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Beau Bell is a former Olympic hopeful, left paralyzed from the waist down after a car accident. He has every reason in the world to be pissed off and miserable, yet he's training for the Paralympics Men's 100m—S6 division. The chair? Just a part of who he is now. Beau's attitude is golden. If only he could contend with this one little issue: errant erections and no way to relieve them!

Nikša Merić is a lonely scientist and really bad poet living underneath the old building where he does his research. Every night he watches his neighbor through his basement window as he undresses in his wheelchair. Although there is no apparent reason for Nikša to be unhappy, he's struggled with depression his whole life and has tried to kill himself on multiple occasions.

When Beau proposes that his "voyeur" come over and help him experiment with the erections he can't actually feel, the relationship they build is a sexual one. But the relationship they need is one that will heal each other's hearts as well.

All That Shimmers Details

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From Reader Review All That Shimmers for online ebook

Karen says

4.5 stars.

I loved this one! Really well done in so few pages especially considering the topics she explores.

I only wish there was more.

Anke says

2.5 stars

The writing was good, I finished it, but overall it was too dark for my current mood.

Serena Yates says

This is an amazing story about two men who each face an uphill struggle not just to survive, but to do it well. Their challenges are very different, and neither of them suspects they'll be able to help each other. But once they begin to interact (on a purely voyeuristic basis at first), then meet and build one of the most unusual relationships I have read about in a while, they discover there is a lot more between them than the "deal" they have made to explore having sex together. Both characters are not just well researched, but written with compassion and a deep understanding of what drives them. This may look like a purely physical relationship, and that is what Beau thinks he needs, but it ends up being a growth experience for both of them. It is also a great case of intimacy sneaking up on two unsuspecting guys and turning out to be not at all what they expected.

Beau is all about the physical side of life. Not surprising really, since he used to be an Olympic swimmer, and even though a car accident paralyzed him from the waist down, his solution is, by necessity, centered around the physical as well. He has to learn how to deal with a different set of abilities, but the one thing he knows is that he will remain a swimmer. Beau has also never had the time (or inclination) for a relationship, so he isn't looking for one when he hooks up with Niksa. Beau requests help with his involuntary erections and how to learn to orgasm without genital stimulation. I thought it was pretty obvious he'd need intimacy to get there, but he never even considers this. For him, as ever, it is still all about his body. It was fascinating to see him learn and grow!

Niksa is the complete opposite of Beau. He is a scientist who lives in his head, has no friends, and not even a real desire to live. He's had a tough life, but his challenge is mental and spiritual. Niksa writes poetry, and it's all very dark and depressing, yet very emotional. He has never had sex, so Beau's "offer" to teach him works well, but Niksa knows he will get attached and be in trouble before they start. He craves intimacy, yet he knows it is the one thing Beau is not willing to give. And Niksa being very self-centered, he misses all the signs that things may be changing, and is totally shocked when he finds out what has been happening to

Beau.

If you like stories about complicated men who face tremendous challenges, if you want to find out what it may be like to live as a physically or emotionally challenged person, and if you're looking for a read that is deeply emotional, character-driven, and very hot, then you will probably enjoy this extraordinary novella.

NOTE: This book was provided by Dreamspinner Press for the purpose of a review on Rainbow Book Reviews.

Gigi says

Too much angst.

Ije the Devourer of Books says

This was great!! Lots of emotion and well researched characters packed into this beautiful story in a way that grips the reader.

Niksa is depressed and suicidal and lonely but he watches his neighbour Beau from his basement flat window. Beau lost the use of his legs in a car accident but he hasn't given up his dreams of swimming and medals, and is training for the 2016 paralympics. The only problem is his sex life. He knows he can have one but he needs someone in his life who will take time to explore with him and help him because now that he is disabled having a sex life is a challenge.

And suddenly Beau realises that his voyeur of a neighbour may be just the person to help him and Niksa who is lonely agrees.

But love surprisingly over takes the two of them and Niksa finds that Beau challenges him to stay alive, and Beau finds that Niksa challenges him to find something that goes beyond just sex and together the two men find both life and love.

This is a lovely novella. It is well researched and portrays the emotions of the two men with sensitivity and emotion. It is one of the stories in a set of three (Piece us Back Together series from DSP) which can be bought separately. Having enjoyed this one I will definitely be reading the other two:

This was lovely

Cathy Brockman says

All That Shimmers is from the anthology (collection) Piece us back together. These stories can all be read separate and standalone beautifully

All that shimmers is a very riveting story about an Olympic swimmer that is now paraplegic. Beau is strong

and even though he is paralyzed from the waist down, he never gave up on his dream. He does have a deeper issue to deal with that we never would think of. Though he is paralyzed he feels the need for orgasm. He knows he gets aroused and can get hard on but cannot ever come.

Niksa has deep mental issues. He has attempted suicide several times but failed. He is all alone, from another country and has no real friends. Can these two men heal each other?

This is a beautiful, angsty story of two broken men, one physically the other mentally. It shows us challenges and needs we would never consider in people's lives. Simple needs such as orgasm for a man with spinal paralysis and the simple need of family of friends. Being alone in a strange land with no one.

I loved the strength in Beau that he never gave up on his dreams even though he lost the use of his legs. He is sort of an ass relationship wise but once you read the story you do see why and cannot really blame him. I still found him likeable.

Niksa, Niksa, Niksa! What I would give to see his full story. (hint, hint). My heart went out to him. (Tissue alert). The way Niksa and Beau meet is a bit creepy, but I loved this story so much.

* I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review through
<http://mmgoodbookreviews.wordpress.com>

Srusnak says

Well this was a bit of an odd one for me--but I saw it on a goodreads newsletter I received and was intrigued. A little disclaimer right off the bat, I skimmed through some of Niksa's stuff in the beginning because... well, wasn't really currently in the mood for all his feels. Also I have no personal experience/know anyone with a spinal cord injury or serious depression difficulties and therefore can't predict what their take on this book would be.

This book surprised me a little (especially given how corny the description sounded) in that I thought not only was the romance well written, but both characters and their plights were fairly well written. Niksa and Beau make such a cute couple and have so many sweet moments that regardless of other aspects of the story I think I would have liked it based on that fact alone. But I also liked how honest both characters were about their problems, desires, and ultimately themselves--they never danced around anything which made them quite likable even when they were doing something not so likable. I will say I think Beau definitely handled some things wrong when it came to Niksa's depression, but I also think that was partially the point; Beau didn't know how to handle something so contrasting to his own views/choices that confronting it the only way he knew how, while right in that it showed he cared and wanted to address it, was horribly wrong for Niksa. But humans are bound to make mistakes, especially when we care. The important part is to keep trying until we get it right and that's what both characters do for themselves and for their relationship, which is what touched me the most about the story.

Not exactly a fluffy read despite being a short romance, but it is high on the feels (do not fear, many a-warm fuzzies included in those feels). If the premise intrigues you, I recommend going with your gut and giving this one a try.

Chris Kottner-Kirschner says

Ein Autounfall hat das Leben des Spitzensportlers Beau Bell von Grund auf verändert und seither sitzt er im Rollstuhl. Anstatt für die Olympischen Spiele zu trainieren, ist sein Ziel bei den Paraolympics teilzunehmen. Und Beau ist extrem ehrgeizig und willensstark. Nach einer düsteren Periode hat er sein Leben endlich wieder im Griff. Fast. Immer wieder bekommt er Erektionen, findet aber keine wirkliche Erfüllung. Das Gefühl ist einfach weg. Mit seinem früheren Freund Simon kann er darüber nicht sprechen, da der Groll auf Beau's Seite noch tief sitzt.

Allerdings fasst der analytische und zielgerichtete Beau einen Plan. Was nicht passt, wird passend gemacht. Und er hat auch schon einen Kandidaten für ein Experiment auserkoren. Ein gutaussehender Nachbar, der ihn stalkt. Allerdings scheint der Mann harmlos zu sein und gibt sich mit der Rolle des Voyeurs zufrieden.

Niksa Meric ist besagter Nachbar und er ist ein einsamer, zurückgezogener Naturwissenschaftler, der auch eine Neigung zur Poesie hat. Allerdings verliert sich Niksa oft in seinen düsteren Gedanken und sieht nur wenig Sinn in seinem Leben. Einige Lichtblicke sind seine Arbeit und Beau, den er so gerne ansieht.

Und tatsächlich finden diese zwei ungewöhnlichen und unterschiedlichen Männer zusammen. Während Beau eben körperlichen Verlust erfahren hat, ist Niksa seelisch zerbrochen. Zuviele Verluste und zuviele Zurückweisungen haben sein Leben geprägt. Auch mangelndes Selbstbewusstsein und seine Unfähigkeit mit seinem Problem und seiner Einsamkeit zurecht zu kommen nehmen ihm jeden Lebenswillen. Und auch diese Beziehung mit Beau scheint für ihn nur von kurzer Dauer zu sein. Er traut sich einfach zu wenig zu und er scheint zu schwach zu sein um zu kämpfen

Ein sehr berührendes Buch, dem jedoch ein paar Seiten mehr nicht geschadet hätten. Die Annäherung von Beau und Niksa ist gut beschrieben und die Autorin verleiht den Protagonisten auch genügend Tiefe. Jedoch hätte ich gern mehr über die Männer erfahren. Vor allem über Niksa, der mich doch sehr berührt hat. Es ist ein stilles Buch, das an manchen Stellen beklemmend ist. Doch es auch ein Buch voller Hoffnung und mit der Botschaft nicht aufzugeben.

V says

Nice story, however the author focuses much more on the romance part of the story than the depression issue.

I don't know anyone who suffers from depression, however, I know many parents who have teenagers or grown-up children who do suffer from depression. From what they have told me, they have a very fragile personality. I don't think in a million years you can say to them "are you going to kill yourself again?" or how many times have you tried to kill yourself". As though you are asking them "How many time have you tried steak?" I found it completely absurd the way Beau deal's with Niksa's depression.

Also, I have never met someone who had an accident and end up in a wheelchair for life like Beau. It's odd that he seems more upset by the fact that he hasn't slept with anyone, rather than the fact that he can't walk.

Love Bytes Reviews says

4 Heart Review by Tammy

Beau Bell was training for the Olympics when a tragic car accident leaves him a paraplegic, luckily Beau has both the personality and strength of character that allows him to keep his spirits up and not become mired in depression. Niksa Meric is the complete opposite of Beau, he suffers from chronic depression and has so far tried to commit suicide four times. The one bright spot in Niksa's life is watching his wheelchair bound neighbour getting undressed every night.

Beau trains for hours every day at the local pool so that he qualifies for the Paralympics Men's 100m in the S6 Division. He has the support and friendship of his coach and fellow swimmers but there is one area of Beau's life he's not happy with- constant erections and his inability to relieve them himself. Now, before his accident Beau was a total manwhore, extremely good looking and never wanting for sexual partners. But it's been a year and a half since the accident and his ever ready, psychogenic erections are the bane of his life because he can't feel anything from the waist down. So starts the exploration to find a way for Beau to have an orgasm!

Niksa on the other hand has been alone practically all his life, his parents sent him to America from Croatia to live with his aunt when he was only two years old. When he was eight his aunt decided he was old enough to know that his parents had died in the war and that was the beginning of his downward spiral into depression. Niksa doesn't know how to be or keep a friend, he holds on too hard which only pushes his friends away. When Beau decides after a considerable amount of research that what he needs is a partner who is willing to explore all positions and options so he can finally have an orgasm, Niksa is overwhelmed that Beau chooses him. Beau doesn't want a boyfriend he only wants to get off, at least that's what he tells Niksa at the beginning and the development of their relationship is amazing with the way Niksa gets through to Beau that he's fallen in love with him. Nobody has ever told Beau they love him and it makes him think long and hard about what Niksa means to him too.

All in all, All That Shimmers is an incredibly powerful and at times very dark short story. You get to go on the roller coaster that is Niksa's emotions as well as Beaus awakening that there is someone to love him even though he's in a wheelchair. I would definitely recommend this story to all m/m romance lovers.

A copy of this book was provided in exchange for an honest review. Please visit www.lovebytesreviews.com to see this and many more reviews, author interviews, guestposts and giveaways!

Lou~Powerless Over 1-Click~ says

4.25 Stars

Debbie McGowan says

This story is a deeply moving portrayal of a very unconventional relationship, spawned by the disparate needs of two men from very different walks of life and the mutual benefits found through their intimate connection.

Beau is an athlete who is paraplegic following an accident. Once the life and soul of the party, he quickly discovers the shallowness of his pre-injury gregarious social/sexual existence. Now he lives alone and, whilst he is highly independent, he is also understandably frustrated.

In an apartment across the way is Nikša, a scientist living with severe, life-threatening depression.

They come together in the most unusual way and embark on a 'relationship' that is at once fascinating, unpredictable, heart-wrenching, sob-inducing and brilliant.

No stereotypes or tropes here. No ridiculous resolve to a conventional happy ending. The ending is wonderful, but it's also real.

If you're sick of reading the same old MM romances, you've come to the right place.

Ele says

Well...I've seen some good reviews around so I'm pretty sure this is a case of "it's not you, it's me".

The premise was good and I like stories with disability as a theme.

Beau is in a wheelchair, but he doesn't let it slow him down, He is a fighter and I liked that. And this is pretty much the only thing I liked about him. **He is arrogant and rude. And he speaks to himself in the third person (God, I hate that)**

"But one thing was for certain: the man was turned on by Beau Bell." (Yes, he talks about himself)

Also, he makes it clear from the get go that he wants Niksa only to help him get off, since he can't do it himself anymore because of the accident, and he is a jerk about it.

"I need an orgasm, not a boyfriend."

Now Niksa...I don't really know what to say, I think the word I'm looking for about his situation is absurd. Niksa is obviously a torture soul. He is lonely and depressed, so he becomes Beau's doormat. He has tried to kill himself four times. We meet him right after his fourth attempt, when he wakes up covered in vomit after swallowing a shitload of pills. And he had the most normal reaction :" Dammit, it didn't work. Ok, I'll clean up, take a shower and go to work. Work is good." DUDE!

Like I said, absurd.

Bottom line, I felt zero connection between the MCs and I found the whole story weird and awkward. But like I said, this is just me:)

Lucia says

4.5 Honestly, I was a little weirded out in the beginning with the whole voyeurism thing but I'm glad I kept reading. I thought Niksa was a beautiful character: he was definitely a little "off" but he tried so hard to make friends all his life and was constantly rejected and ignored. Eventually he just became a loner and kept to himself even though he still truly craved a real relationship, intimacy, sex, etc. Then he meets Beau, the object of his obsession, and his total opposite. Beau is confident, outspoken, and doesn't let the fact that he is in a wheelchair bring him down. Instead he tries to be the best at whatever he does and I think his confidence and positive can-do attitude is what helped Niksa in the end.

Vanessa theJeepDiva says

“You’re made of dark stuff, aren’t you, Nicky?”

At one time Beau Bell was headed to the Olympics looking to obtain a gold medal in his future with any sexy man candy he wanted on his arm. Now Beau is excited about possible record breaking swim times and his future in the Paralympics. Beau still sees a gold medal in his future. The one thing Beau wants in his near future that isn’t even a blip on his radar is an orgasm. It still works he has seen the hard evidence of that, and he wants it to do what he is used to it doing. There are a few things Beau misses about his pre-accident life and getting off is the the one that is one his mind the most.

Watching plants grow and penning his dark poetry are the only things that Niksa has, that he sees. Sometimes when the darkness gets to be too heavy he tries to end it, but like everything in life he fails at that too. This is why Niksa is shocked when the sexy neighbor that he has named Wheels invites him over to help with relieving him of a problem that Beau’s own hand cannot. This is the beginning of the ‘help Beau get off’ fling that makes this novella such an enjoyable read.

I have to tell you that the moment Niksa takes his trip to the library (for research purposes) that I totally fell in love with him as a character. Beau is fun and upbeat and spirited and entirely too easy to like as a character. Niksa and his darkness makes you want better things for him, but he still has a long way to go before he’s whole. I liked the fact that the character who should have the more reasons to hate the world is really the optimistic person i All That Shimmers. The character that can easily be seen as “normal” is the one that has to most to gain or lose here.
