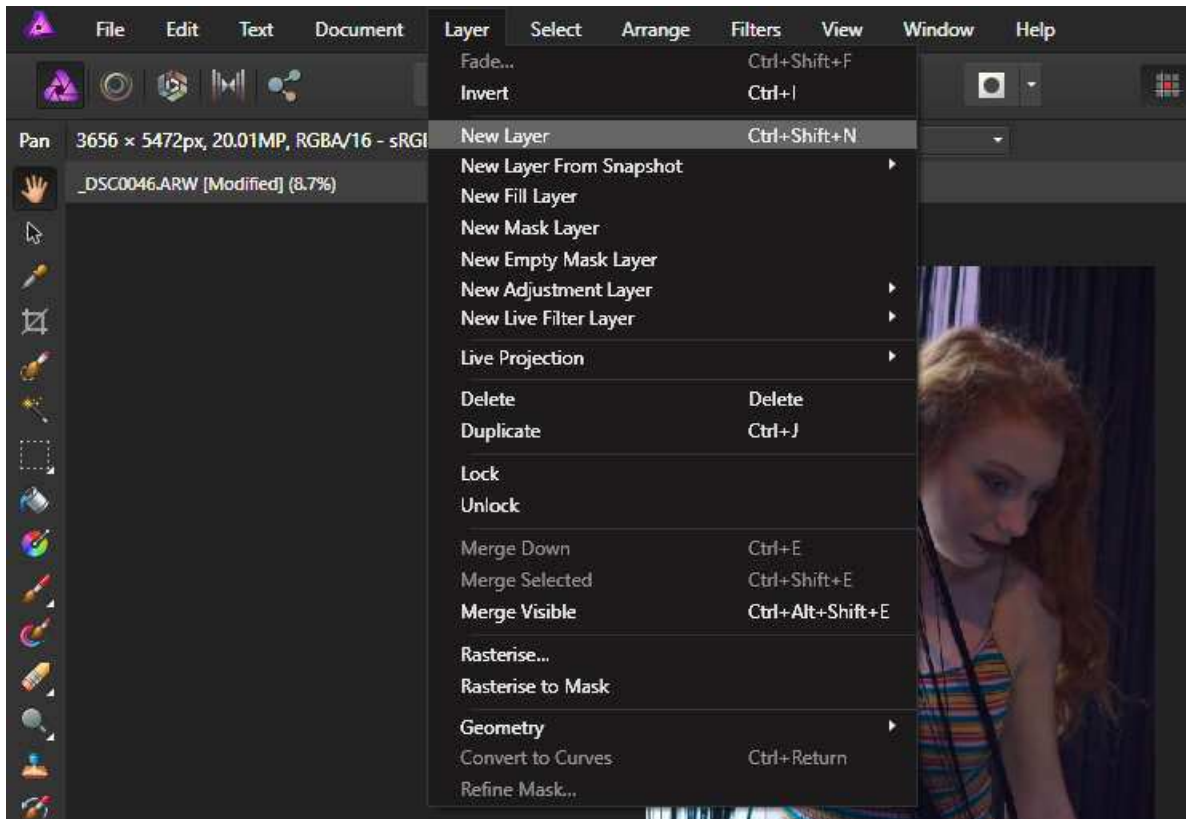


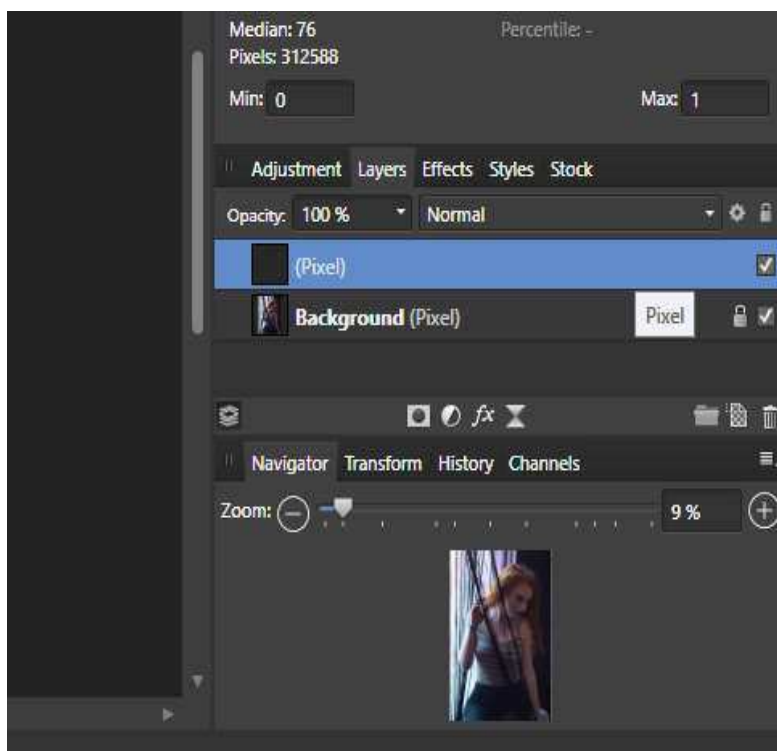
Just for completeness and to demonstrate that all the packages are very similar, this basic edit is done in another image manipulation package 'Affinity' for windows.

As with other packages , file – open, and select an image.

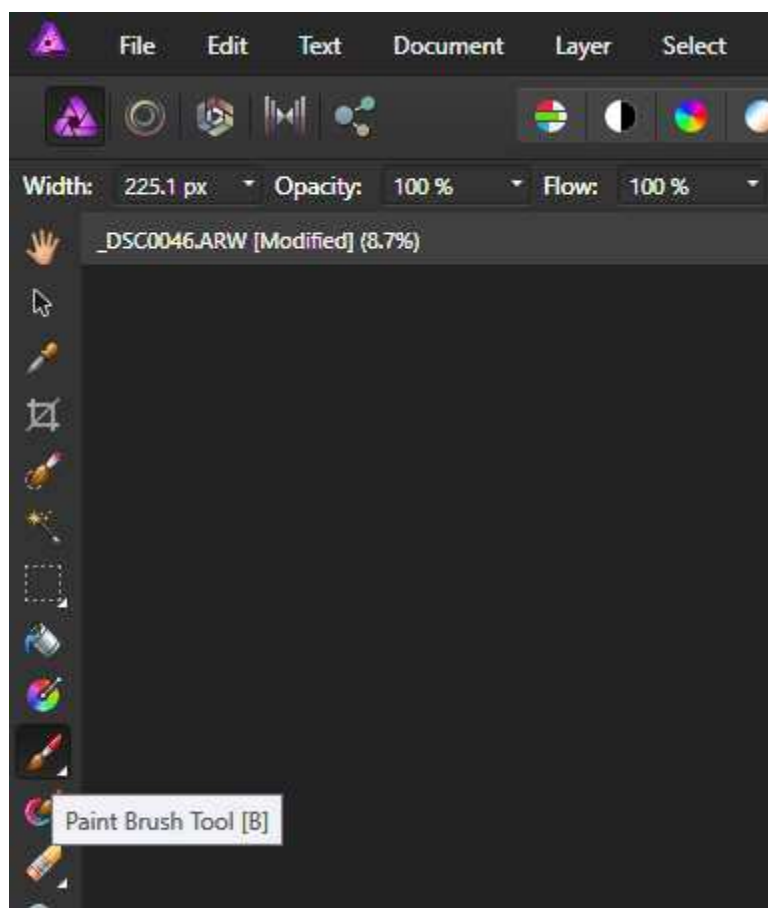
Once open, I went to 'layer' – new.
This creates a new blank layer.



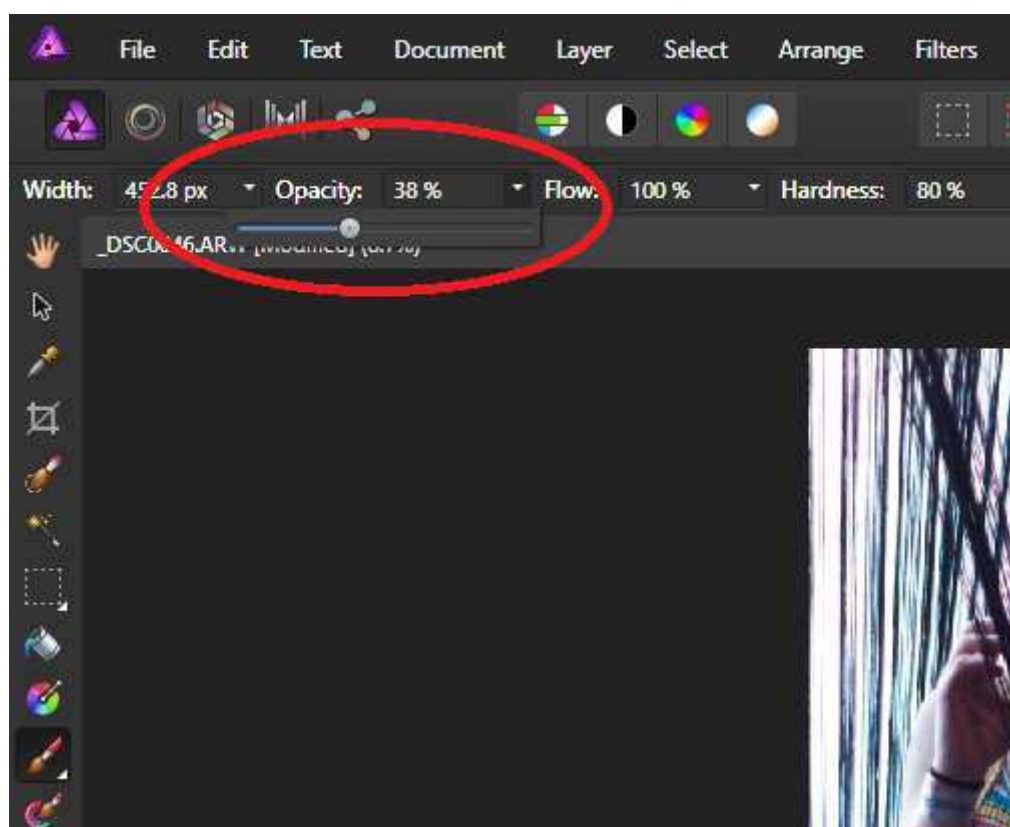
You'll see the new layer created – (note the tickbox, you can turn layers on or off)



just to demonstrate what's possible, lets select the brush icon [or press 'B']



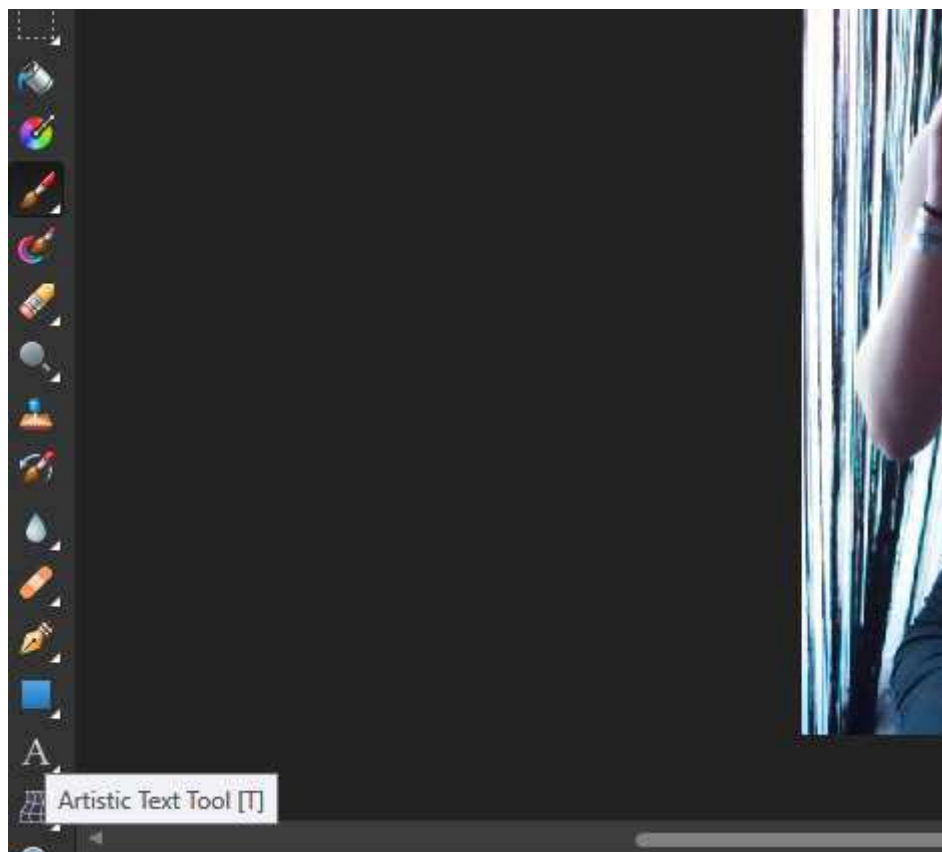
select the 'opacity' slider , and drop to about 50 %.



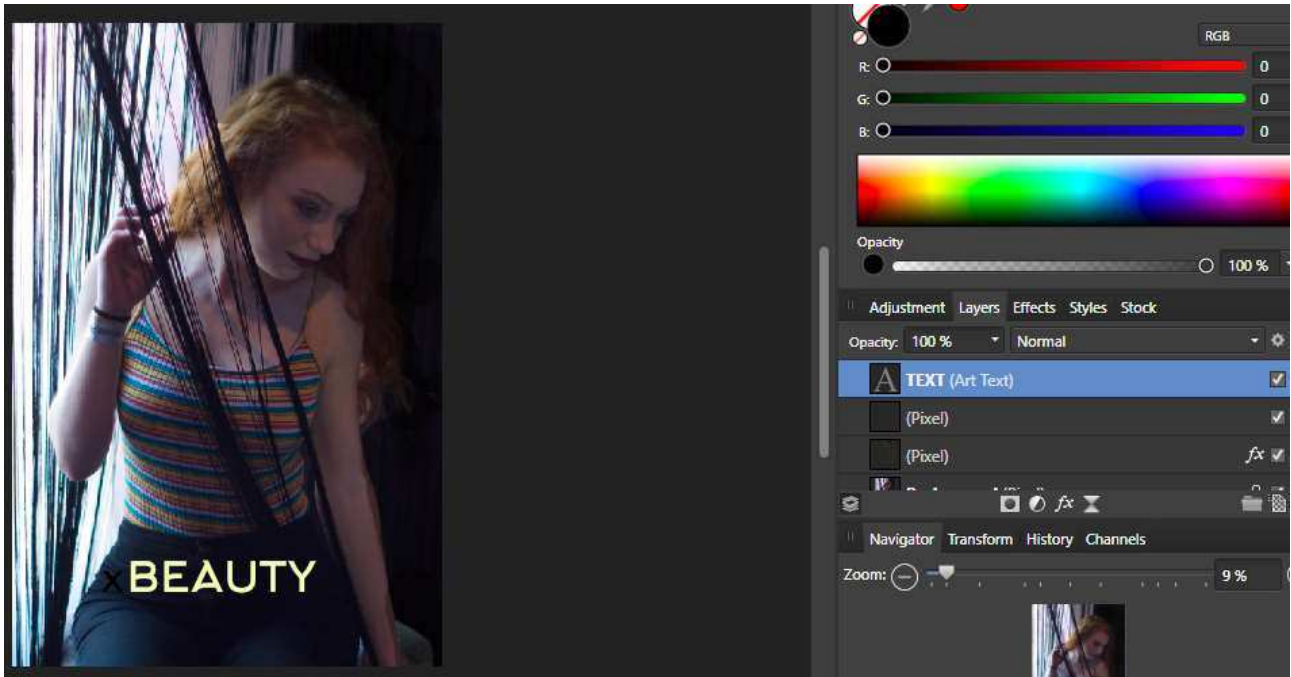
then I just painted black in the shadowed areas of the picture



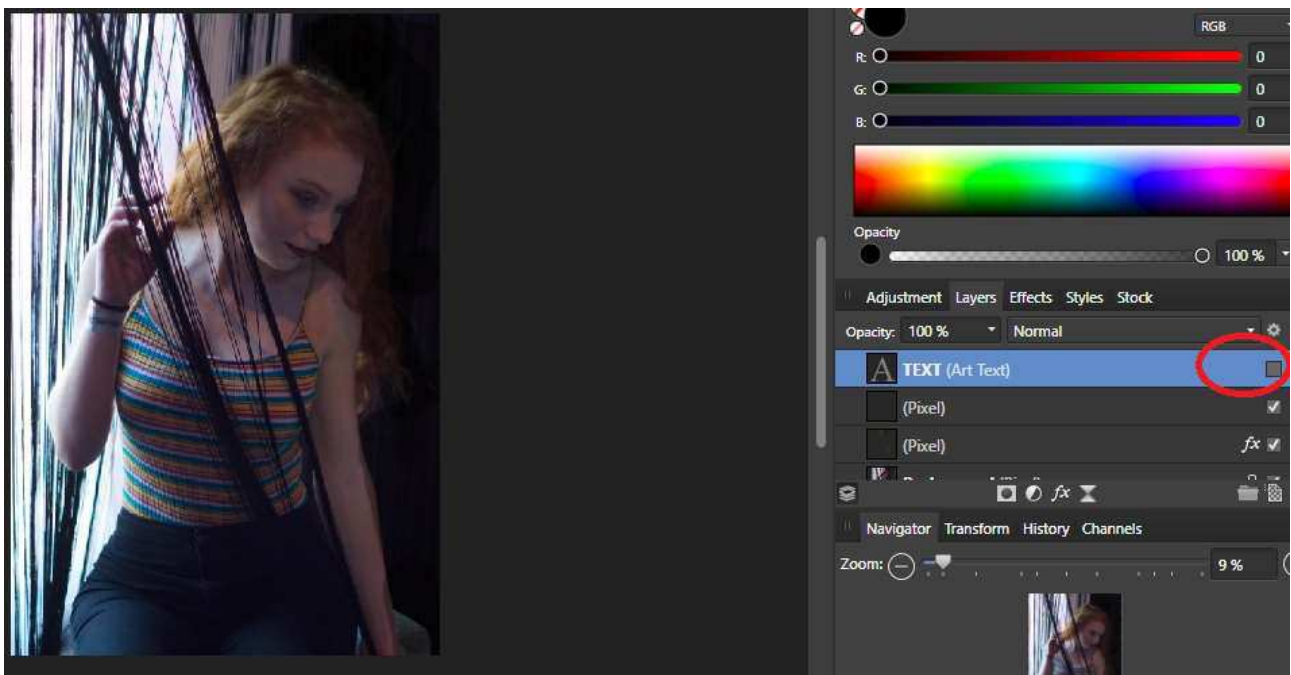
what i've done next is again go to layer – New, then i've selected the text tool;-



select an area of the image and typed 'BEAUTY'



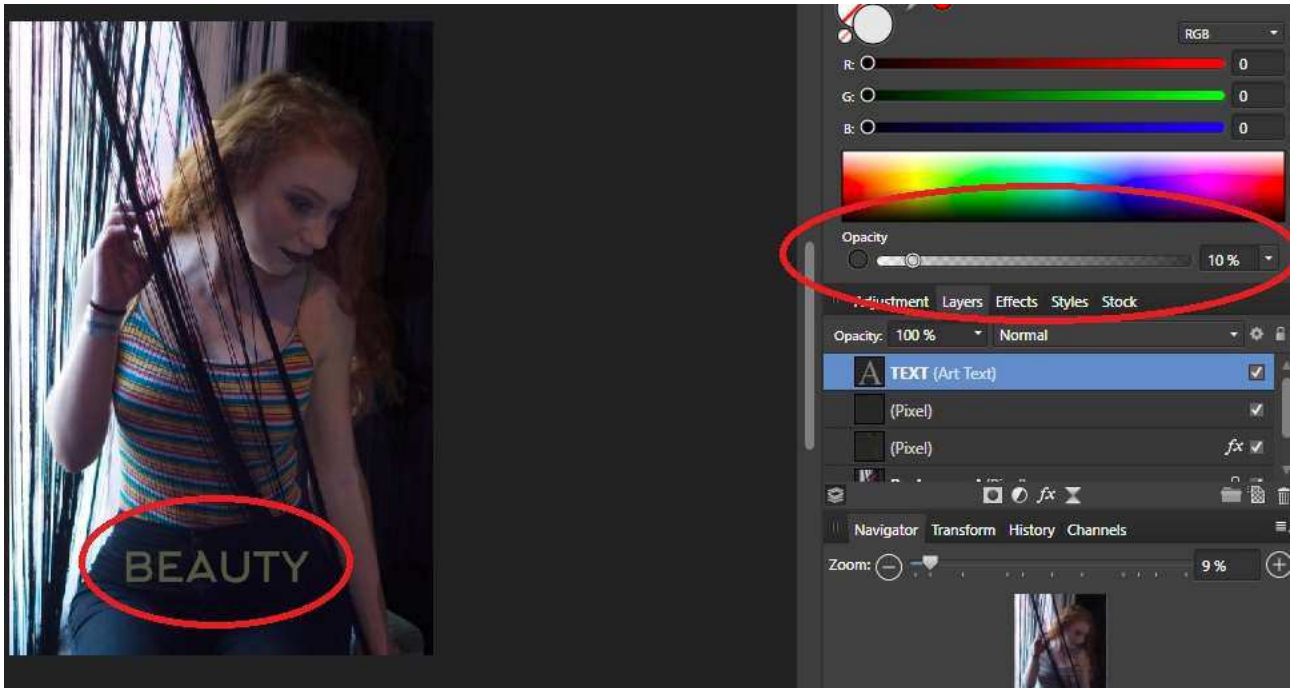
now lets say for the sake of argument I want to remove the text to check the image, I can simply un-tick the layer, and the text will not show until you re-tick the layer back on. This principle is the same for all layers, so if you apply an effect and you're unsure, you can just untick that layer.



Note the layer is still there, but it's effects have been 'turned off' as it's unticked.

Ok, so here's another little trick. You can change the opacity levels of layers. So you can 'dial down' or tame a layer or layer effect if you like it but it's looking unrealistic.

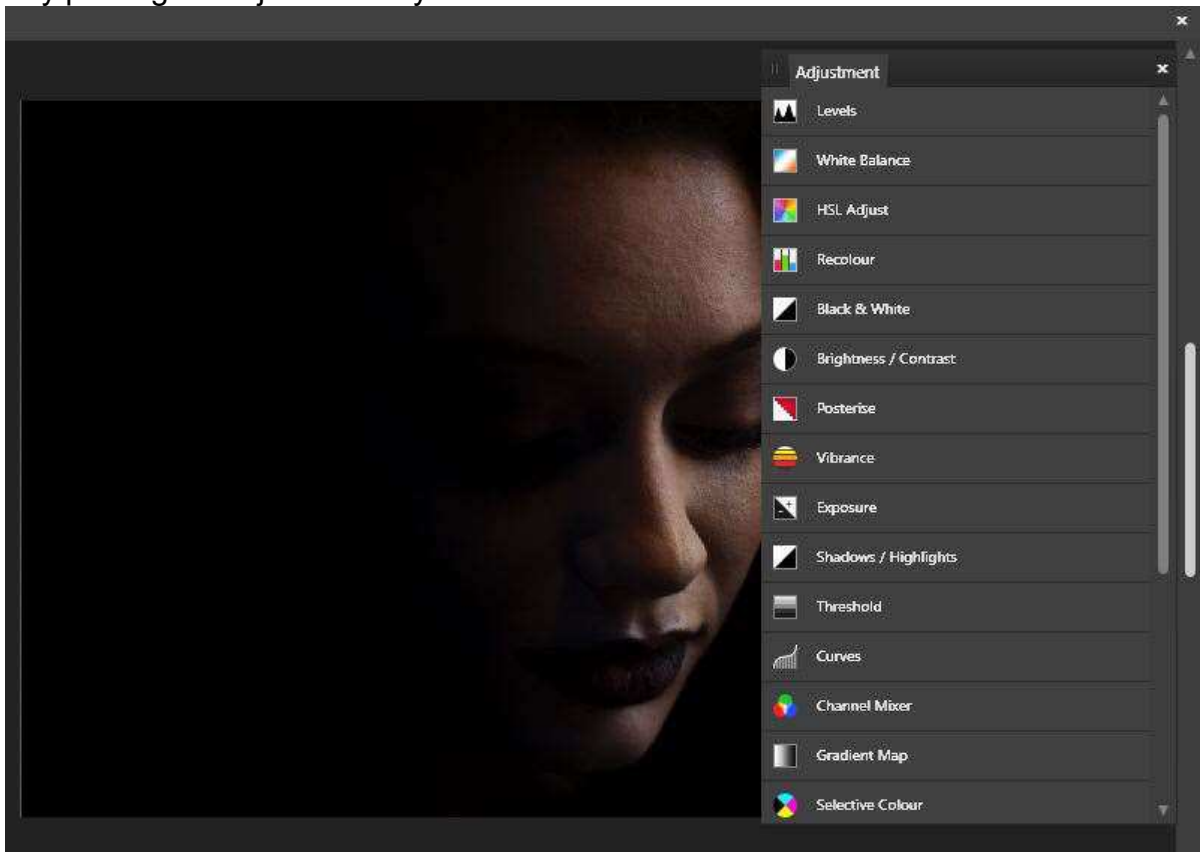
let's turn the text layer back on and change the layer opacity to 10%.
select the layer you wish to change , and slide the opacity slider down to , in this case 10% and you'll notice the text layer becoming less visible



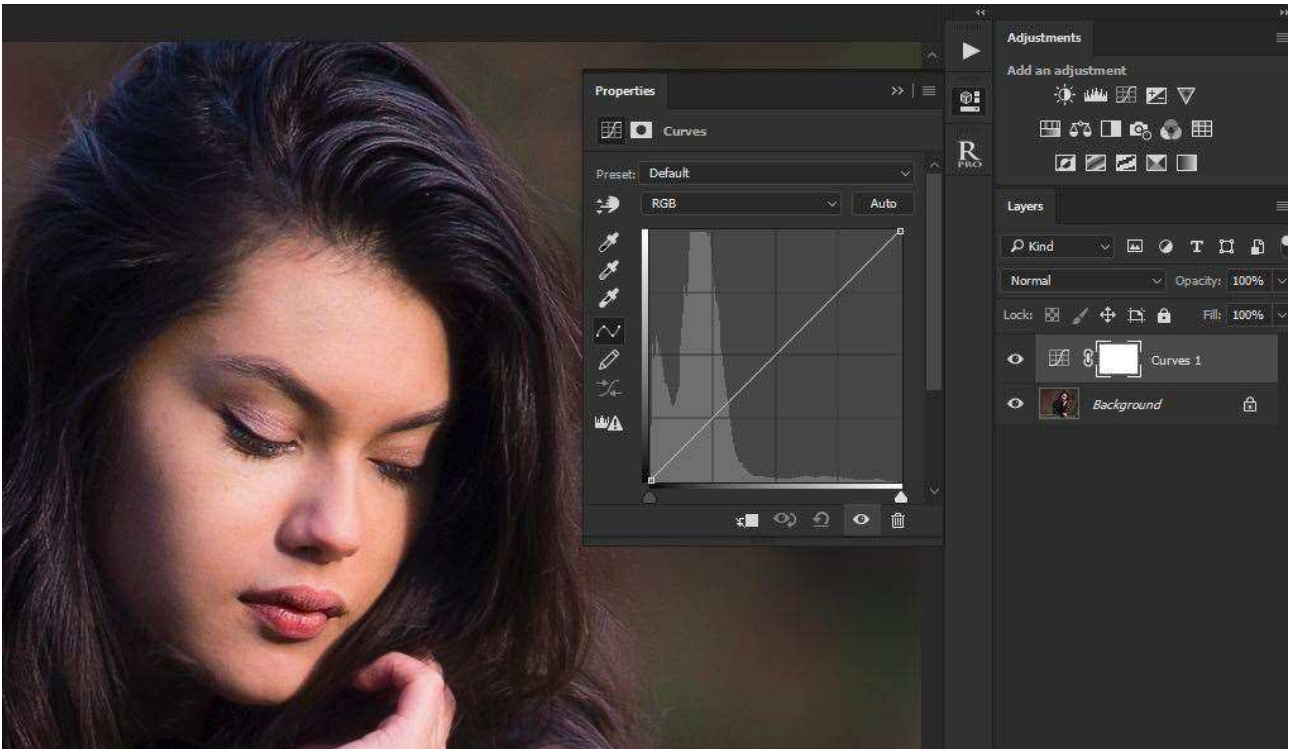
As well as creating your own layers, software manipulation programs come with predefined 'adjustment layers'. These behave in exactly the same way as layers you might create manually, but they open up various options. As before adjustment layers can be stacked, so you could for example use a 'black and white' layer, and then use a 'levels' layer afterwards to boost highlights or darken shadows of your black and white layer.

Adjustment layers look similar between software packages, and below are the adjustment layer panels for both affinity and photoshop

Affinity package – adjustment layers



Photoshop adjustment layers ;-



I suggest that if interested you dive into google to fully explore the various adjustment layers and their options.

Ok.....one more quick tip.

Now you have an appreciation of layers, the other facet of layers is the 'LAYER MASK'.

Essentially the function of a layer mask is to either display or hide.
A good rule of thumb to remember is 'black conceals / white reveals.'

so as you can see from the screenshot above with adjustment layers you automatically have a layer mask with the adjustment layer.
So you can effectively 'paint' in adjustments with the brush tool, giving you insane control over your retouching or manipulations.

so hopefully this small demonstration has shown in some small way, the capabilities of layers.

There's countless tutorial videos on layers and digital manipulation, and I encourage anyone to delve a little deeper to unlock the full power of this brilliant principle.