and wouldn't be doing the work I'm doing today. So I am a different person. It's a path that is chosen for you in some ways, but the journey is decided by the steps you choose to take.

R

Rob Mineault 36:13

Yeah, that's a really important part of these stories, is that, especially for people who are, who are looking at vision loss and trying to deal with it. Part of the reason why that that's so hard to deal with is that they feel like that's the end, like they're just like, oh my god, how am I going to go on? And that's why I think stories like yours, Brett, are so important to get out there in the world. It because what it shows people is that it's not the end. It's just it's a different path. It's just different. And you can do many things that you still want to do, you just have to do them differently.

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 36:48

That's one of my main things. I try to portray and tell everybody, is this, this not the end, exactly. And if you're stuck doing something the way you are and it's not working for you gotta, you can always find a way, like you got to find a way around that barrier, because there is a way for pretty much everything. You gotta just figure it out, man, find a way like I I remember the first time I had to put a black marker down on the whiter on, like, white concrete, and I knew that that last 2% of vision I got will help me find that when I'm like, when I'm going up to it last second, definitely. And it's still fast reflexes you gotta have, but that's adaptation. So what you got to do? And there's definitely times I've skated into telephone poles. I've skated into balls. I've skated off of the drop offs without knowing they were there. Yet. No It happens, but once you figure out, like, hippie mic industry, is this an indoor skate park, and hope we put tape down all over the park and, like, black tape all over the park, and it's great. I've also been to skate parks where I put tape down and then people take it off. I've also asked the municipality of places if they let me paint to the park. And they're like, No. I'm like, I'm not asking you to paint it. Can I paint it? And they're like, No. I'm like, Okay, I definitely won't. I still did. Yeah, no, it's wild. And it is definitely just being able to find a way in Ryan that was an amazing way of putting that dude. Like, I really like your journey. Dude it's awesome.

R

Ryan Fleury 38:13

Well, and I like your motto, and you should put it on a shirt, "stay on the board".

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 38:17

Yeah, that's awesome. That's Hippie. Got to give credit where credit's due. Hippie Mike yells at me all the time, "stay on the board". And there's even a part in the documentary that's coming out here that he he's literally says, I didn't lots of things that he put in his part. I didn't know he said, but there he was getting interviewed about me hitting the EMB 6, and he says, no, Brett is going to do everything in his power to stay on that board. I know that, and he's gonna land this. It just some matter of how many takes it's gonna take, or how many tries it's gonna take, and when he's gonna do it, but he's going to do everything in his power to stay on the board. It's just going the right way and getting the right speed.

R

Rob Mineault 38:58

Talk to us a little bit about - because you, you've started up a foundation, and I'm really, I'm really curious to hear about that. So what can you tell us about the foundation? And what do you guys do?

R

Rob Mineault 39:09

I mean, it's amazing. I know, you know, Ryan and I are both involved in assistive technology and the frustrating thing about assistive technology is there is all this amazing stuff out there that people can use, but unfortunately, a lot of it is very expensive, and a lot of it is out of reach for a lot of people, it's just out of reach.

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 39:09

That's exactly it. And I've done this for people in like areas where they live in like areas of the city, where they might not be able to afford things like that.

R

Rob Mineault 39:09

I also want to talk to you a little bit about TBK, which stands for, of course, The Blind Kid. Yeah. And talk a little bit about this branding and this label. Can you tell us a little bit about the origin of that?

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 39:09

So is, the foundation is me. When I went blind, I learned about the voice over and screen reader technology a lot later than I'd like to admit. I got an iPhone because we heard it's got Siri, and Siri became my best friend for a while, because it just felt like asking her every two minutes, what time is it? Read my notifications, what time is it? And then when somebody told me about voiceover, I can't, unfortunately, remember who told me about it, but that that was, like the biggest game changer, and we knew that an iPad would be more accepted in school and things like that. So my mom's work, a few people from her work came together and put some money together and got me an iPad. And when I realized how much that helped me, it was life changing, like I was able to graduate high school there, I was able to write essays, I was able to finish work and hand it in, because I. Right? Because it was all accessible. It's all it all read it back to me. And I knew how to type on a keyboard already, because it's tactile, you know, so I was able to do all that. And when I realized that, immediately I knew I had to do that for other people, I had to help other people, because it's not like there is a foundation I knew ever wasn't like there is a national anything for anybody that was going to help me get that. And so I because my mom's friends got it, you know, so I knew I got, well, they had to do it for me. I got to do it for other people. So I started the clothing line the blind kid. That did happen. It wasn't called visually impaired, not high. It was called the blind kid, Tbk, for short. I drew the

logo on the iPad because I tried doing with a poster board and big, thick Sharpies, but I kept losing where I put the marker, like where it ended, or physically lost the marker rolled under the desk, but I was able to do it on the iPad, and it's not like I could see it better on the iPad or anything like that. It's just I was using my finger. It was easier that way. So I would scribble down a bunch of different things and be like, what does this look like? How about this? And I thought, I'm like, how about I smash the letters T, B and K together? And I did that, and then I brought it to a graphic designer so it didn't look like a two year old did it, but he'd made it look really cool. And then I put that on shirts, and I used that to fund the foundation. So money from every shirt sold went to the foundation, and once I finally got enough to buy an iPad, a keyboard, a smart cover and a little pair of headphones, then, because we know how loud and annoying VoiceOver is for the sighted folk, I asked the Manitoba Board of Education for disabilities if they can help me find my teacher who is coming out, and Joanne Tokar, she helped me. I asked him, cute, find me another blind kid, potentially one that just lost his vision, potentially between these ages and these ages, and I'd like them to be just blind. Like just someone who's gone through what I've gone through. And she found one. I got the mom's phone number. I called the mom, and I'm like, hey, has this so and so's mom, and she's like, yes, my God, Hi, I'm Brad the blind kid. And she's like, well, that's my Okay. Does your son have an iPad that can help him with school? Because it has screen reader technology on it? She's like, No. I mean, I heard that, right? I'm like, Well, is it all right if I give him one tomorrow at school? And then the mountain of just how grateful the moms are is what warms my heart, you know? So I call this principal at school, and I'm like, can I come in the school? Because obviously I was from somewhere else. So they're like, yes. And I'm like, sweet. So I go in, I didn't even tell the student at all. I didn't even tell the teacher. I just knock on the door and I'm like, Hey, is Mike here? And he's like, yes. I'm like, hey dude, I'm gonna come up to you, so I give him, I hand him the iPad, and I'm like, Hey, cute. This is for you. It's, it's an iPad. It's got something called VoiceOver on it. Your TA will teach you all about it. I gotta go bye. And that's it. Like, I don't make, I don't I don't want to make a big thing out of it, what I'm doing. And I just want to be able to just want to be able to help and get out of there, you know. And it probably looks pretty funny for the rest of the students, seeing some other blind kid coming up with other blind kid and going, here you go, bye, and then I just leave, you know. And I've done that a few times, probably over the past 14 years, I've done it about six times, because it takes a while to get that kind of money up when you're doing it, just from T shirts and donations, and just throw in as many fundraisers as I can. It's a long journey to do that and or, like, say, My wife got one of those bank accounts when they give you an iPad, when you open it, kind of thing. We gave that away because she's great, and she's like, Yeah, just give it away. Do it. And so I'm just, anywhere I can get it, I do that. And so that's what my foundation is all about. Right now, my dream is to make it way bigger. Like, you know how amazing it'd be to be able to give like, a blind starter kit, you know, like, here's a MacBook, here's an iPod or an iPhone, here's an iPad, here's a set of Ray Ban Metas, and here, like, and here, you know, like, you got it now, like, here's everything you can need. So that's the dream, but that's like a \$5,000 kit, and that's expensive. I can help five kids at once with that right now. So that's, that's, that's the Foundation, man. And that's just, it feels so good to do it like, I think I do it more for me than them at this point.

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 42:55

Yeah, man, it really started from walking around school and just kids not really knowing how to keep their mouth shut. You know, like, there goes the blind kid. There goes the blind kid. When I'm just walking past them, not, not the deaf kid, boys and girls, it's like, I hear that, but it was never a problem for me. Like, usually, like, we've all been bullied, and I was a small kid with eyes that moved back and forth because I had nystagmus as well since I was born. So there's, there's, there was always that in the back end of me, so I knew how to handle that kind of stuff. It never really bothered me. I just went and did my own thing. But it really hit me one time when a friend of mine came up and she's like, Hey, blind kid, how's it going, you know? And I like, I really didn't bother me at a moment. At that moment, I literally went to myself, That's it. That's right. Okay, yeah, I am the blind kid. what's up? And then I shortened into Tbk, because that sounds pretty cool. I love being called Tbk around, you know? I used to go to the bar, go to the hip hop show, stuff like that. And, you know, TV guys here, what's up? You know, it sounds pretty cool. So that happened, and that's where I got that. So that's where I made the name. I made the brand, and I made it because I help other blind kids. I am the blanket. I'm a kid at heart. Man, we all should be and but that's where it always started, and that's where it carried through. Like, I know I'm 30 now, and I used to say, well, kid, rock still calls himself kid, but that's not really a good I don't think I want to.

R

Rob Mineault 46:33

I love that, because you know, really what, what's happened is, you know, you took something own it that people said about you, and you've turned that belongs to you. Yeah?

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 46:44

It's like, you call me the Blind Kid, pay me for it. And then you're helping somebody else. Now, you know, like, now I've taken it from being bullied with it, people who used to bully me about that. Again, bullying is a weird word for that, because it was saying something in a derogatory term, not saying in an endearing term. And I took that and turned it around to be like, okay, now you got to buy this shirt off me so you can help this other blind kid out.

R

Rob Mineault 47:11

Yeah, I love that. And it's almost like it must feel kind of empowering,

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 47:17

Oh, yeah. A badge of honor, man.

R

Rob Mineault 47:20

You're taking control of your own story, in a way, because you've taken that, you've made it into a brand, and turned it into like this, this advocacy movement.

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 47:30

Thank you. I actually just started printing out some more new shirts recently, and I changed the logo a bit. Well, I know I keep, kept the same logo, but I also got a new one, and it's a little outline of a rubber duck with the logo on them. I like rubber ducks got a tattoo of it on my butt.

R

Rob Mineault 47:48

It's funny. We talked to a lot of people too, and I often want to ask them about labels I feel like that can be super empowering. And it you with skateboarding. It's great how you've built that up, but at some point, is it a bit of a double edged sword? Because I would think that it can be kind of frustrating, because it's, it becomes part of that skateboarding identity, like, you're, you're that, you know, oh, he's that Brett, he's that blind skateboarder. Does it ever, like, sort of piss you off? Because it's kind of like, well, you know, sometimes I just want to be recognized as Brett and or just about the skateboarding Does, does it ever kind of bum you out?

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 48:34

Uh, personally, no, but also yes. I know that's a really bad answer. But like, yes, it's because, like, when I'm with the boys, they always just know me as Brett, like they don't. There's not being a blind skater, because I'm keeping up with them. Honestly, it has nothing to do with being a blind skater. But when it's in the public I yeah, it can be kind of people think they got to hold my hands sometimes, and they don't. And that gets a little tiring. And also here in the whole like, blind kid blanket, blind kid, it's like, yeah, I am. But also some people are all like, oh, isn't blind of the wrong word, isn't it visually impaired and all of that. And it's like, dude, I'm calling myself the blind kid. Like, that's, it's, it's run with it, you know? And that's kind of where we came from with wanting to name the documentary "Blind Corners". They wanted to change that because, like, well, that's not a very good word. I'm, like, I'm the blind kid, dude. Like, it's fine. I own it enough to know that I go ahead. Like, it's it's cool with me. But if you try to put me in that box, and we just wouldn't associate it.

R

Rob Mineault 49:42

One more question. Then I promise we're going to talk about the documentary, because I'm really I'm really excited to talk about that too. But before we get there, I want to talk about the skateboarding community, because as we've been talking, I'm kind of curious to know whether your presence and your work in the community, do you feel like it's starting to change? Is it becoming more inclusive? Or do you find that, you know, there's still a lot of ableism out there that are sure that shows up in, you know, a variety of different ways?

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 50:08

To be real, everyone's super cool about me being a blind skateboarder. It's when I show up places they're stoked about it. It's never like ableist was, like, you can't do that, because it's either I'll show you, or it's like, you're not important enough to be a part of that. It's always that's really cool. Can you want to skate with me? Like, Yeah, as long as you show me where we're skating first. Like, show me where we're going. And my my team, my boys, they're awesome. Like, my team is, I'm on the Hippy Mike skate team, Hippy Mike Industry Skate Team, and they are the most inclusive. Like the day I showed up at HMI, Hippy was like, come here. Let me show you around the park, if you want. I'm like, yep, show me around the park. He's like, what can we do to make this work better for you? And immediately him, his son, and I started putting tape lines down, because that's what I found works best for me, and also, I've even one of that park I definitely didn't spray paint lines on. It's a very white park. Like, like the concrete is very, very light, very white, and when I put those lines down hippies, hippie literally said he's, like, I saw those. And that helps us, because it's too white for everyone else, even too like, having those lines on the transitions makes it easier, so it's ironically inclusive the other way around as well. But everyone's been so cool about it. And there's even been times where I've walked into a skate park at skate shop looking for a sponsor, and he's like, yeah, I'll sponsor you right now. And I'm like, Well, hold on, like, watch me skate first. Don't just say yes, because I told you I'm a blind skateboarder. So, yeah, no, I've been very lucky because I know I everyone else doesn't have the same story as me, same experience as I do. I know that, and I'm very grateful for the experiences I've had in the skate community and in just the regular community of people accepting me for being the blind skater and being who I am, well, being brat dude, being Brett and being the blind skater who I am, like, I've been pretty dope. It's been pretty dope. And there's also, there's, honestly, there's more animosity, isn't the right word, but there's more, like, competition for in the blind skate community than there is with me being a part of the regular skate community, I would get more accepted there. And we, we do a lot of like, when I went down with Hippy Mike, down to San Francisco, skating with him and his son. We I got a clip everywhere we went, because Hippy found spots for me to either skate that he knew I could or found something that he thought I might be able to do it. So give it a shot and to the point like we went to an underground under a bridge DIY skate park, which is just like big concrete walls with like, quarter pipes going up to a built of concrete too. And like, you gotta go fast, and if you go down, you go down hard. And it went from teaching me how to, like, aiming me in the right direction to then going back further and further and further and getting more speed to be able to actually rip up the wall around the corner and down the other wall. And I want to see, even if I can see, I never would have thought of doing that. I never would think that I could do that when I could see. So it is all a part of the community that I have, and I'm super stoked to have my community.

R

Rob Mineault 53:12

Okay, talk to us a little bit about the documentary, tell us what it is and how it all came about.

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 53:18

So it's called 'Blind Corners' currently, and it's because everyone's had to experience blind corners, but not, not as many as us, you know, and every corner is blind for us. But it started out because I went to the skate park with hippie that first time, and he immediately thought, I gotta, I gotta put more attention on this kid. This is awesome, because the first day I was there, he taught me how to do a trick I've been trying to do since I was, like, 12, and I just constantly tried and landed on my head, because it's called a hand plant you go up the quarter pipe, put your hand on the ground, grab your board and go over yourself and it I've landed on my head a lot try on that one and but he taught me how to do it. Just literally taught me how. And then he I did it that day. So he's like, Oh, we got something here. So I can't kept going back there, and I just made a relationship, and I tried to get out there any way I could. And that's that's in Hope. And I'm Langley, that's like an hour and 20 minutes away. But at that moment, I got to be part of that, that skate park, that team, that community, because HMI is literally known for being the most inclusive place, like everybody's welcome there, and honestly, everyone's got something going on with them, but mine's just blind. But Hippie took me under his wing. We went and did some crazy things, like skateboarded all summer. Went skating in different places. He took me places I'd never been. Just taught me how to do things there, whereas I used only skate places I was comfortable or a little bit less crazy things, and he put me up to and that was a big part of it, is the never giving up attitude that he saw in me. And I've always had a story to tell over the past, since I went blind, like that's my story, I like to think is pretty gnarly, and I always think that it should be told people need to know that you can't give up. Got to find a way. You got to figure out. You got to stay on the board. And when I with that story with Hippie learning more about me, he's like, we got it. We got to tell more people this. Like people need to hear this. The world has so much negativity in it right now. We need a good story to tell. And we got people together about a year and a half ago, we started filming. Had a few film days. We knew we had to do it. So we, Hippie, started pulling the strings. Man, it's all on him. I'm gonna be honest. He's the best. He started pulling the strings. He got me, he got me in front of the camera. My parents were in town. We got them in front of the camera, my wife in front of the camera, people who've been a part of the journey in front of the camera. And we just, we just interviewed him. And it was all just stories about me being a blind skateboarder. It was all about me being blind, going blind, the darker times I went through the motivation of speaking, the people the music career have had just little bits of this, little bits of that, and then a bunch of clips of me skating and that kind of told the story of going blind. But me, I had to prove it. I had to prove the whole never giving up things. So when we had an edit made of it, the videographer is like, we need 10 more minutes if you want to sell it to broadcasting. You know we need, if you we need 10 more minutes to make it at least 25 minutes, 22 minutes. I'm like, Okay, well, let's go over another skate day. Let's do it like I landed a six stair with Hippie and San Fran. So why don't we go and do another six stairs somewhere like that'll be cool without Hippie. So I know that I could do it because he taught me. He coached me. Guess what? I was wrong. We and I didn't need to get that last stair. Said I got enough footage during the day skateboarding at a different Park. But we went to the sixth stair that my friend David Getty showed me. The spot is a small six. It's easy. I got it. The light was blasting my eyes, and there was salt on the ground. It was January 19. And I landed, uh, two of them. I didn't land, like, eight of them, two of them. I did, like, really bad landings, and

rolled my ankle on one of them. And I'm like, I don't know if I should try again. You know, I don't know if I should do this. This might be stupid of me to try it again. Like I can barely walk right now. I can kind of skate. I'm like, You know what? I'm gonna give it one more shot. Because if it's if it's a bad one, that's a break. But if it's a good one. That's a good clip. It wasn't a good clip. I landed with one foot on the board and one foot on the concrete, and the board kept going, and I snapped my femur about two inches below my hip, and then gave it a spiral fracture, because I tried putting it back in place, thinking it was just a dislocated hip. And then my buddy's like, stop. I'm like, good call. And I'm on the ground. They called an ambulance. I'm just laying on my head, on my backpack, just chilling. You know, there's a picture of me, a pretty iconic picture of me just laying there, being like, All right, well, let's wait, because I can't stand up. I tried standing up, and it felt like standing on water. It was so weird. And I got to go for my first ride in an ambulance. They're putting me on the on the board or on the stretcher, and they had to cut my pants off. And first they cut my shoelaces, take my shoe off. I was pissed, dude. I'm like, you say, are you gonna release that? And then they started cutting my pants off, and they get up to my hip, and I'm like, hold on. I like this belt. So I started, I take my belt off, and it's like a sweaty leather belt. So those aren't easy to pull through denim. And I'm like, ripping off. The paramedics are staring at me like, you have an insane like, Dude, stop. We're gonna cut that off. I'm like, No, so I take it off. I'm like, here, David, take my belt, please. He's like, okay, he takes it and they cut the rest my pants off. They put me on the stretcher, they roll me onto it, you know, they give me the blabbing gas. And I'm like, sweet, they get me into the they get me into the ambulance. And I'm like, we're not giving me any IVs or anything like that, right? Like, I'm more worried about needles. Still, I'm not even joking. I'm saying I don't want a needle. I don't want an IV, until we get to the hospital. You better not put one of those on me in the ambulance. That's a moving vehicle that don't do that. That's that was my concern. And she did, of course, friggin lied to me, dude, but she was still super nice about it. And she was nice. I called Hippie first, and I'm like, hey, man, I don't think I'm gonna make it to the skate park tonight. He was like, why not? Like, I'm on my way to the hospital. He's like, whoa, dude, you ruined the documentary. Man, I told you not to go too hard. I'm like, I Well, yeah, well, I didn't mean to. I thought I could land it. He's like, either what happened? I'm like, I might have dislocated my hip or broken something. He's like, if you broke something, you'd be screaming at me. I'm like, oh, okay, cool. And at this point, I obviously didn't know it's broken yet. I'm like, okay, cool, whatever. Sweet, let's go. So I call my wife, and I'm like, hey babe, on my way to the hospital. Can you come meet me there? She's like, what you know? I'm like, yeah, it's all good. I call my Mom. I'm like, it's all good, Mom. I'm on my hospital. I'm on my first ride in an ambulance. This is sweet. And, like, they even lit it up, like, the lights and sirens for the ride, oh, because we feel. Right? Everyone was having, I was having fun with it, and they're all doing their best at joining keep my energy right. They we got all the footage. He got the footage me laying down. God, didn't even drop the camera to go. Be like, are you okay? Thankfully, I'm happy about that. That's a professional, yeah, that's right. I was very, very happy about that. And thankfully, we got it from two angles. So my buddy was filming it on his phone, and we got it on a 4k camera. But what this all proves is, well, when I got to the hospital, they x rayed it right away, and they're like, yeah, that snapped in two and a spiral fracture. And I'm like, Oh, that's not good, dude. So they give me surgery the next day, I have a metal bar for my knee to my hip. I got two screws down by my knee. Got a screw up by my hip. I had 38 staples in me, and it was, it was pretty intense being there for like, four days. And this is where there's some of that ableism is where to guess. I don't know when they're doing the I have to walk the day they do the surgery to make sure they did the right surgery, or, like, make sure they did it right. I mean, the right surgery, yeah, it's weird. So they, they just holding on to my gown while I'm walking, like, barely, not helping me in the blind way whatsoever. And they wrote down on my sheet being like, he still needs assistance, so he has to stay here another day. And I'm like, they didn't write down why they didn't write down that I needed it because

I'm blind, so I told the doctor. I'm like, dude, they lied to me, saying it's because you're still on too many drugs. I'm like, no, I'm taking the least amount because I don't want to be here and I don't like pain pills. I don't like that. I want to feel what's going on. And every day, I was, like, bending my knee every half an hour to try and, like, make sure my leg didn't seize up. Any of that, I was determined, right? So I told him, I'm like, I'm getting out of here if you discharge me or not. So I'm out, you know? And I left. I did. I'm like, I'm out of here. So I'm blue in the face about never giving up, because, yeah, I went blind, and I still skateboard, but it's so me to prove it. And you even hear me in one of the scenes after the break in the ambulance going, I'm sorry I didn't get the shot. Guys, it couldn't be more me, you know. And belligerently me and I went after that, we got some footage of recovery, and about six months later, we got footage of me skating again, man, and I got back in the board, and the day I started skating, and Hippie taught me a new trick, something called the Gravitron, where you go into a bowl from the top at an angle, and wrap around the top of the ball and then go in. And that's like, I'm not even a ball skater. He just taught me how to do it and took me out with him when he still wants skating. I'm like, as long as I'm not off the team. He's like, You think you can get off the team because you snapped your femur? He's like, no, like, I'm not giving up on you. You didn't give up, you know? I mean, like, it was beautiful. And so that's what the whole documentary is. It's about never giving up. It's about knowing that there's you gotta find a way. I got a bigger board to start skating just again so I can get it under my feet again. I found a way, and now I'm back to normal skating. Now. I'm jumping over stairs again. I'm hitting the half pipe again. I'm doing hand plants again. It's that's amazing, man, skateboarding is all part of my life.

R

Rob Mineault 1:03:19

Wow, wow. Okay, okay, I'm excited. Okay, so how do people see this thing? What's, what's happening with it? And where can people find out, like, more information about you?

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 1:03:33

So there's a premiere of it next month, in November, because right now, it's October. So this might be coming out in November, I don't know. So there's a premiere November 28 in Abbotsford at a place called Open Space. You can go to my Facebook page, The Blind Kid, TBK, or Tbk The Blind Kid, I can't remember, but either way, it's the same thing. You'll find it and on there you can see the documentary trailer, but you can also find the event link on there that has a ticket link in there, all the information about where to go to get it. The tickets are only \$10 and anything over, I think they're \$20 but anything over that is a donation. It's just to go to anything over that goes towards the Foundation to help other blind kids, man, and at the at the premiere, it's gonna, we're gonna have a few people speaking, then it's gonna be the premiere, then it's gonna be a question and answer panel of me and Hippie and Tim, the videographer. And it's, I'm just so excited, man. I just want people to come watch it and feel good when they leave, you know. And there's also a private invite only one that I'm going to be inviting you guys, you three, two of or Lis, it sounds like you're on the East Coast, so you can fly in if you'd like to. That'd be pretty cool. I got a couple people flying in from Detroit. I got a couple people flying people flying in from all over the place. But I want you guys to come to both.

L Lis Malone 1:04:47
I'm there in spirit.

B Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 1:04:49
Okay, I'll have a have an empty seat for you.

L Lis Malone 1:04:50
Yeah, I always get the best seat that way.

B Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 1:04:57
But, yeah, no, that's where we can you can come see it's not gonna be online anywhere. It's only in person, because it's way better there, man. It's way better doing things and producing community based. Come out, be with each other, cry with each other, laugh with each other, you know? And that's where that's gonna happen. You can find everything on me. I'm on Instagram at The Blind Kid, TBK again, or TBK, The Blind Kid. They're always one or the other, you know. I've got some music out on there too, but it's all skateboarding and music for me, man, and I've got the Foundation. My website isn't actually up right now. It got taken down by WIX. It wasn't for anything bad. It's just they'd stopped using they took the donation button away for no reason. So I'm like, well, that was my main purpose, other than selling T shirts. So website should be up very soon You can find me, really, anywhere you Google the blind kid, man, you'll find me. Or Instagram the blind kid. It's, I've said that way too many times now,

R Rob Mineault 1:06:07
Yeah, you can never say it too many times, that's all marketing. You can never say too many times. Yeah.

B Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 1:06:13
Or you can find me at HMI, probably skateboarding or at the Aldergrove skate park.

R

Rob Mineault 1:06:19

There you go. Just not at the hospital.

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 1:06:22

No, no, hopefully not again, man. My wife told me I'm not allowed to jump over six stairs anymore. It's either seven or five.

R

Rob Mineault 1:06:30

Okay, well, that's good. She's a reasonable lady.

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 1:06:33

Yeah, she didn't say the seven or five thing. I told her that, man. You guys are so awesome. I really appreciate you guys so much for having me on here too. Like, I you guys have the best questions ever. Like, you guys are so incredible, and you do so much good for the community. And the people that watch this probably feel amazing every time they watch an episode or listen to an episode. And you guys have had such cool people on here. Just thank you so much for what you guys do.

R

Rob Mineault 1:06:59

Well and thank you and listen. Come back anytime. We have lots more questions for you and lots more stuff to talk about. So you're, you're welcome anytime, sir. And yeah, we'll, we'll, for sure, well, we'll see you at the premiere.

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 1:07:12

Yeah, man, let's, let's, let's do this again. We can be more silly, more fun with it, because that's who I am, more or less, had to be a lot more serious, because we're getting to know who we are, man. But you know, we can have a lot of fun with it next time too, not like we didn't this time, but you guys are awesome, dude. Thank you.

R

Rob Mineault 1:07:26

All right, sir. All right, take care.

L

Lis Malone 1:07:28

Bye. Bye. Nice to meet you.

B

Brett "The Blind Kid" Devloo 1:07:31

You too.

L

Lis Malone 1:07:32

You know, I think Rob, you should, like, bring a cardboard cutout of me and we'll but we're gonna, like, you know, hourglass, my figure a little more. Yeah, I'm gonna be, I want to be a little taller than I am, and then I can be seated. I could be seated next to you at the at the event.

R

Rob Mineault 1:07:55

Yeah, sounds good, yeah. Well, we can make that happen. Yeah, you know, okay, send me the notes, and we'll, oh, we'll start working on it, because it's a month away.

L

Lis Malone 1:08:05

We gotta superimpose my head on like a book, like a really good body. Like, a lot of options out there. Yeah, there is a lot of good bodies out there, just none of them are on me.

R

Rob Mineault 1:08:20

I'm excited. I really want to see this, and not because I, you know, I have a desire to see watch somebody break their femur in HD. But no, it sounds like it's, it sounds like a great event, and I'm really gonna be, gonna be fun to meet him. What a cool guy, you know. And we've said this before, like growing up with vision loss in a small town with limited resources, if any, resources, and no community around you of peers or mentors, that's a real tough sell.

R

Ryan Fleury 1:08:53

Yeah, it's a recipe for disaster.

R

Rob Mineault 1:08:55

It is. And the fact that he came through with flying colors, and, where he's at ... See, that was a fun episode, and it Lis's first episode back. Yeah, I tell you, man, like this. I'm not even kidding, you should go back and listen to the shows over the past like month, or however long you've you've been out. Not guests fault at all. Guests were phenomenal, but the shows were a little dry.

R

Ryan Fleury 1:09:27

There was something missing. I made the right choice when I reached out to you to become a host.

L

Lis Malone 1:09:37

You were missing your, your your special sauce on your Big Mac, yeah, that's right. Special sauce. You guys are the two patties and I'm the special sauce.

R

Rob Mineault 1:09:46

Yep, yeah, that works.

L


Lis Malone 1:09:49


Then that makes then Steve is our sesame seed bun. Steve is the sesame seed bun, yeah, yeah. But you guys are the beef patties.


R


Rob Mineault 1:10:00


I don't know who the cheese is, but I'm not.


 Lis Malone 1:10:03
I don't bring the cheese.


 Rob Mineault 1:10:06
That being said,


 Ryan Fleury 1:10:07
That's gonna both do it for us this week.

 Ryan Fleury 1:10:10
That is gonna do it for us this week. But where can people find us?

 Ryan Fleury 1:10:14
They can find us online, at www.atbanter.com

 Rob Mineault 1:10:17
They can also drop us an email if they said desire, at cowbell@atbanter.com Yeah, I think you startled, Brett with the cowbell. I was actually, I kind of mocked you for a while there where you're just like, maybe we should trigger warning for that. But he legitimately sounded startled when you did that.

 Ryan Fleury 1:10:40
So, yeah, well, there is, there is a place for that. That's why you hear them on TV. You know, they issue trigger warnings, contain flashing lights and all sorts of stuff.

 Lis Malone 1:10:51
Ryan, always scaring the guests.

R

Rob Mineault 1:10:53

That's right. So there you go.

L

Lis Malone 1:10:56

Well, that's a warning. That's a warning to the guests. Hey, you better listen to the show first before you come on. Don't just, don't just come on the show.

R

Rob Mineault 1:11:03

Do your homework, everybody. It's not our fault.

R

Rob Mineault 1:11:06

All right. Bye.

R

Rob Mineault 1:11:07

All right. Anyways, that is going to do it for us this week. Big Thanks, of course, to Brett for joining us, and we will see everybody next week.

S

Steve Barclay 1:11:23

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