

another night, another dream

by Peter DeWolf

She pushes herself to climb the steps between the first and second floor of her favourite bar.

She catches a glimpse of her reflection in the wall of mirrors. She ignores the blurry backdrop that is a rippling mass of cleavage and Axe body spray and lies and bad decisions happening on the dance floor. She ignores the soulless, seemingly never-ending bass-overwhelmed musique du jour.

She looks at herself more closely.

It could partially be the lighting, but she looks...

Hot.

She gives herself a satisfied nod.

She picked the right outfit. Sexy top. Favourite jeans. She once told a friend that she figured that her ass owed these jeans money for making it look so good.

Hair. Eye make-up. Cute earrings.

For a girl who wasn't sure she wanted to go out, she kinda nailed it.

She spots her friends. The girls are, as always, surrounded by guys.

She puts her game face on and enters the fray.

Her friends laugh and hug. And smile for drinks. And some act dumber than they are. And some don't. And some act more interested in the guy than they are. And some won't.

She's not there. Not fully.

It's been a long day. Week. Year.

She sips her same drink.

She tries to fake a smile, but it is not in her.

Not right now.

She's not in a bad mood. Not really. She's just...

Not feeling it.

Her friends are. And normally she'd be in the middle. Of all of it.

Her friends are beautiful. And they are smart, accomplished women. But, for whatever reason, she noticed — and kept it very much to herself — that she always gets the most attention from men when they go out together.

A male friend, who knows them all, once told her that she has “an amazing presence” and a “certain special spark” that her friends, while beautiful, lack.

She didn't fully believe what he said.

But she didn't forget it either.

She never feels as beautiful as men tell her she is.

She never feels as beautiful as she “jokingly” tells people she is either.

She'll tell you she only exercises sporadically.

She can tell you seven things she doesn't love about her face.

Thirty seven things about her body.

She can tell you that.

But she won't. Not unless she really knows you.

Actually, more importantly, if you really know her.

And you don't.

She pounds a couple of drinks.

They make her feel warmer.

But that's it, really.

As the night goes on, it gets a little fuzzier.

Ed Hardy shirt tells her about his car.

Long hair tells her about his band.

Suit tells her about his new condo.

She knows the game all too well.

She's played at a hall of fame level.

Biting her lower lip gets her a drink.

Rubbing an arm gets her a double.

Really being... her gets her proposals.

As the evening winds down, it becomes clear that Suit is the most interested.

Or competitive.
He leans in closer than necessary to talk.
His hand lingers longer than necessary to get her attention.
His obsession with wealth turns her off.
His confidence... doesn't.
She really wants closeness tonight.
"So... wanna see my condo?" he smiles as if a positive reply is an absolute certainty.

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She walks into the bedroom.
The jeans and top are gone.
The hair is down.
She stops in front of the full-length mirror.
The bra and underwear don't match. They compliment one another. In a cutesexy mutual admiration society kind of way.
She tilts her head a little sideways.
She still looks hot, she thinks.
Hotter probably.
She turns towards the bed and exhales. Long. Slow.
Then she takes two steps and jumps...
Into her empty bed.
She notices how chilly it is in her room and quickly climbs under the covers.
She stares at the ceiling.
She reaches out and grabs her phone from her night stand.
She hesitates.
She scrolls through her contacts. She stops. She hits the little picture of a phone.
She closes her eyes.
"Hello..." a sleepy male voice answers.
"Hi. Is this OK?"
"Hiiii. Of course."
"Were you sleeping?"
"A little."
"Time difference! So sorry. We can talk another time."

"Don't be silly."

"Are you sure?" she asks, very quietly.

"Tell me about your day."

She smiles and pulls her covers up to her chin.

