

A romantic close-up photograph of a man and a woman. The man is on the left, leaning towards the woman on the right. They are both looking down and appear to be about to kiss. The lighting is soft and intimate, highlighting their profiles. The background is dark, making the subjects stand out.

NIGHT OWL

More Than Friends
FREE READ

Lila Pearce

More Than Friends By Lila Pearce - <http://www.lilapearcewrites.com>

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Title: More Than Friends

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More Than Friends

The small, square bedroom glowed eerily with the flickering light of the television. Aimee relaxed against Derrick's shoulder, leaning against the wall and letting the weight of his muscular armrest over her shoulders. She breathed in the comforting smell of the t-shirt he'd been wearing all day. She could hear Derrick's roommates tromping around the living room as they got ready to leave. They'd been making fun of him all afternoon because he volunteered to hang out with her instead of going out to the bar. Normally they all went out together, but losing her driver's license last week hadn't made her the most popular one in their group for going out.

"You sure you don't want to go?" Aimee poked Derrick in the side, just under the ribcage, where she knew it would make him jump. "You don't have to pay for my mistake."

"Nah." Derrick smiled a cocky smile. "Besides, I know you'll make it up to me."

"Oh really, and how will I do that?"

"You'll have to think of something good." Derrick pinched the soft skin above her elbow.

Aimee laughed. They'd been flirting ever since they had met through Derrick's best friend Aaron four months ago and became friends immediately. "You are amazingly self-assured, has anyone ever told you that?" She punched

him lightly in the arm, letting her loose fist bounce off of his muscle.

“Yeah right, you know you want me.” He wrapped his arm around her neck and locked her into a wrestling hold against his chest. The door to the hallway banged shut as Derrick’s roommates left with a chorus of shouted good-byes. The apartment was suddenly quiet, the sound of the movie the only noise they could hear.

“Hey, let go, the commercials are over,” Aimee protested and sat up on the bed.

They settled into comfortable but tense silence, neither of them really watching the movie, both aware that they were now alone in the apartment.

“I hate scary movies,” Aimee complained as she scooted back to sneak underneath Derrick’s arm again.

“Hey Aimee,” Derrick whispered as he leaned in to her.

She turned her face toward him without taking her eyes from the movie.

“What?”

“Boo!” He shouted and grabbed her arms.

Aimee jumped as an involuntary shriek escaped her lips. “You jerk!” She grabbed Derrick’s lumpy pillow and smacked him in the stomach with it. Pouting in pretend anger she glared at him as a thrill of excitement shivered through her veins. She reached up to push Derrick’s shaggy blonde curls out of his face. He winked at her and wiggled his eyebrows, a confident smirk lingering on his lips.

The sparkle in his eyes made her catch her breath. Her heart hammered against

her ribs. Realizing she wanted him to kiss her, she snapped her attention back to the TV.

Derrick started tracing his fingertips up and down her arm. She could feel the conceited smile on his face even without looking at him. His t-shirt was soft against her cheek. His heartbeat thudded dully in her ear, drowning out the noise from the movie. The room became warm and her skin tingled under his touch. When he leaned to the side to lie down she let him pull her in front of him, snuggling into his body with her curves. Neither one of them spoke, but the movie was forgotten.

Aimee's mind raced with what-if's. They had become best friends—what if what they were doing ended it? What if Aaron wasn't really over her like he said? What if they gave in—and it wasn't good? What if it was? Every question mark raised her heart rate until she was certain Derrick could feel her anxiety with his fingertips, which were still tracing light patterns up and down her arm. Goosebumps rose all over her body as she felt Derrick's warm breath against her neck, sending her worried thoughts into a tailspin.

She wanted to tell him to stop, but at the same time her body didn't want him to. It had been months since her last boyfriend, not counting the mistake she made with Aaron. The last thing she wanted to do was to lose Derrick's friendship if the relationship didn't work out. A sudden thought froze the blood in her veins—what if he didn't even want a relationship? As much as she didn't want to have that awkward conversation, she had to say something before it was

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too late. Just as she opened her mouth to stop him, Derrick slithered his other arm underneath her to draw her in for a close hug. Her heart pounded, wanting so badly to believe that he thought of her as more than a friend. The hand that had been stroking her arm came up to caress her cheek. She sighed in contentment. It was too late; she gave in to her heart's desire and abandoned herself to the physical sensation of his muscular chest against her back and his hips pressed against hers.

His knuckles skidded lightly across her face, filling her with a warm glow. Aimee lay still, letting his fingers trail along her jaw line and across her chin. Derrick's touch grew more tentative as his hand swept past her mouth. Aimee parted her lips, catching his thumb with the bottom one and kissing it lightly. She felt him go still behind her, holding his hand motionless as she grew bolder and took his thumb in her mouth, embracing it with her tongue.

Derrick turned her face back toward him and she rolled over, following his lead. For one agonizingly slow moment their eyes locked, asking the question both were afraid to voice. Aimee held her breath, hoping he wasn't going to stop now. She shivered in anticipation as his hands stroked her back. There was something almost vulnerable glimmering behind his confident façade; she couldn't help but kiss him.

A devilish thought sparked in the back of her mind—he wasn't sure she really wanted this. Aimee smiled against his kiss. Under all that bravado he was just as scared as she was. She waited until his arms snaked around her in a

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crushing hug; she wasn't going to be satisfied by a little bit of fooling around tonight.

Aimee rolled onto her back, pulling Derrick down on top of her. Grabbing his t-shirt with both hands she started to pull it over his shoulders.

“Wait,” he broke his hungry kiss, pushing himself up on his hands. “Are you sure—”

With a mocking raise of her eyebrows Aimee pulled her own shirt off and dropped it on the floor beside the bed. Derrick smiled at the challenge in her eyes. His shirt landed in a crumpled pile on top of hers as he let his weight fall back down on her body. He snuck one hand behind her back, unsnapping her bra in a matter of seconds and taking it off. For a brief moment Aimee thought about how much practice that must have taken—a thought that was erased immediately as his fingers pinched a nipple. A gasp of delight sprang from her throat, encouraging another pinch. Derrick hardened against her hip, drawing an immediate response from deep within her. In that moment she knew that she wanted him, no matter what it meant for their friendship.

The small bedroom seemed hot, the flickering light of the television casting mobile shadows across Derrick's sculpted chest as he sat back on his knees, straddling her midsection. Staring down into her eyes he ran one finger across her skin just above the waist of her jeans. Her back arched toward his touch and she bit her lip to keep from whimpering. She closed her eyes, relishing the sensation of his gentle strokes. Her breath started to come in shallow gasps that

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she fought to subdue.

His hand paused as it came to the button of her jeans. Afraid he was going to stop again, Aimee grabbed the waistband of his pants and undid the button. The amazed look on Derrick's face made her smile again. He obviously hadn't expected this. Aimee slid his zipper down far enough to reach her hand down the front of his pants, stroking the length of his erection.

"So that's why you're so arrogant," she teased him with a giggle, wrapping her hand firmly around him and tugging playfully.

Derrick snatched her wrists away and pinned them to the mattress at her sides before slipping out of his pants.

"Leave them there," he commanded when she moved to take off her own. He leaned over to kiss her stomach just above her jeans. His unruly curls tumbled forward, tickling her. Soft kisses trailed all the way up her body to the hollow of her neck and the sensitive spot just behind her ear. She felt herself tremble as he sucked on her earlobe. Breathing hard, she pushed her hips up against his body.

Having nothing else to do with her hands, Aimee curled her fingers into the sheets. The past four months of flirting and pent-up sexual frustration made her skin tingle under Derrick's lips. She set her lips in a hard line, determined not to beg. He unfastened her jeans and his mouth found one of her tender nipples, flicking it lightly with his tongue. She felt the electric jolt of pleasure all the way down to her core. Her underwear grew damp as Derrick pushed her jeans down

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to her knees. Aimee wriggled out of them the rest of the way, kicking them to the floor.

Their bodies were both glistening with the sheen of sweat and reflections of the movie, both of them breathing quickly. Aimee cried out as Derrick's teeth bit down on her nipple, her back arching of its own accord. She wrapped her arms around his back, digging in with her fingernails, trying to pull him closer as his fingers rolled her other nipple in a firm pinch.

"I said, leave them there," Derrick repeated, pushing her arms back down on the mattress.

"Or what?" she asked innocently, making her eyes round and simpering.

Instead of answering, Derrick bit down on her nipple again, harder. She couldn't stop the cry of excitement from escaping her lips.

"And that's supposed to stop me?" Aimee giggled. She could play this game. "What if I do this?" Reaching up one of her hands she traced it up the outside of Derrick's naked leg. She was rewarded with another nibble that sent shivers racing down her back. "And this?" Aimee dragged her fingernails up the inside of his thigh, feeling the heat of his erection against the back of her hand. This time his bite was not gentle or quick. He lifted her breast by the nipple with his teeth, shaking his head back and forth. The wet spot between her legs grew. With a devilish glint in her eyes, she rolled the head of his penis into her fist and squeezed.

Derrick's eyes closed as he threw his head back with a drawn-out moan.

“And what if I do...this?” Aimee reached up with her free hand to pinch her own nipple, delighted at the miniature shock as it grew hard under her touch.

Derrick simply stared at her, his eyes unbelieving. Aimee let the hand wrapped around him drop, moving it to the waistband of her underwear.

“Not so fast,” Derrick snatched her hand away, replacing it with his own. He pushed through her folds, seeking out the center of her desire. Aimee’s back arched again as he found it, teasing her with his fingertips. She couldn’t stand it anymore. Pushing him back, she yanked off her underwear and straddled his lap, pushing her eager breasts in his face. He took the bait between his teeth, clamping down hard. A loud moan hummed in her throat. She positioned herself over him, feeling his throbbing head against her wet opening.

They both sighed in pleasure and Aimee slid down on top of him, drawing him into her depths. Satisfaction flowed through her veins with her pulsing heartbeat. Derrick fell forward on top of her, pinning her down with his hips, sliding in and out of her in agonizingly slow strokes. Her excitement built higher and higher. Aimee reached down between her legs and stroked herself and Derrick at the same time, bringing them both to the edge. He held himself up on trembling arms as he watched her fingers play. Without warning he plunged deep inside of her, grinding against her pelvis as he rocked back and forth. The added friction snapped Aimee’s last thread of control; she let herself go, feeling the outward burst of warmth from her core radiate throughout her body. Derrick came with a strangled cry as she tightened around him; he collapsed on top of her,

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both of them panting.

They wrapped their arms around each other and lay together for several long, silent minutes, running their hands up and down each other's sweaty skin.

Finally, Derrick rolled to his side, pulling himself out of her. The music of the movie's end credits filled his bedroom, the white letters scrolling up over a black background.

"See?" Derrick said, his arrogance fully restored. "I knew you wanted me."

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