

Excerpt from “*Love, Virtually*” by Chloe Whitehorn

LAUREL: Matt, you say you’ve compared everyone you’ve dated to me. How? You didn’t know me. We didn’t have a single conversation in high school. You still don’t know me. You’ve got this image of me in your head that is based on, on what? Fantasy? And you want to make it real? How the fuck am I supposed to live up to the fantasy version of me you’ve created for years? You think I’m scared to take a chance on someone real? Of course I am. I know what I had with Noah is mostly in my head. I had one moment with him. That’s all. But it was real. And he was sweet and he was beautiful and he was perfect. And I fell in love with that. With that moment. And that’s safe, and comforting and I don’t want to let that go. Because I know, no matter what you say, that moment, it was real. What I lost, it can’t compare to you losing your friend, or his parents’ loss, or anyone that really knew him. Your loss is substantial. But what I lost... I lost the possibility. The possibility of what could have been. You want me to take a chance on something real? Fine. I will. But it won’t be you, because what you’re offering me isn’t any more real than what I have with Noah.