

# PREFACE

Before putting words on paper, I had to reconcile my thoughts about how people might react if they recognized themselves in this book. In the end, I chose to write my truth. When I shared my idea with my Best Friend Forever, Michelle, whom I affectionately called “Miche” (pronounced Mitch), and a few mentees, their response was unanimous: “You betta write that book! People need to know they are out here violating friendships.” So here it is.

This book is for:

- People who want to understand the nature of their friendships.
- People who need to be better friends to themselves and to others.
- People who may not realize they are in toxic or “abusive” friendships.
- People who want to celebrate great friendships.

At its heart, it’s about recognizing when a friendship is out of order, when to set boundaries, and when to make the challenging but necessary decision to walk away. It’s about the connections that serve you, the ones that harm you, and the ones that need redefining. True friendships require mutual investment, respect, and honesty, not just history, convenience, or obligation.

My mother always told me, “Adrienne, everybody ain’t your friend. They’re chinnin’ and grinnin’ in your face and talking about you behind your back.” Her words echoed in my mind every time I felt the sting of betrayal. My first best friend was my baby sister, Nichole. She always had my back and had an uncanny ability to see through my so-called friends. She was my protector, my confidante, and my first lesson in what it meant to have a true friend.

In 2017, this book was inspired by the tragic ending of what I believed was an everlasting friendship. The pain was deep, and healing took years. I started writing from a place of hurt, but now I write from a place of healing. Through that journey, I learned that not everyone shares the same beliefs about what friendship means. For me, friendship is sacred, a bond built on trust, respect, and loyalty. Once that trust is violated, the bond is never the same.

Recognizing the complexities of these connections can help us form healthier, more fulfilling relationships. I hope we can all approach friendships with greater compassion, understanding, and authenticity.

As you move through these chapters, may this book encourage you to reflect on the relationships in your life. From navigating one-sided relationships to embracing authentic sisterhood, may you find the courage to evaluate which friendships truly uplift and support you.

Just as you adjust your slip when someone calls it out, may you adjust your friendships with wisdom, self-respect, and love. Because at the end of the day, the best friendships aren't just the ones that make you feel good, they're the ones that make you better.

Let's step into this conversation with open hearts and honest reflections because, if nothing else, friendship should be a space where we can stand fully seen and still be loved.

