



The Friend Zone

Written by Abby Jimenez

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The Friend Zone

By Abby Jimenez

The Friend Zone Podcast

Kristen Petersen doesn't do drama, will fight to the death for her friends, and has no room in her life for guys who just don't get her. She's also keeping a big secret: facing a medically necessary procedure that will make it impossible for her to have children.

The Friend Zone Abby Jimenez Vk

Planning her best friend's wedding is bittersweet for Kristen—especially when she meets the best man, Josh Copeland. He's funny, sexy, never offended by her mile-wide streak of sarcasm, and always one chicken enchilada ahead of her hangry. Even her dog, Stuntman Mike, adores him. The only catch: Josh wants a big family someday. Kristen knows he'd be better off with someone else, but as their attraction grows, it's harder and harder to keep him at arm's length.

The Friend Zone Movie

The Friend Zone will have you laughing one moment and grabbing for tissues the next as it tackles the realities of infertility and loss with wit, heart, and a lot of sass.

Just what the world needs. Another problematic book masquerading as a cute read... *sigh* Admittedly in the early parts of this read I was really enjoying this book for what it was; a contemporary romance with a bittersweet core. So I laughed, I cried. I had a lot of feels. Yes I ignored the blatant stereotyping and negative portrayal of *the other woman* that the leading man dated who wasn't our sassy heroine because...

Well I liked the hunky leading man.

And I liked the sassy heroine! (Even though she was 100% a not like other girls stereotype which is of itself problematic) Just what the world needs. Another problematic book masquerading as a cute read... *sigh* Admittedly in the early parts of this read I was really enjoying this book for what it was; a contemporary romance with a bittersweet core. So I laughed, I cried. I had a lot of feels. Yes I ignored the blatant stereotyping and negative portrayal of *the other woman* that the leading man dated who wasn't our sassy heroine because...

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And I liked the sassy heroine! (Even though she was 100% a not like other girls stereotype which is of itself problematic)

Everyone in this book was so likeable really. I cared about the characters, I was rooting for them to get together and was very touched by the storyline...

But then that ill advised ending happened. And I'm unimpressed.

My review is going to be spoiler filled. I do apologise but it's the only way I can discuss this book honestly and to be able to openly draw attention to its problematic nature.

So the content warnings for this book are illnesses and difficulties surrounding female reproductivity.

Our leading female character is Kristin. One day she has a minor fender-bender with hunky fireman Josh and sparks fly! Their chemistry is off the charts and much sassy banter and flirting ensues. But Kristin has a boyfriend called Tyler. He's deployed overseas with the military but she loves him... Right? Wrong... She's settling for him. And we quickly learn why. Because Kristin suffers with fibroids and extremely heavy menstrual bleeding. She has been told that she is infertile and within weeks is planning to have a hysterectomy at age 26. So she can't have children, and Tyler doesn't want kids so he seems like a logical choice for a partner....

But she has all this chemistry with Josh and despite her best efforts she finds herself falling for him. And it's likewise for Josh. He's getting over a breakup with his girlfriend Celeste because....she doesn't want to have children and that's a deal breaker for him because apparently he wants a baseball team's worth of kids!

So understandably Kristin feels that she is not the ideal woman for Josh but she won't reveal to him her

reasons, much to Josh's disagreement...

Anyway the story evolves into a friends with benefit style relationship until we know that both characters are painfully in love with each other but Kristin resists until finally she believes that she is worthy of love. That her infertility should not deny her true happiness because to the right person (in this case Josh) it's not a sacrifice for him to not have kids because of her, because to him his life is incomplete without her.

This was great. Ah I loved this. Struggling with issues about your own fertility and the knowledge that you are possibly responsible for your future partner not becoming a fully genetic father to children is a theme that needs to be explored in books. And I was so touched by the storyline. I related to it. It's difficult to open yourself up to a relationship when you know you are infertile or have fertility struggles.

However, one of the reasons that Kristin finally accepted that she should be married to Josh and live happily ever after with him is because one of their best friends tragically dies..... CAN WE NOT HAVE THE PEOPLE DYING SO OTHERS CAN LEARN A LIFE LESSON TROPE?????????????????

Honestly!!! *eye roll*

BUT IT GETS WORSE!!!!!!

Remember. This is a book that is about infertility and the acceptance of such... SO THE LAST THING YOU'D WANT IS FOR KRISTIN TO GET PREGNANT RIGHT??????

Well guess who gets pregnant miraculously at the end because apparently her IUD device was pushed out of her system with a heavy flow and the one time they don't use condoms his oh-so-virile sperm just says screw you (literally and figuratively) to her tumour-infested uterus and boom it's a boy.....

No.

No.

No.

No.

No.

Look I read the author's note at the end of the book where she proclaimed the following (taken from the eARC copy) and I get what she was trying to say.... But I think when you have to spell this out for people in the hopes that your book won't be interpreted a certain way...well then you're on to a losing streak and no author's note is going to make up for your egregious storytelling.

Kristen's happy ending was never about getting pregnant. It was about her allowing herself to be loved,

The Friend Zone

despite what she felt were shortcomings. It was about her recognising that she wasn't defined by her ability to have children, and that her worth went beyond the state of her uterus. That was her happily ever after.

I can't seriously be the only one bothered by this right???? If discovering true happiness is when Kristin learns to... I guess it's almost learns to forgive herself for how her body is, then why would you utterly defeat the purpose of this character arc of growth, self love and happiness by having her fall pregnant in such an unrealistic manner?? Because therefore you are implying that the happy ever after is only when she has her own child born from her uterus!?!?!?! Go away. That's insulting. This message is problematic because of how it still places that happy emphasis on one method of having children. Could our cute couple not have gone through with surrogacy as planned? Fostered? Adopted??? I mean it's just such a ridiculous cop out that she gets pregnant at the end. Yes I know that these pregnancies can happen and that this is but one interpretation of a woman's struggles with fibroids BUT this is not the commonplace experience. Therefore, I think it would be very upsetting to someone who is reading this book who themselves are struggling to conceive and was hoping to find a happy ever after of a more realistic sort.

I know, as a person who was and still is hesitant in relationships due to my own fertility status, I was personally very upset when I read the ending as it felt disingenuous to what I believed was the main theme of the book, that of the overall character arc of happiness through self acceptance and improving one's sense of self worth in the light of fertility problems. The ending simply cheapens the whole message of the book and is a slap in the face to the myriad of women for whom this is not possible no matter how much they hope and dream it to be.

It also is poor in that it tells women with horrific menstruation problems that cause them untoward amounts of pain, possibly damaging levels of anaemia and causes them to live lives 100% dictated by their menstrual cycles that if you hold off and continue putting your body and health at risk by not opting for a surgical option (ie hysterectomy in Kristin's case) then you'll be rewarded with your bundle of joy and not a life of pain and recurrent hospitalisations...

I am baffled by this book's unhealthily romanticised logic.

I had thought this would be a four star read half way through the book... Then it went to three stars with the dead friend but that ending hammered the proverbial nail in the coffin and it's one fat shiny star.

An e-copy of this book was kindly provided to me by the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. ...more

The Friend Zone Book

You might be tempted to write Abby Jimenez's new book *The Friend Zone* off as fluffy "chick-lit," assuming it's not much different than the countless other books like it out there.

You'd be wrong. Sure, there is romance, humor, talk of soulmates and futures, but there is also an extra layer of emotional complexity in this book. It made me want to devour the book even quicker than I did, and now that I'm done, I can't believe I have to wait until 2020 for Jimenez's next book!!

Josh and Kristen's meet-cute doesn't quite follow the traditional pattern: Josh, a recent transplant from South Dakota to Los Angeles, actually rear-ends Kristen when she has to stop suddenly in traffic. Kristen isn't any damsel-in-distress either—she's covered in coffee from the fender-bender and isn't afraid to let Josh know what a crappy driver he is, using every bit of flowery language she has at her disposal.

When they realize a little while later that Josh will be the best man at Kristen's best friend's wedding, both reluctantly admit they'll enjoy the prospect of spending time together. There's no doubt they're attracted to one another, and Kristen is awaiting the return of her Marine boyfriend, who will be moving in with her anyway, so there's no risk to their friendship.

The problem is, Kristen can't get enough of Josh, and the feeling is definitely mutual. Having been raised with six older sisters, Josh is more sensitive to what a woman wants—he knows that she needs to eat before she gets "hangry," they have the same sense of humor, and he even loves her little dog, Stuntman Mike. And the truth is, Kristen isn't even sure that her boyfriend Tyler is what she wants anyway, and the closer it draws to his discharge from the military, the more she starts to panic.

For his part, Josh has fallen in love with everything about Kristen. He can tell she doesn't seem into her boyfriend's return, and he knows they have serious chemistry? So why does she continue to keep him at arm's length?

Kristen has a debilitating medical condition, and it appears the only answer is a procedure which will make having children impossible. Josh has said more than once how he can't imagine not having a huge family of kids. How could Kristen deprive him of that, force him to choose her and give up his dreams? She wants him to have the life he so desperately desires, but she won't tell him why she keeps pushing him away, even when it's obvious how strongly she feels for him.

What I loved so much about *The Friend Zone* is the complexity of its characters and their relationships. Even when the book took a surprisingly emotional turn, the characters remained utterly true to themselves and the story, and I became even more invested. Sure, Kristen's reluctance to share the truth with Josh gets really frustrating, but the way he handles it, and the way the other characters in the book do as well, felt realistic and not part of some glossy romantic fantasy.

This is definitely a book I'd love to see adapted for a movie or television series, because I loved this story. (Plus, I wouldn't mind seeing how some casting director envisions firemen/ex-Marines Josh and Brandon, as well as Kristen and Sloane. Especially the firemen, but whatever.) Jimenez's writing is funny and charming and hooked me from the get-go.

I've really been enjoying my forays into this genre over the last year. There are some really talented writers out there and while it's easy just to think "chick lit" is fluffy and meaningless, you might want to adjust that belief. And *The Friend Zone* might be one that can help convince you.

Forever provided me an advance copy of this book in exchange for an unbiased review. Thanks for making it available!

This book will be published June 11, 2019.

See all of my reviews at itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blogspot.com.

Check out my list of the best books I read in 2018 at <https://itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blogspot.com/2019/01/the-best-books-i-read-in-2018.html>.

You can follow me on Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/the.bookishworld.of.yrralh/>. ...more

5 STARS

This is one of the best books I have read so far!! devour it, it was fast paced and mostly I have a smile in my face!! I fall in love with the characters and their relationship through the story. It has everything I wanted and even more!! It was fun, sweet, emotional, intense and romantic.

I find it addictive and in the end I wanted more. It has great dialogues and the relationship between Kristen and Josh was unique. I fall hard for both of them. Kristen is the best, I loved her, she was sassy and I

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The Friend Zone

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This is a friends-to-lovers romance, it was full of emotions!I highly recommend it!Abby Jimenez did an amazing job and I can't wait to read more books from her in the future!

Â

Â Â ...more

The Friend Zone Merch

This review has been hidden because it contains spoilers. To view it, [click here.](#)

JOSHUA AND TYLER DESERVED BETTER! WOMEN WITH INFERTILITY DESERVED BETTER!
BRANDON DESERVED BETTER!

So plus points first, before I get carried away in incandescent rage.

- 1) This was mostly well written, and the writing seemed to flow quite well throughout the book.
- 2) The start wasn't bad. I liked Josh, Kristin was funny, and the book spoke about periods and infertility, which isn't really ever addressed in other contemporary romances.

Now...Firstly Kristen..OMG when will authors realise that we do JOSHUA AND TYLER DESERVED BETTER! WOMEN WITH INFERTILITY DESERVED BETTER! BRANDON DESERVED BETTER!

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- 2) The start wasn't bad. I liked Josh, Kristin was funny, and the book spoke about periods and infertility, which isn't really ever addressed in other contemporary romances.

Now...Firstly Kristen..OMG when will authors realise that we don't want to read about 'the cool girl?' Kristen was described as an amazing girl who doesn't like drama, doesn't wear make up, ate cheeseburgers, drank beer, and was actually labelled a unicorn four times in the book. "An honest, no-drama woman who didn't bullshit and drank beer and cussed and didn't care about what people thought about her. She was a unicorn, tucked in the body of an attractive woman with a great ass."

Lets just address that first because OMFG I'm sick of reading about these so called perfect women, and then seeing the author compare them to other women who are "exhausting" or "crazy." Why do we need to put down other women in order to boost the heroine?!

Next she wasn't honest, and she did indeed care about what people think about her. She lied to her boyfriend, and to Josh repeatedly. She was selfish, self absorbed and manipulative! She was such a bitch to the men in her life.

Which leads me to Tyler. Kristen's long term boyfriend in the military. The author looked down on him because he was intelligent, highly educated, career driven, liked nice clothes and fancy restaurants. I mean how dare he?! Kristen did not technically cheat on Tyler, BUT she was constantly thinking about another man instead of him, she didn't answer his calls so that she could hang out with another man, and within minutes of their relationship ending, she jumped into bed with that other man...Even after all of that, he was nice to her, and he ended up getting hurt. He deserved better.

Then there was Joshua (why are so many love interests called Josh btw?!) Kristen lead him on

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repeatedly. Yes she had medical issues, yes he wanted kids, but she was dishonest with him, didn't communicate with him, ran hot and cold with him and was just basically a bitch. She would have sex with him but then say no kissing, hand holding or hugging, but then want to be friends with him and hang out. She kept stringing him along. He was seriously some kind of saint! Kristen should have just been honest with him, and then let him make his own decision. He was an adult and he deserved better. The lack of communication between the two main characters really wound me up!

Ok now to the unnecessary death of Josh's best friend and Kristen's best friend Sloan's fiancÃ©. I HATE IT WHEN AUTHORS USE THE DEATH OF A CHARACTER AS A PLOT DEVICE FOR THE NEXT BOOK!!!!!! I was reading, and thought I saw it coming, but thought no surely not, she wouldn't...She did. Brandon was killed off to bring the two main characters together, but also, the next book is about Sloan getting over his death *stares into the distance* It also really triggered me, as I lost a relative at the end of last year after they were placed in a medically induced coma. I shed many tears, and felt the whole scenario could have been avoided.

Next, the fucking surprise pregnancy. A pretty much infertile woman, with an IUD has unprotected sex once with a man, after 8 years of having unprotected sex, and boom she's preggo! And it's just explained that he has some super fucking strong sperm.

What a slap in the face for all of the women reading who have struggled with infertility. Honestly fuck the author's note at the end! The fact that she has written that to try to justify the ending tells me that she was probably aware of what she was doing. This book has already upset women who are struggling with their fertility, I can see that in the reviews. It isn't how most cases end up, and most people won't be able to relate to that fairy-tale ending. Why couldn't they have used a surrogate, or fostered/adopted a child?

I feel like the ending of the book undermined everything that happened before it. What was the point of all of that conflict? Why did we see a character suffer, but grow to accept her situation, and to start to think she was worthy, to then cancel out that arc, and undermine the important message?!

Other issues I had was the gushing about the man buying the tampons, I mean really? In this day and age, surely most men would? IDK I know my husband wouldn't be bothered, its not like the cashier would think he's on his period...ðŸ™„

The book felt like it was judging women who didn't want to have kids, and women who wore make-up. This goes back to the author trying to make the heroine look good at the expense of other women.

Instead of a funny, heart warming story, this book made me feel really angry. I think I have actually talked myself into changing my rating to a one star! ...more

Hey, everyone! This is a weird type of commentary on this book, but I've actually written a very personal and emotional blog post about my experience with PCOS and why reading about Kristen's uterine fibroids resonated so deeply with me. Please check it out if the topic isn't too triggering for you. It's a very, very emotional and important topic for me that'll always stay close to my heart. I don't think I'll ever be prepared to write a full review for this without also telling you the full s Hey, everyone! This is

The Friend Zone

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ARC kindly provided by Forever Romance in exchange for an honest review.

...more

The Friend Zone Full Movie

A sweet banter between two friends/ co-workers who have to deal with this tension between them, and also learn how to cope with having life obstacles...

So you see that gif above? Yup! That gif explains this novel perfectly without using any words. But because I am me, I have to use words to better help you, the reader, understand what I mean. As you can see, the gentleman who is walking through the FRIEND ZONE door, is demonstrating an expression of hesitation. That was me when I first read th A sweet banter between two friends/ co-workers who have to deal with this tension between them, and also learn how to cope with having life obstacles...

So you see that gif above? Yup! That gif explains this novel perfectly without using any words. But because I am me, I have to use words to better help you, the reader, understand what I mean. As you can see, the gentleman who is walking through the FRIEND ZONE door, is demonstrating an expression of hesitation. That was me when I first read the synopsis of this novel. Very, VERY hesitant about it because of multiple reasons, the main reasons being are because Abby is a new author to me and when it comes down to romance novels that involve (sort of) a third party to the equation, I am not the biggest fan of. I have never been disappointed with any of the novels that Forever has published so that's an upside to everything they promote or publish, so my hesitation did diminish a tiny bit when I saw who the publisher was. That fact for me makes a big difference. Don't ask why, because I don't even know that answer.

Following up that analysis of the gif, we proceed on over to seeing the "nurse" or "surgeon" entering the FRIEND ZONE, and he stumbles upon many different peeps. That to me represents all the different obstacles that the characters go through to be together. The difficulties are there, and there was a problem for me to get past 18% of the novel. Hence why it took me a tiny bit longer than usual to read this novel. This being the debut novel of Abby's I want to give her full credit for being part of the author world now and also creating such a comedic novel. Because that is for sure the one thing that she did not fail on. I could not stop laughing at some scenes where laughter was needed. Considering this novel as a rom-com, is the ideal description for it.

At the end to finalize this analysis of the above gif, the peeps inside are all happy with smiles when seeing the "nurse"/ "surgeon". That is how I feel because after finishing the novel, I truly did enjoy it. Not as much as I was hoping for but there were positive sides to it that made me fall in love with Kristen and Josh. Thank you to the wonderful Estelle at Forever Romance for recommending this novel, I am looking forward to more books by Abby!

The Friend Zone

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WOW this debut BLEW my expectations out of this world you guys! I kept hearing raving reviews about this book and was thinking "well see about that... most likely I'll be on my outlier island again."

Oh my goodness was I completely wrong... I LOVED everything about this book. This is not your typical light and fluffy romance read. It's so much more than that.. it has depth and emotions that will rock you to your core.

I'm wondering what else does Abby Jimenez have up her sleeve? Abby truly write WOW this debut BLEW my expectations out of this world you guys! I kept hearing raving reviews about this book and was thinking "well see about that... most likely I'll be on my outlier island again."

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I'm wondering what else does Abby Jimenez have up her sleeve? Abby truly writes like she's been writing novels for YEARS... I mean.. my gosh I couldn't put this book down and didn't want it to end.

This has truly everything you're looking for in a book. The characters were so connectable and I was crying when they were crying, I was laughing when they were laughing, I was angry when they were angry.

This book deserves all the true and raw 5 stars... and THAT is extremely hard in my book you guys. I rarely give out 5 stars so that is in itself should tell you to run not WALK to get this book ;).

This is one gem and true piece of special literature that you don't want to miss. I literally am biting at the bullet for her next novel that comes out in March 2020!!!

Thank you so much to Netgalley and Forever Publishing for the arc in exchange for an honest review.

Publication date: 6/11/19

Published to Goodreads: 6/10/19 ...more

The Friend Zone

The Friend Zone Song

***** NOW AVAILABLE EVERYWHERE! *****

Go meet and fall in love with Josh and Kristen today!

Purchase now: [The Friend Zone](#)

UPDATED RELEASE DATE - June 11th, 2019!

I'm so excited that readers get to fall in love with Josh and Kristen even sooner!!

5 stars isn't enough for this laugh out loud, beautifully honest, and sometimes heartbreaking novel. This book consumed me in the best way possible right from the start and I'm confident it will be one of my favorite reads ever. The Friend Zone was on ***** NOW AVAILABLE EVERYWHERE! *****
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5 stars isn't enough for this laugh out loud, beautifully honest, and sometimes heartbreaking novel. This book consumed me in the best way possible right from the start and I'm confident it will be one of my favorite reads ever. The Friend Zone was one of my most anticipated reads of 2019 and it was more captivating and moving than I ever could have imagined. It's hard to believe that this is Abby Jimenez's debut novel!

I absolutely loved Josh and Kristen! They were both such perfectly imperfect people. Their struggles (individually and together) were so relatable and honest. They had the best witty banter and their playful barbs were so much fun. I loved how they each gave as good as they got. Things start off on the wrong foot for them, but as they spend more time together, that spark they felt ignites and they recognize that their attraction is more than just physical. They truly see the other and that feeling of being known is so powerful. The build up between these two was delicious and their chemistry was off the charts. I felt all the longing and every stolen moment between them. It was all worth the wait though because when things come to a head, they aren't just hot, they're nuclear!

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Without a doubt, Josh is a shoo-in for my book boyfriend hall of fame. He was everything I love in a hero - loving, considerate, loyal, understanding, funny, protective, intelligent, and an all around good guy. His thoughtfulness and unwavering patience only made him more endearing. Kristen was a fantastically complex heroine. I loved her blunt honesty and take no prisoners sarcasm, even though she mainly used it as armor to protect herself. She was fiercely loyal and cared so deeply and wholly for those that she loved. Her friendship with Sloan was unparalleled and I loved how they complemented each other so well. Yes, Kristen did frustrate me at times with the push and pull with Josh, but given her history and mindset, it made so much sense. One of the things I appreciated most about this book, is that the story was as much a love story between Kristen and Josh, as it was between Kristen and herself.

The author's sense of humor really shines and there are some truly hilarious moments and dialogue that had me cackling like a mad woman. (I'm looking at you Shawn! LOL) The humor balanced the poignant and heartwrenching scenes so well and readers will definitely want to have some tissues handy for the last quarter or so of the book. Through the tears though, there is also a wonderful message of hope and unwavering love. I don't think I will ever be able to adequately express how much I loved this book. It resonated and touched me in a way that few books have. It was like the author opened my chest and held my heart in her hands. I felt every emotion while reading this one. Jimenez tackled infertility in such a compassionate and truthful way. It was gut wrenching and painful, but to those that have had their lives touched in this way or are a part of this club that no one ever wants membership to, it's also unflinchingly honest. Kristen's feelings of worthlessness and not being good enough will sadly hit home for many, but that's what makes this book so compelling. I highly recommend reading the author's note at the end as well since it gives greater insight into the story and characters. The epilogue brought everything together so wonderfully and I'm eagerly awaiting the next book, which features one of the beloved secondary characters who is sorely in need of their own happily ever after. Truly an incredible book and one that will stay with me.

I voluntarily read an advance reader copy of this book ...more

Phew.

I had been prepared (warned?) by mutuals that this story was a funny bit of fun but that it would be as equally heartbreaking as it was joyful. And I'm here to confirm that for you.

"I am not drunk. I'm just talking in cursive."

THE FRIEND ZONE starts off fairly lighthearted. A snarky first-meeting between our protagonists sets the tone for their association; Kristen is in a long-distance relationship with a deployed boyfriend and Josh is recently single, and recently relocated, and, despite Phew.

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THE FRIEND ZONE starts off fairly lighthearted. A snarky first-meeting between our protagonists sets the tone for their association; Kristen is in a long-distance relationship with a deployed boyfriend and Josh is recently single, and recently relocated, and, despite his attraction, not all that bothered by her unavailable status as a result.

Nothing offended me except cauliflower and stupidity.

At least not at first.

"There's something you should know about me, Josh. I say what I think. I don't have a coy bone in my body. Yes, you're sexy. Enjoy the compliment because you won't always like what I say to you, and I won't care one way or the other if you do or don't."

Their friendship, as it can only be friendship, was a delight. Kristen is unapologetically herself. She's not to be messed with when it comes to food, she's witty, she's honest, she's out to impress no one. And Josh was just game for everything. He was sweet, understanding, gave as good as he got, and they were just so fun together. And, having not read the blurb, I didn't really know where things would go beyond what it seemed at first glance.

"I already know how I'm going to die."

"How?"

"Spider bite. Or being sarcastic at the wrong time."

But this story is a lot more than snarky, sassy, when-will-they-can-they-ever times. This is hard hitting, emotional, devastating. It deals with loss, tragedy, and Jimenez's story even skirts a certain line I am not usually on board for but, thankfully, never crosses it. Additionally, the emphasis on Kristen's issues with fertility -- which is of course emphasized as it's a major point of conflict -- was something I thought unique to the romance (women's fiction?) world. Talk of periods, discomfort, tampons, fibrosis, IUDs.. nothing was off limits. This is not only a great bit of fun and sweetness, alongside some heartbreak, but also a book I think a lot of women will see themselves in. Feel represented by. I think that's so fabulous.

"You know, you seem too fearless to be afraid of spiders."

"A black widow killed my schnauzer when I was a kid. Embracing a lifelong debilitating fear of spiders is cheaper than therapy."

What stops this from getting full marks is that.. I felt some things got dragged out. Same conversations, same hot and cold, same back and forth. It was a bit exhausting, too repetitive, and honestly I was pulled out of the story a bit because I just felt so bad for these fictional people. Both of them, really. It was kind of miserable for them for a while. And then of course a whole other kind of misery started but that was easier to lose myself in. No spoilers.

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"I hope you're not planning on sending me flowers."

"What would you like me to send you then?"

"Something practical that I'll get use out of, like a dick pic."

The ending was a bit of a surprise for me and I so loved it. I really did. Additionally the author's note was an extra bit of wonderfulness and I definitely hope readers take a moment to experience that, too.

Overall, though, I'm blown away that this was a debut. It's funny as all get out, it broke my heart, and I definitely want Jimenez to do it again. Lots of times. Will absolutely read whatever this author serves up next.

** I received an ARC from the publisher (thank you!) in exchange for an honest review. **

This review can also be found at [A Take From Two Cities](#). ...more

The Friend Zone Kristen Callihan

When I first read the synopsis of this book, I knew that I had to read this book. I couldn't wait to read a sweet rom-com that tackled some serious issues.

Kristen Peterson has accepted her future, which means making sacrifices when it comes to her life. Planning her best friend's wedding, Kristen doesn't like how she feels around the groom's best man, Josh. Josh is cute and fun. Josh likes Kristen. But Josh wants a big family. And Kristen can't give him that. So Kristen pushes Josh away until J When I first read the synopsis of this book, I knew that I had to read this book. I couldn't wait to read a sweet rom-com that tackled some serious issues.

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Since this is called The Friend Zone, you all know that Josh and Kristen become really good friends as Kristen refuses to go to the "something more" stage with Josh. Their friendship was EVERYTHING to me and I think that's what made them fall that hard for one another. I loved how much they hung out and just got to know each other while Kristen made it clear they couldn't be anything more. Their chemistry was through the roof and I was just dyying for them to give into that chemistry already.

While the romance was fun, it was also definitely on the serious side dealing with Kristen's infertility. I loved reading a story about a woman who was dealing with infertility and how broken she felt. I personally know a few women who have dealt with infertility, so I'm happy a romance came out that dealt with that topic to show women they shouldn't feel alone if they go through that. That being said, I was slightly disappointed in the ending the author chose for this book, but the rest of the book was too amazing not to rate five stars.

Overall, I enjoyed this book so much and couldn't put it down! While I typically would be annoyed with a character like Kristen, her experiences made her so relatable and her insecurities made me just want to hug her! And can we talk about Josh? What a perfect man! Ugh. If you want a super sweet friends to lovers romaine that will definitely bring a tear to your eye at the end, you need to pick up The Friend Zone! ...more

5 Stars!

It was about her allowing herself to be loved, despite what she felt were shortcomings. It was about her recognizing that she wasn't defined by her ability to have children, and that her worth went beyond the state of her uterus. That was her happily ever after.

The Friend Zone

The hype is REAL for this book. How do I like my romantic comedies? I like them to be laugh out loud funny, heart-warming and ultimately realistic. This book is that and then some.

Kristen is planning her best friends wedding and 5 Stars!

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The hype is REAL for this book. How do I like my romantic comedies? I like them to be laugh out loud funny, heart-warming and ultimately realistic. This book is that and then some.

Kristen is planning her best friends wedding and is in a relationship with a man in the military. He's off on deployment and she's been focusing on her bff's upcoming nuptials. She doesn't do drama and will tell you how she's really feeling. She gets into a little fender bender one day and thinks nothing of it. The next thing she knows, she's met her bff's future husband's best friend since he's the one who tapped her bumper. From there, a sassy friendship forms and after awhile maybe she realizes Josh isn't all that bad.

But Kirsten has a bit of a dilemma - she always seems to fall for guys who want big families and she cannot have one due to some serious medical issues. She has been told all her life how she's not good enough and tries to save the men from her. Insert Josh who would do anything for Kristen at the drop of a dime. Kristen knows he's perfect - he always has food for her when she's hangry, he thinks shes beautiful with curlers in her hair and he will go to a sketchy taco truck with her at all times of the night. She just knows that her medical condition will cause Josh to never be hers but she can't seem to stay away...

This book is easily in my top 5 of 2019 so far. It was so realistic and I love when I feel like books have characters and story lines that I can relate to. I definitely have friends like Kristen in my life and honestly I'm probably more of a Sloan. The relationships in this book felt like real friendships and real romantic partnerships. There wasn't so much "fluff" that sometimes come with these stories. One other thing about this book was it easily made me feel the emotions the characters were feeling at any given time. I attest that to the real and easy going dialogue.

I'm lucky, as of now, that I've never personally experienced any fertility issues but I'm also not in the stage of life of having children of my own. I know other's have stated they've gotten emotional and cried during these parts but I was more empathetic towards Kristen rather than brought to tears. I think this is just because I have not experienced this or have gone through any fertility steps at this point in my life. However, the devastation that Sloan endures, that is where my heart broke. I could never imagine going through what she did but we see her true love shine through at the end.

Overall, this is a great laugh out loud romantic comedy. I cannot believe this is a debut by Abby Jimenez.

The Friend Zone

I read this book in a day and only two sittings. I only stopped because I had to sleep at some point! This book publishes tomorrow, June 11th and you definitely need to have this one on your summer TBR list. Also, I can't wait for Abby's next novel coming March 2020!!!

Thank you to Forever Romance for my copy of this book! ...more

The Friend Zone Doesn't Exist

A bad summary based on the book's blurb: When Kristen and Josh accidentally get into a fender bender, they have no idea that they are already connected through their best friends. As the maid of honor and the best man, they're going to have a lot of events to do, and there is no denying their chemistry. But when Josh tells her that he dreams of having a large family, it hits Kristen right in her womb, because she is infertile. Determined not to lead Josh on, she tries her best to keep him at a distance.

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What. The. Fuck. Did I read??

Seriously. This is like Jody's Revenge meets your average Lifetime movie.

For those of you who aren't military, Jody is the guy who bangs your girl (or partner, but the stereotype, like this entire book, is heterosexual) while you are deployed.

For real.

Kristen has a boyfriend who is a Marine (because of course) and Josh is also a Marine (because of course). However, Josh is the salt of the earth infantry dude who likes pizza and beer, while Tyler is the sophisticated Marine linguist who enjoys wine and tapas and the finer things in life. He's also a gunny sergeant, whatever the fuck that is, because this author clearly has no idea how military ranks work. (view spoiler)[Marine Corps 101: the rank is gunnery sergeant, shortened to gunny only if you either know the person well or have enough rank/balls to call an E-7 a gunny. For example, all gunnys are gunnery sergeants, but not all gunnery sergeants are gunnys. There is no such fucking thing as a gunny sergeant (hide spoiler)]

Also, Tyler has somehow been deployed for two years, which is a thing that is not probable? At first I was like, okay, maybe he's deployed for an Okinawa tour but nooo, he's somewhere in some unspecified war zone. And Brandon and Josh were deployed for year long tours too. Which, uh, no. Standard Marine Corps deployments are 6-9 months long. You might deploy for a year, but generally only as an individual augment. Year long deployments in the Marine Corps are rare, but you know where year long deployments are frequent? The Army.

Yup. So imagine my surprise and delight when I thought I saw two regular soldiers being repped and then my irritation when Josh and Brandon were Marines. Look, nothing against Marines (I am a Marine

(view spoiler)[but due to damaging shit like this book and the vetdouchebros women's service is erased from the narrative/deliberately undermined because women in the military damages the masculinity of the men serving (like, seriously this is a thing) (hide spoiler)] , but I'm tired of Marines being the next-tier in hyper masculinity below special force alpha males. Like, can we not? And can we also not with the infantry thing too? I mean, I liked that Tyler was not infantry, but it was shown as something lesser and more inferior and honestly POGs get enough of that shit in life, it doesn't need to be perpetuated in romancelandia.

So my frustration with the first 2/3 of this book has mostly to do with the military aspect. Not only is it really wrong, but Kristen's emotional cheating on her deployed boyfriend is literally the oldest tale in the book. And Josh, as a Marine, should know this. This common cliché of the service member deploying and their partner cheating with another has been told so many times (and I've seen it and counseled a lot of Marines) that having it told from the perspective of the cheating partner with them as the hero just makes my blood crawl. Like. No.

Also, the break-up was not a break-up. You can't get mad at someone for telling you they are re-enlisting over the phone when you don't answer their calls because you are too busy hanging out with your fake-boyfriend. You also don't get to call that other person the villain when you've been hooking up with someone right after the break-up. Tyler had no damn clue Kristen broke up with him because she never answered his fucking calls or texts. She's the ghost master.

And you sure as fuck don't get to say "I signed up for the military relationship" and then bitch about everything that involves being in a military relationship and say that's what ruined it. That is literally what you signed on to. (view spoiler)[and no I sure as hell am not putting military partners on a pedestal of being better or whatever, just that there are certain things you kinda have to accept when your partner is in the military (hide spoiler)]

As for the rest of it. There's a lot of hyper masculinity (ok, this is a romance book but still) and some seriously whacky heterosexual bullshit that goes on. The magical penis thing was a little much, along with the emphasis on his dimples and him liking her tiny-not-a-dude's dog and rampant misogyny that is particularly emphasized by reducing Kristen's worth down to her defective uterus. I felt like I was reading something from 2006. Not 2019.

I get that that was not the point of the book and that it was all in her head (and what many women with infertility issues feel), but it felt very regressive to have Kristen focus on being worthless to anyone without either a) a man and b) a working uterus. She either had to be with Tyler (and settle for his not wanting kids and sophisticated ways) or forsake Josh because she couldn't give him a big, natural family. And BIG spoiler (view spoiler)[The author says that the book is not about Kristen having children but finding her self-worth as a human outside of not having a working uterus or being able to have children, but Kristen literally only found her true happiness after having the miracle pregnancy and her miracle baby. I felt that the infertility issue would have been resolved a lot better if they had embraced her being infertile head on, gone through the surrogacy and everything instead of going, "oh but

look! You do have self worth because you were actually able to have a baby! (hide spoiler)] Also, thereâ€™s a magical mental illness cure trope, with Kristenâ€™s OCD being resolved when sheâ€™s with Josh. What. The Fuck. No.

Thatâ€™s a lot of the 2/3 of the book with the Tyler issue and Kristenâ€™s infertility, 90% of which would have been resolved with simple communication instead of Kristen stringing everyoneâ€™including meâ€™along (no bitterness here, clearly).

The last 1/3 is some sort of Lifetime movie tragedy porn where Bad Things Happen to Side Characters and this forces the leads to realize that life is short and they need to seek happiness where they can find it.

Overall, although I found initial enjoyment in the first 20% of the book due to my interest in seeing infertility issues actually addressed in a contemporary romance, once it swerved into deployment-cheating territory and Iâ€™m-worthless-without-a-womb land, I found my enjoyment eroding until I was left with bitter resolve to finish it for the sake of finishing.

And to see if it would get better.

It did not.

I received this ARC from NetGalley for an honest review. ...more

MUST READ BOOK ALERT! You guys, Iâ€™m so excited about this one, itâ€™s way up at the top of my favorite books of the year list and I want everybody to read it! Donâ€™t be fooled by the cutesy cover and assume that itâ€™s just another silly and fun rom com because it is SO much more than that. Yes, it has all the charm and laughs of a traditional rom com but it also has depth and tackles some serious subject matter as well. This isnâ€™t just a fluffy book yâ€™all and itâ€™s way different than everything else

MUST READ BOOK ALERT! You guys, Iâ€™m so excited about this one, itâ€™s way up at the top of my favorite books of the year list and I want everybody to read it! Donâ€™t be fooled by the cutesy cover and assume that itâ€™s just another silly and fun rom com because it is SO much more than that. Yes, it has all the charm and laughs of a traditional rom com but it also has depth and tackles some serious subject matter as well. This isnâ€™t just a fluffy book yâ€™all and itâ€™s way different than everything else currently available right now.

When I pick up a romance I know that if I donâ€™t immediately connect to at least one of the main characters then the book probably wonâ€™t work for me. Well, I connected to Kristin almost instantly, she is just a cool chick and her sarcasm and wit made me wish she was my BFF instead of Sloaneâ€™s. Sheâ€™s also just a badass, tough woman who I found myself both admiring and relating to. Then thereâ€™s Josh, who sigh may be my new favorite book boyfriend because not only is he hot and charming, heâ€™s also sensitive, values his family and he heâ€™s an amazing sense of humor. SWOON

• Put these two together and you have magic, their chemistry is off the charts and when the story

The Friend Zone

took an unexpected emotional turn you get to see that deep down theyâ€™re also both kind and just honest to goodness human beings. I couldnâ€™t ask for more in terms of characterization, seriously perfect.

One last thing, this is a debut and I canâ€™t tell you the last time that I was this blown away by a debut author. Abby Jimenez writes like a seasoned pro, I donâ€™t know how she will ever top this gem but I have a feeling we will find out when we get a new book from her next year! Until then, Iâ€™ll be over here planning my reread of this one and pushing this book on anyone who will listen.

The Friend Zone in three words: Witty, Relatable and Emotional

...more