

## My Friend

by L.J. Davis

“Come on, come on,” he nudged her. “We have to go!” He kept on nudging but she seemed distracted and did not pay attention to his urgings. He had been with her for a long time. It seemed forever. Not a day went by that he didn’t think kind thoughts about his friend.

When Sid was very young, she had been there. She always had a kind word, a gentle touch. From the moment that they met, he knew that she would be his

forever. They were uniquely connected and the bond that they shared, the bond that grew with every meeting, was tremendous.

Sid wished that there was some way to convey how much she meant to him. He knew that she relied on him, to some extent, and that she thought they were pals. But, he cared about her so deeply that, for him, it went beyond just friendship. It was devotion and selfless love.

Now, all he wished to convey was that they needed to go and that they needed to go now! He cocked his head and tried nudging her again with his shoulder. This time it worked. "What's a matter with you, Sid?" his friend asked. She looked at him curiously for a few moments. Then, as she gazed into his eyes, her mind came into full focus and she gave him her complete attention. "Oh," she said, "you're right. We better get going."

His friend turned sharply and walked over to the salesperson who had moved away from the counter to help another customer. "Excuse me," his friend asked, "Is there some place that I can lay down?" The salesperson looked at his friend curiously and began to say that there was no place to lay down in this

store, when his friend held up her arm and showed the woman her bracelet. It took a moment for the salesperson to understand but then a curious rush took over and she said, "Oh, yes, come with me!"

The salesperson nervously led them to a small employee lounge on the second floor. Although it was primarily used for lunches and breaks, off to the side was a small section with cots and a nice heavy curtain that could be pulled for privacy. This was where they were led. The few people that were in the room glanced curiously at the trio. After explaining that they would be left in private, the salesperson walked over to the store employees and whispered something that Sid could not make out. A few stolen glances were made before all of the employees walked out of the room. Before she left, the salesperson asked, "Is there anything I can do to help?" His friend casually replied, "I have Sid. He knows what to do."

After everyone left, it was quiet. For Sid, these moments were surreal. On the one hand, the room was quiet but, on the other hand, he was shaking with anticipation. He knew what was coming and it was anything but quiet. His friend, who laid quietly on the floor, looked at him and smiled. "Anytime now," she

said. She reached towards her collar and loosened a few buttons. He sat down and waited.

It was taking longer than normal but he knew it would come. He could sense it even if she could not. He would sit there and wait and make sure that she was all right. He would wait for as long as it took. Suddenly, her body started to move. He glanced down at her eyes and saw that they had rolled back in her head. He knew the shaking would be fierce. The sounds of her body thrashing, out of control, broke the silence of the small room. Sid wasn't scared. He had a complete understanding of the event that was taking place.

When he was young, it took some time to get used to the sight. It was a natural inclination to panic and run away when someone was so obviously in pain. But, through training and experience, he realized that his friend really wasn't in any pain. In fact, she would probably not even remember how wild her body shook.

At some point, her actions signaled that the frenzy had peaked and Sid knew that her body would start to slow down. All he could do was wait. The seizure finally stopped and his friend lay still. She was in that

in between state where although her body was calm, her mind was still active. She needed a jolt to pull her back into consciousness. Sid knew just the thing. He stooped down and began kissing her. He kissed her all over her entire face. His kisses didn't stop and, finally, she began to come back.

He knew she was back when her hand reached out thoughtfully and stroked his back. He looked down at her with tender eyes and she looked up at him with devotion and love. "You're always there, aren't you?" she said. "You always wait so patiently." He kissed her again.

She pulled herself up into a sitting position and cradled him in her arms. "What would I do without you, my Sid. You are such a good boy." All Sid could do was look loyally into her eyes and bark.