

You unlock this door with the key of desperation. Beyond it is another dimension. A dimension of sadness. A dimension of loneliness. A dimension of emptiness. You're moving into a land of both shadow and substance of heartbreak and neglect. You've just crossed into... The Friend Zone.

The Friend Zone: the worst zone that one can find oneself in. A deep dark expansive abyss, filled with the souls that have passed on, yearning and obsessing over those who could never be theirs. Accompanying them, are those who naively believe they can maneuver the Friend Zone to find love on the other side. And in the epicenter of the Friend Zone, lies a prison. A prison occupied by the naïve, who still cling to their ambitions of love that will never be fulfilled. Ambitions that will forever be out of reach, as prisoners clutch the cold steel bars, conniving of different ways to find love. In essence, to escape. This is a lie. A lie based upon the false hopes and dreams that lead to the crushing of one's heart. Only heartbreak and despair are found by those who trek the Friend Zone, and if you don't follow my words carefully, you too will end up as a permanent resident, of the Friend Zone.

For the foolish who still believe they can escape the Friend Zone, welcome. Your stupidity and unwillingness to admit defeat, will make this journey treacherous. You have been warned. You may think the strongest survive, you're wrong. The realists survive, and if you're smart, you'll become one. If not, sadness and hurt will become your cellmates, constantly hovering over you until a never-ending depression sets in, and you may believe relief will come, but it won't. Friends. Family. They can't save you. The only visitors allowed, are the ghosts of prisoners' past. Hollow and empty ghosts that provide a false sense of hope and ignite sharp and intense pain within, that leave inmates cowering in the darkest corners of their cells.

What's their crime, you ask? Well, each prisoner is guilty of committing acts of love that will never be recognized and are sentenced to serve an eternity within this prison. How long is there sentence? That's depends entirely on the inmates. They can choose whether to leave or not, but as stated before, they prefer to wish upon a star to make their dreams come true by liking every picture on Instagram, complimenting them on their appearance and clothes, or being the person to vent to with the intention of swooping in at a later date. Any foolish soul who believes they have a chance after being friend-zoned, ends up in this abyss. A way of escape? Of course, there's a way of escape! Aren't you listening? These prisoners don't want to escape! They want to remain hopeful for a circumstance that will never arise. But, yes, there is a way of escape: a key. A bronze key able to unlock any and all cells in the abyss. A fractured heart-shaped key that dangles within arm's reach of each cell, and yet, many forego the key. They remain cowering within their cell; with the false hope their beloved will come to them and free them from this dismal place. Some reach for the key, but are unable to grasp it, for they must be worthy of the key, and to be worthy to attain the key, they must embark on the journey within!

Surviving the Friend Zone is the toughest journey you can endure. It is full of obstacles that will test your will and heart, and be warned, there aren't many survivors who pass this way. Can you survive? Can you undergo the pain that so many others have tried and failed? Doubtful, but let's see if you can prove me wrong. If you do, you may escape with your life, but expect a few scars along the way.

First, you must undergo the transformation. You must admit to yourself that you must move on, and you will never have a chance with your 'hopeful-beloved.' You must realize that you have no shot. Ever. You have been placed in the junk drawer, discarded away with no possibility of being removed. Next, you must awaken! Awaken, and open your eyes to the world that is filled with men and women whose romantic desires want to be fulfilled. Can you imagine the possibilities? Someone actually could be interested in you! Unfathomable! But once you accept the possibility of another filling that romantic aspect of your life, you'll be better off, and you'll be one step closer to freeing yourself, from the Friend Zone.

Then you must undergo transfusion. If you haven't realized it yet, these terms were made up to sound more professional, and if you haven't realized *that* yet, well it's no wonder you've locked yourself in this abyss. Anyway, you probably think transfusion means changing yourself by completely removing your older self to become someone new. Wrong. Be who you want to be. You are beautiful (in someone's eyes apparently). Now, if you possess some characteristics deemed toxic, you should probably rid yourself of those and adopt more attractive traits. Just food for thought.

Finally, there is no fancy word for it. You must simply let them go. Yes, it seems hard, but you don't want to reside within the Friend Zone, forever, do you? Didn't think so. They aren't the one, so move on. Everyone has a soulmate, and yours is waiting for you to arrive. So, what are you waiting for? Grab the key, walk out of the abyss, and set yourself free.

A friendly word of warning. Something you won't find in any other guidebook. The next time you think about having a crush that makes your heart ache, make sure you know what

kind of territory you're entering. Or you may find yourself a permanent resident of... The Friend Zone.