

**EXCLUSIVE EXCERPT FROM MR UNAVAILABLE & THE
FALLBACK GIRL REWRITTEN SECOND EDITION FOR
PRINT**

ABOUT THE BOOK

When you're involved with someone who wants attention, sex, a shoulder to lean on, an ego stroke, money and any other fringe benefits that you can enjoy in a relationship, it's not exactly a leap to assume that they're available and that you're in a relationship, right? Wrong.

If you've ever found yourself involved in a relationship that feels and seemingly looks like one but it doesn't progress or you've been in the ambiguous territory of a 'casual relationship', you've likely tried to change them, wondered what you 'did' to cause this, what you can do to win their love and commitment, or even whether you're going crazy in some great misunderstanding.

Mr Unavailable and the Fallback Girl is the definitive guide to understanding the relationship between emotionally unavailable men and the women that love them. From explaining how and why they blow hot and cold, to where that future they promised went to, how you've ended up being a booty call, why you've been together for a gazillion years but aren't going anywhere, and more importantly how and why you're involved with them in the first place, all of the answers are here.

In the summer of 2005, British writer of dating and relationship site BaggageReclaim.com, Natalie Lue declared on her then personal blog that not only did she seem to love unavailable men but that she'd made the uncomfortable realization that her dating experiences weren't an extended case of bad luck - she too was unavailable and commitment resistant. Since then she's been using her experiences, self-discovery, and observations on relationships to empower people to have better self-esteem in better relationships, connecting with thousands of women around the world who thought that their experiences were unique, that they'd 'done' something to create them, or that they were even going crazy.

Mr Unavailable and the Fallback Girl is inspired by all of Natalie's experiences as well as those of her readers. Originally published as an ebook in 2008, the print edition is a newly updated and shrunk down version that answer's all of the questions about these dubious partnerships.

If you want to understand your own availability and why commitment in a healthy relationship is eluding you, *Mr Unavailable and the Fallback Girl* is your guide to being available and attracted to healthy, available partners.

YOU KNOW HE'S UNAVAILABLE WHEN IT'S A CASUAL RELATIONSHIP OR SEX IS A WEAPON

Back in 'olden times' which is actually about twenty years ago and beyond, casual relationships were somewhat different to what they are today. There were more people engaging in them than previously, but it wasn't the *done* thing. We knew they were very sexually led and that they weren't going anywhere so were more likely to participate for a short period of time. Being casual was somewhat less ambiguous as well. You knew that if you weren't speaking to and seeing each other regularly where you slotted into the pecking order.

Casual in a lot of people's minds is still regarded as a purely sexual relationship but unavailable people have adjusted the 'rules' to somewhat suit their agenda because getting all the fringe benefits of a relationship without having to commit seems like a wonderful prospect. The pressure to be part of a couple or for a relationship to progress into more formalised, steady arrangements isn't what it used to be. For some, they're able to get their rocks off on tap and dial you at whatever hour of the night and know that you'll 'hook up', and for others, not putting a name to things allows them to play it safe and minimise risk.

Before where it was down to telephone calls and seeing each other, you can now be 'managed' via text message, instant messenger, email, Facebook and even dating sites.

As Fallback Girls, we'll often convince ourselves that keeping it casual is the way to go because we're still hurting from a previous relationship or we're risk averse. When you throw in the fact that we're actually far more receptive to casual relationships than we've ever been *and* some of us have high sex drives and/or *overvalue* sex, Mr Unavailable has also worked out that this can be used to his advantage to distract from who he really is or the true nature of the relationship. He recognises that playing to the enjoyment of sex or tugging the insecurity strings is highly advantageous, making sex or the prospect or withdrawal of it, a very powerful weapon.

IT'S NOT *JUST* FOR SEX BUT IT'S *STILL* CASUAL

When you're involved with someone who wants attention, sex, a shoulder to lean on, an ego stroke, money and any other fringe benefits that you can enjoy in a relationship, it's not *exactly* a leap to assume that they're available, right? Wrong. Many of us have been conditioned to think that if someone isn't available and around, they'll either use us for a shag and then disappear, or straight up say that they're not interested. They won't keep coming back and hanging around us, right? Wrong.

Many men *and* women still believe that casual relationships are about sex and *yes* often they are, but certainly in recent times, they have transformed into a different 'beast' - one that looks and talks like a relationship but doesn't walk like one. Unfortunately there's something very important and unpleasant that you need to acknowledge here:

You may be thinking that you're in a relationship of sorts with Mr Unavailable but he may see you as little more than a Fuck Buddy, Friends With Benefits, Hook Up, Friends Who Fuck, or a Booty Call.

He might not attach these particular terms to you but this is often what you amount to. Unfortunately they may see you as the woman they can call and get into your pants when it suits, even though they're not investing emotion or themselves into the relationship. We tend to glorify things or they let us believe that it's more, so that they minimise conflict and safeguard the sex and attention supply.

I should know - I've *been* this woman and in the relationship that triggered my epiphany about my penchant for Mr Unavailable's, I made the mistake of believing that because we'd had sex over a period of several months, spent time together, been out, kept in touch albeit increasingly sporadically, that we were a couple, albeit a rather ambiguous one. It's this ambiguity that I should have paid more attention to plus if I'd look at the 'relationship' as a whole instead of focusing on what I call 'hallmarks' of the relationship - things that we see as markers of a couple - I would have noticed that commitment, progression, intimacy, consistency and balance were missing from our relationship (the landmarks), making ours a very much casual relationship. We were *hooking up*. Not only is this confirmed by the fact that I never felt safe in thinking I could refer to him as my 'boyfriend' but after five months of a barely there relationship, he *told* me he wasn't ready for one...

CASUAL RELATIONSHIPS...MORE FOR LESS

Mr Unavailable has mastered the art of having a casual relationship. While some are purely about the sex and literally stick to a hard and fast (excuse the pun) arrangement that leaves you in no doubt that it's a sexual relationship, there are many others who have learned how to get their main purpose fulfilled (sex) and get whatever else they can around it (bonus).

Some are what I call **The Shagger**, the guy that makes you feel like you're the centre of the universe, sleeps with you, then disappears off the radar either for good (one night or a fling), or until he decides he wants to sleep with you again. If you sleep with him more than once, you're basically a booty call.

A **booty call** is an arrangement based around sex with no emotional involvement and it isn't always mutual. Typically used to refer to someone that makes contact with the aim of getting laid, even if they put frills like dinner, drinks, gifts, and sweet nothings around it, it also refers to when someone treats you like someone they can call up for 'booty' even though there is seemingly a relationship. i.e they see you in sexual terms. Another term for booty call is **'hooking up'**. It can happen once, a few times or even many times and can go on for years if you allow it.

The difference between a one night stand and a booty call? Not much. It's just a one night stand on repeat.

It's pulling the same 'con' more than once and actually managing to get away with it. For that to happen, you're pressing The Reset Button *yourself*. Booty calls happen because they chance their arm, possibly do a little more Future Faking, and you *accept*. Standards and boundaries are not applied and not enough questions are asked.

If you believe that you're both friends, either because pre-sex you had a friendship or he has played the 'friend card' when you've questioned things, you may refer to the 'arrangement' as **Friends With Benefits, Fuck Buddy or Friends Who Fuck**. Really, using the word 'friend' is a way of legitimising what would under other circumstances be unacceptable behaviour, especially if you weren't friends in the first place and only started referring to them as such because you needed a reason to feel that sticking around was worthwhile.

Friends With Benefits (and other such 'friendly' arrangements) are where two people who consider themselves friends agree to be sexually involved without being emotionally involved. Generally speaking, you're not exclusive, but I have heard of situations where exclusivity is expected or when non-exclusivity causes friction....like a relationship. If it's more of a random, sporadic 'dalliance', it may be more appropriate to call it 'hooking up' or 'Fuck Buddy'.

While friendships can survive a one night stand, a fling or even sporadic encounters with mutual care, trust, and respect but no emotional attachment beyond friendship, if one crosses the line, it's very difficult to recover the friendship, especially if the other party seeks to continue the dalliance *anyway*.

It's logical to believe that because of your friendship and sleeping together that a relationship could and should happen.

It's been drummed into us that the best relationships are ones where the couple are friends as well and we've seen enough romantic comedies and read enough chick lit to cement these notions. However, and it's a big however, you're forgetting two crucial pieces of information - you're a Fallback Girl and he's a Mr Unavailable so you are both stepping into murky waters. While he may be a great guy, I've read enough tales to know that as Fallback Girls, we're often attracted to qualities in male friends that we are in our relationship. However these friendships feel safer and sometimes we think we can right the wrongs of our past and get validation safely via them. With your fear of abandonment and need for validation and his tendency to think about himself, this is *messy*.

Particularly if you were both genuinely friends, he may assume that you know what he's like. You, unfortunately, assume that you're exempt from his treatment due to the 'friendship'. Yep, messy.

While these arrangements can *appear* to be mutual, like anything that has Mr Unavailable in it, it's not actually as mutual as you'd like to think and one party (him) is dictating the terms. Even

though we'll bullshit ourselves, the truth is that in *any* casual relationship, there is always one party (you) who wants more or has more expectations. Mr Unavailable knows this, but if you are knowingly participating in one of these arrangements with him, whether you put a name to it or not, he let's himself off the hook by telling himself that you know it's casual or that it's obvious that it is, so he gets to sleep easier at night.

Mr Unavailable doesn't want the weight and responsibility of a 'full on' relationship so casual relationships are perfect for him because he's unavailable and he doesn't get emotionally involved.

Casual is as casual does and in treating you casual, Mr Unavailable feels that even if he hasn't been entirely honest and has even engaged in some Future Faking, in his eyes, his *actions* are casual, hence you should know that it's casual. The truth is that it *not* being a one night stand and him getting the fringe benefits makes him feel better about his actions. For them, not shagging around, particularly beyond a certain age, might not fit an image that they want to project. He's no more willing to commit but he needs *more* satisfy his ego.

SEX & THE DISAPPEARING ACT - FAST FORWARDING *EXTRA*

FAST

Many a woman has slept with a man thinking that it was the start of something beautiful, when in fact it was the end of something that had never really started for him. He knows from the outset that he has no intentions of calling again, or that he's just not interested in having a relationship, but he allows her to *believe* that it's a possibility. His ego loves the idea that she's falling in love, desiring and trusting him; he's not interested in the non ego-massaging experience of being with a woman who just wants him for sex.

Guys that lose interest as soon as they 'hit it' are out there aplenty and one of the mistakes that we make as women is thinking that following our lust will lead to positive results in terms of hooking them in. In the chapter *You Know He's Unavailable When His Actions Don't Match His Words*, I explained **Fast Forwarding** and how you can be sped along with their high intensity and Future Faking, only for the rug to be snatched from under your feet. While some fast for-

ward you over a period of weeks and months, some will do it in days or even *hours* which may be when you will experience a one night stand or the ‘amazing’ date that never made it to a second.

For some Mr Unavailables, when they get the sex, the Fast Forwarding stops and they hit the ‘stop’ or ‘eject’ button.

If he comes back for more despite disappearing or blowing lukewarm or cold, it gives strength to the misconception that he finds it difficult to resist the sex, which then places it at the centre of the relationship, creates a false emotional tie, and you connect the fact that you enjoy the sex so much and that he keeps returning with the idea that he must be ‘The One’. What he’s doing however, is extracting maximum value by turning it into a no-strings, unemotional arrangement. When he thinks about having a ‘good time’ and getting a warm reception, he thinks of you.

SEXUAL DOUBLE STANDARDS & ENTRAPMENT

Casual sex is more prolific now than it’s ever been, yet women, *not* men, continue to be penalised for being sexually liberal. On top of this, even if you’re not looking to indulge in casual sex per se, many of you still engage in some level of sexual activity in the early stages of dating. It might be because you think that you’re having such a great time so ‘What the hell?’ or you don’t want to be perceived as sending the message that you’re a spoilsport because you’re turning them down. While I don’t deny that sleeping together on the first night or very quickly can work out for some people, more often than not, if you open your legs too soon, it backfires and leaves you empty handed, especially when that sexual partner is Mr Unavailable and he doesn’t play fair.

His egotistical conflict doesn’t stop him from having sex with women and essentially setting a trap. At the end of the day, if you’re not going to respect a woman that sleeps with you and there’s a strong likelihood that you won’t want to pursue anything as a result, why bother to sleep with her? Because he can.

For him, if one woman ‘slips up’ and gives it to him ‘too easily’, there are plenty more where she came from.

You're being set up to fail. This is entrapment and it all feeds back into his beliefs about relationships, love, and himself. It suits his agenda for him to sleep with you and discard you or mark your card as a 'Passing Time Candidate' that's good enough to screw and use, but not good enough to be 'The One'. That's not because you deserve this treatment or that you are necessarily anything you've been deemed by him to be, but by sleeping with you, whether it was on the first date or a few dates in, or letting things be casual, he draws negative conclusions about you that confirm his beliefs.

If someone believes that you're X because you've done Y, even though you may feel otherwise, it doesn't matter.

He doesn't allow for the fact that he's actually led you to believe that he is OK with it - after all, it takes two to tango - and he certainly doesn't consider the fact that he's just as much a party to creating the illusion of a false connection.

In many cases, Mr Unavailable is chancing his arm to see how women react to his advances.

When he chances his arm, if the risk pays off, he enjoys the sex and writes you off. If the risk doesn't pay off, his interest may be piqued and he'll believe he's more interested in you than he is, until he finds another way to mark you down. The reality is that with Mr Unavailable, you just can't win. You're damned if you do and damned if you don't. Sleep with him and he relegates you to the 'easy bin' and treats you like a casual sex companion even if he allows you to think that you're more; or don't sleep with him and you get consigned to the 'hard work' or 'challenge' bin. Even if you do 'hold back', there are some men egotistical and twisted enough to keep pursuing you till they get what they want, only for them to move you to the easy bin afterwards. Certainly don't make the mistake of holding off the sex for a year or until marriage in an effort to eradicate the problem. He'll just play normal and then revert to type or even cheat!

For Mr Unavailable, this is part perfection issue and part being unable to stop thinking with their penises. They have conflicting instincts: On one hand they want you to be rampant and have sex, and on the other hand, they want this perfect little wifey that has almost virginal qualities. The conflict makes them unavailable automatically to women that in their eyes make it easy for them...even if they do their damndest to help create that 'easiness'.

THE NO SEX MR UNAVAILABLE

Over the past few years, I've increasingly heard from a particular Fallback Girl - the one that's involved with the Mr Unavailable that doesn't have sex, stopped having sex, or for whatever reason, can't. Of course, because you're validation seeking inclined, you will be confused by the ambiguous nature of being involved with a man who doesn't seem to have an interest in sex and may even be willing to take on the crusade of trying to fix/heal/help your Mr Unavailable out of impotency issues. You wonder why they don't want to have sex, might not be particularly affectionate, but they still want to be around you and because one of your core beliefs and modes is to seek change from others, you'll be thinking along the lines of:

If I can get him to change and to sleep with me, or to even overcome sexual issues that were present long before I entered the picture, I will be validated and it will show how much he loves me.

With the Mr Unavailable that doesn't have sex and isn't affectionate but he does seem to want you around, it's because in his mind you serve *other* purposes and whatever they are, as long as his needs are getting met, he's not concerned about you. If you're not around, he has to look too closely at himself, so holding on to you, even though he either doesn't want you or is unprepared to treat you with love, care, trust, and respect, becomes of paramount importance. You're a beard - you give the illusion to him and others that he's 'The Man'.

With the Mr Unavailable that doesn't have sex but is affectionate in other ways and seems to want to be around you, whether it's a low sex drive or feelings for you that just flit above friendship, again he is enjoying the fringe benefits of having you without extending himself. He may feel that being affectionate is 'enough' for you. It might be enough if he were actually emotionally available, but with all the other issues that create barriers to intimacy, this will end up feeling like a friendship - you're a companion.

With the Mr Unavailable that used to have sex but stopped or has become sporadic, it may be low sex-drive, or the sense of the unknown and thrill of the chase has expired. He might be stingy and controlling with sex and feel he needs to only wheel it out when he's in danger of losing you,

or he may literally feel like continuing to have sex will create too much intimacy. The wind has literally gone out of his sails. He may have other problems that compromise that ability even such as drugs, alcohol, money issues, or yes, sleeping with someone else.

With the Mr Unavailable that can't get it up for emotional reasons, these issues existed before you met. It may be a combination of intimacy, confidence issues, beliefs, and deep rooted reasons that may stretch back as far as childhood. The more you look for him to validate you, is actually the less likely he is to 'put out'. If it's for physical reasons, it's literally that it *doesn't* work no matter how positively he thinks. If he's in denial about his issues, he'll think it comes down to the 'right' woman to breathe life into it or encourage his libido.

The easiest way to demonstrate how the No Sex Mr Unavailable can come about is to tell you two reader stories:

Alice, late forties has been married for nearly 15 years and has rarely had sex with her husband. Prior to getting married, she had no idea that he had issues with sex. They were intimate during the 'courtship' but the sex itself was a post marriage activity. At first she tried every trick and move in the book to get him going, then she blamed herself, and then she became frustrated. When she tried to discuss it, he told her that he'd had sex all the time before he was with her, that he was a five times a night guy, he could do this and that, and that all of their issues were particular to this relationship. The truth is altogether different - he was exactly the same in his previous 25 year marriage and no doubt his confidence took a further knock when his wife left him for a younger, sexually able guy. Alice feels duped - she's experienced Future Faking of a different kind here.

Unfortunately the Mr Unavailable that doesn't have sex, can Future Fake because in the 'hot' phase with the 'newness' and uncertainty of your interest, that in itself may be more than enough for them to be able to perform. Once he 'has' you, the desire wanes and literally loses its erection - it's like he has to be chasing/losing you to get excited. He also recognises in 'getting' you that he's bound to be found out and his confidence is eroded further, often dealing with this by being a workaholic, palming you off with material goods, or being mean to you and implying or outright stating that it's your fault.

Marianne, mid thirties spent the first few months of her relationship having lots of sex. He promised the sun, moon, and stars, they moved in together, and hot, turned to lukewarm, turned to ice cold. His nuts were practically shrivelling up at the idea of commitment and feeling closed in by her close proximity. So he withheld sex or if she said she liked something in particular, he stopped doing it. It's like he didn't want her to get too comfortable.

When Mr Unavailable chops and changes from being all over you to withdrawing the sex, the natural inclination is to wonder what the hell you have done. The truth is, you haven't done anything other than expect, need, and want based around what you've been led to believe you were involved in. While there are plenty of Mr Unavailables that will screw you even when they know they are not interested or as commitment able, there *are* some Mr Unavailables that lose interest in sex when it feels like too much 'intimacy' is being expected of them. It may be their way of calming things down and distancing themselves and the shrewder ones will recognise your sensitivity to rejection as an opportunity to *manipulate* you.

He's perfectly fine with letting you believe that it's *you* and watching you jump through hoops and break whatever is left of your emotional backbone blaming yourself for his reluctance or inabilities.

All of these shady actions end up controlling you and serving as a distraction from the wider issues that signal that this relationship is doomed *anyway*, great sex, bad sex, or no sex. In feeling lacking, you'll no doubt overcompensate and/or be scared to create conflict by questioning what's happening. Your needs are forgotten.

As denial is a natural part of his emotionally disconnected life, it's *easy* for him to continue denying and lying. He may make out that any 'issues' have only arisen in *this* relationship so of course you're going to blame yourself. This is him pressing The Reset Button and rewriting the past to suit his current agenda. It's highly unlikely that it's a new problem, but in the tried and tested mode of being Mr Unavailable, he doesn't seek to resolve any issues.

When he can't or won't have sex but is in denial and dodging responsibility, instead of seeking to address his issues, he decides that his problems will fade away when he's around the 'right' woman.

Of course he communicates this in direct and indirect ways so you believe that you're the 'wrong' woman and start doing cartwheels trying to be 'right'. As women, we are not used to men not wanting to have sex, in fact, we believe that men think with their penises! The sexual disconnect is him being physically unavailable and it's tied up in his emotional unavailability.

A man not wanting us for sex can sometimes be perceived far worse than a man trying to get into our knickers all of the time, because we take it as a personal blow to our sexuality and sense of femininity.

You assume that you must be doing something to turn him off, and so the trying to win him over through seduction begins, because it's another way of proving your worth if you're successful. On the rare occasions that he literally throws you a bone, you'll feel on top of the world and like he must really love you...till it dies a death again. Unfortunately the repeated attempts to get him to be sexual, the discussions (or lack of) about it, and the cold frost of not being given basic affection will deal a huge blow to your self-esteem. This is just another example of him putting his needs first and foremost without regard for how it will impact on others.

This *isn't* about you. To think it is, is to make his problems about you - problems that existed before you came along. While the sex is no doubt an issue, it's actually symptomatic of wider issues because the truth is, no matter how he tries to dress it up or which bells and whistles you attach to your situation, in being involved with Mr Unavailable, this *isn't* a particularly healthy relationship *anyway* and that's only further compounded by you being manipulated by his denial about his inadequacies.

HE USES SEX AS A WEAPON – YOU CONFUSE SEX WITH LOVE AND A CONNECTION

You assume that someone you're attracted to or have a great sexual 'connection' possesses similar values and is an ideal love partner. The 'attraction' 'chemistry' and 'libido' response is more often than not, totally unlinked to the actual character of the person, especially if you 1) don't

actually know them yet or 2) are in denial about who they are. Ever had great sex with someone who has treated you badly and been totally unworthy of your time? You use your libido, orgasms etc as a judge of character making you love blind and a slave to your hormones.

Sex is just sex. It's not love or emotion, and it's not a demonstration of what they feel for you or what you feel for them.

You give yourself too much credit for your powers of judgement and use the wrong 'skills' to gauge the suitability of partners. Focusing on the feeling created by sex and mistaking it for an *actual* connection, will turn you into a crack fiend looking for their next fix. You'll lose sight of yourself, who they really are and what your relationship actually is or isn't and believe that the sex, which you also think is your 'love' will fix everything - it won't.

Your vagina, libido and hormones are not great judges of character.

Whether it's good, bad, or non-existent sex, as a Fallback Girl you overvalue it *enough* to either let your judgement be clouded by it, to make dangerous assumptions about him and the 'relationship' you have, and to claim a greater connection than actually exists. For Fallback Girls, there is a very fine line between sexual communication and emotional communication so you actually think that they're one and the same.

MO SEX, MO PROBLEMS

Even if he never utters a damn word of care or doesn't do anything non-sexual to show it, if you're having *great* sex, you think that it reflects his true feelings. If you're having *bad* sex, you think it's reflective of your flaws so you think that improving it will show that you're loveable and worthy. If you're having *no* sex, you think it's reflective of how 'rejectionable' you are so you'll make it your vocation to try get sex so that you can feel accepted and validated. Sex plays too big a part in unavailable relationships. If you allow sex to cloud your judgement, you may also believe that you can sex your way out of problems or into someone's affections - you can't.

Sex is the low hanging fruit that's easier than actually *being* emotionally intimate.

Combined with love, care, trust, and respect, sex is a key way of being intimate with your partner, but without love, care, trust, and respect, it is important to realise that on its own it is a physical act. Having great sex doesn't mean that you love them or that they love you. Not so great people can be really good in bed - in time you will recognise the hollowness and the real lack of intimacy between you both. If the 'intimacy' can't translate beyond sex, your relationship is limited. If sex and love were intertwined, there'd be no such thing as one night stands and casual sex.

Sex is not a precursor of a loving relationship or intimacy.

You mistake a sexual connection for an emotional one, an indication that there is more to the relationship than there actually is and if you're getting bad sex or no sex, you mistake the emotional connection that you think you have as a reason to keep pushing ahead so that you can try to make the sexual connection. When you find someone attractive, feel a supposed chemistry, your libido goes crazy, or you swing from the chandeliers while having orgasms, just like they cloud your judgement, you may also believe that all of these things equal a love connection. They don't.

Sex on its own creates a sexual connection between you but it doesn't automatically translate to a love connection.

It's important to recognise that a 'connection' means a bond, relationship, something that ties you together - it is dangerous to assume that because you feel 'bonded' or are 'relating' to another person that it means you should be together or that you actually have a relationship. If you feel connected to someone who is unavailable, it's not a healthy, or quality connection - not all connections are created equal or worthwhile maintaining.

Like chemistry, a connection is one of those difficult to pinpoint, tricky to define linchpins of a relationship making it an easy blanket reason for why you're sticking with someone as you get to avoid looking too closely at your true reasons for your attraction to them. Not looking closely enough means that you're overvaluing this 'connection' to the detriment of other factors about your relationship that signal that this is not a healthy partnering.

Without chemistry and a connection you will feel something is ‘missing’, but if you have them without the fundamentals, you’re in a hollow relationship.

And this is where it's important to remind yourself of what you're dealing with here: Unavailable attracts unavailable so you may have an emotional chemistry and possibly a sexual chemistry that has you convinced that you're compatible, however you're compatible for the *wrong* reasons. You may well have a sexual connection, but the *overall* connection is rooted in dysfunction, fear of rejection, abandonment, letting go, being alone and starting over, and more importantly, the connection is rooted in your negative or misguided beliefs. This is why it feels 'right' even when it seems so 'wrong' and why you're still banking on that emotionally unavailable or assclown 'somebody' who you had so much of a 'connection' with...you just couldn't string a relationship together.

GREAT DYSFUNCTIONAL SEX

A very long time ago I learned that no sex was *that* good or *that* important to me that I was willing to be in a bad relationship for it. For me, when it becomes apparent that the guy is unavailable or an assclown, the sex deteriorates...fast. But, in talking to many Fallback Girls, it seems I am the exception, not the rule, and what was even more shocking, is that irrespective of whether you're getting good sex, or heaven forbid, *bad* sex, you're still heavily invested; they just generate two different types of relationship.

I call sex (both good and bad quality) with dubious partners **Great Dysfunctional Sex**, which is any sex where there's a significant shift in the balance of power, or where ambiguity, insecurity, dependency, high drama, strung out emotions etc exist, or there's the existence of another person (i.e. they have a girlfriend or wife). The 'greatness' in dysfunctional sex is really about the size of its relative importance to the relationship, not necessarily the quality of it, and Fallback Girls greatly *overvalue* sex so they ultimately end up *devaluing* themselves. The reason why you continue to have bad sex and pursue a relationship is that you believe 'the problem' is something that *you* need to work on and that the moment you are loveable enough, the sex problem will be solved. Some of you will blame yourself for his lack of 'prowess' in the bedroom and it will cater to your beliefs, increasing the level of dysfunction.

Ever wondered why:

the last sex you had with a partner before you broke up was off the chains and mind-blowing?

sex with a person that actually 'belongs' to someone else feels so damn good?

you're losing sleep over a man that mistreats you and can't even sleep with you right?

sex with Mr Unavailable leaves you clinging to him with orgasmic joy and may even push you to tears?

make-up sex is soooo good? (only applicable if you have make-up sex very frequently)

he won't discuss the issue of the sex rapidly declining since you were first together/his refusal to be intimate, with him implying that it's your problem or in your imagination?

All the breaking up and making up, the confusion, uncertainty, ambiguity, not knowing how to interpret his latest behaviour, add to the heightened sexual tension, and the reality is that if the sex is great, it's heightened by the absence of reality. If you ever got real about him, you'd find that the sexual connection diminishes rapidly.

Ask anyone who's been No Contact and then fallen off the wagon - more often than not the sex is utterly disappointing.

This is because even though your self esteem hasn't grown quite enough to stop you from falling off the wagon, it's grown enough to know that there's nothing but hot air and an emotionally vacant man lying on top of you who quickly shifts to his usual mode of disappointing the hell out of you soon after.

YOU'RE CHASING A FEELING

I get it, sex feels good and even when someone isn't up too much in other departments, it's easy to convince yourself that because you feel so good *during* sex that you just need to *extend* that feeling for longer periods of time and across your relationship. Unfortunately the very premise of things being focused on sex is very short term thinking.

You must stop chasing the 'feeling' created by sex and quit living in the moment or clinging to 'moments'.

When you're with a guy who enjoys 'hooking up' with you, he's thinking about now and getting his needs met, and not living beyond that moment. He assumes that because his needs are met, he's living in the moment and he's showing you who he is irrespective of anything coming out of his mouth, that not only are you living in the moment too but that you know the deal and you're OK with it. He's very 'of the moment' reaping the short-term benefits but leaving you with at best, a medium-term hangover. He doesn't think about the consequences and to be fair, neither do you. It's time to pause for thought and think beyond the now or the short-term because one of you has to and you are the only person responsible for you.

It's not thinking beyond these 'feelings' and the 'moment' that is a sexual pitfall for you and Mr Unavailable relies on this thinking, your libido, and your confusion about emotions and sex and reaps the benefits - he exploits the opportunity.

There will always be sexually opportunistic people but you do not have to provide the opportunity.

If only some of you really thought about things, put aside the sexual feelings, put your feet in reality, removed the fur coat of denial, and the rose tinted glasses, you'd think *'Woah...hold on a flipping second! Haven't we been here before? I know the pattern - no good will come of this. I feel good now and crap later.'*

For the average woman that loves a Mr Unavailable or an assclown or keeps going back to the scene of the crime, a lot of it is about recreating a feeling no matter how long ago that feeling was experienced or how much pain is experienced in between. Sex does and can feel good but the way sex makes you feel is not something that's sustainable the entire time.

Remember sexual communication isn't emotional communication and it's important to distinguish the two because if you don't, you'll continuously disappoint yourself trying to translate sex into emotions.

Be careful of dangerous optimism where you cloud out the reality and entirety of the person because you're opting to focus on the feeling or the nostalgia you feel for the 'moments'. There's a difference between feeling good sexually and feeling good emotionally and it is easy to kid yourself with your vagina and your over active imagination that the feelings created by sex or the

supposed attraction and chemistry you feel, can correlate to the rest of the relationship. Trust me, in fact, trust yourself and your past experience - they can't. Great sex, no matter how great, has a sell by date, and after a while, you need some substance behind the penis.

FEELING SEXUALLY REJECTED

Something has gone very wrong when you're prepared to take anything just as long as you get a semblance of a relationship. It stems from fear of being alone, of not finding somebody else, that this is as good as it gets, of letting go, and ultimately having to deal with your own issues. Fear, fear, fear, fear, fear draws in mean, mean, mean, mean, *mean!* It's important to recognise that feeling sexually rejected doesn't just stem from bad or no sex - if you're only good enough to have sex but not a relationship with, that's sexual rejection in another guise.

Fallback Girls feel sexually rejected when they're used for sex, feel they can't please their partner, or are not having sex.

The desolation you experience if you're feeling sexually rejected alongside what already feels like rejection of you in terms of a relationship, can make you dependent because *how* you perceive yourself becomes intrinsically tied to how successful or *unsuccessful* your relationships are. You end up believing that something about you is unlovable and that if you can just be everything that he wants, then POOF, great relationship *and* great sex will appear.

So along with trying to extract a decent relationship out of someone that doesn't want to give or be in one, you find yourself trying to turn him into Mr Loverman when all he wants to do is 'get' his...and get out with minimal fuss or drama. Some of them will happily give you a cuddle but they'll give you worse sex than a teenager screwing like a jackhammer or struggle to touch you. And I'm sorry, but a cuddle just doesn't cut the mustard when it's not that he can't have sex (for instance - impotent); he just doesn't want the sex to be a two way street.

Take this man off his pedestal! If you're being used for sex or having bad or no sex, he is an equal contributor to this paltry situation! Why the hell are you assuming the sole responsibility for the success or failure of the relationship?

If you're not trying to turn him into Mr Loverman, you're trying to turn him into Mr Relationship - that's why I get so many Google searches and advice queries asking 'Can a booty call turn into a relationship?' This is exhausting, redundant work. It's all about him and his selfishness. His problems, his world, his everything, his sexual gratification. Where do you fit in? Is there anything in this relationship that gets to be about YOU?

Of course you're not going to leave: You wonder what man will want someone who isn't good enough to have sex with or is *only* good enough to have sex with?

Your confidence is shot. You figure you might as well stay and keep trying because no-one will want you anyway and of course you might get validated. If he's your first relationship or sexual experience, or you're involved with him while you're already feeling vulnerable from a previous experience, you'll believe that this relationship *defines* you.

Sex becomes a weapon that we can be controlled with because no matter what type of sex you're getting, him 'deigning' you with the opportunity to pleasure him becomes 'affection' and 'attention'.

He sees himself as Mr Wonderful as well, so you can be damn sure if there are issues with the sex, he'll stonewall any attempts to improve the situation or actually include you in the action, because to open himself up to this, would be like *empathising* and considering someone else's needs. He might actually discover that he's not anything special and he'd rather ensure that *you* don't feel special. You could be a cardboard cut out for all intents and purposes and I've often joked that it's what they should be left with.

THE JUSTIFYING ZONE - THE GREAT COVER-UP

You have some sticky areas that when addressed, will change your dating and relationship experiences, and more importantly, improve your self-esteem. When you stay in relationships long past their sell by date or pursue even the flimsiest of dalliances, it's because you have a reluctance to admit that you've made a mistake, you get carried away, and even in the face of *knowing* you have made a mistake you cannot handle it. What results is that you become a habitual resident in **The Justifying Zone**.

This is that slippery slope that many women find themselves on, especially after they have sexual contact. We feel that we need to justify our emotional and sexual investment and this justification is effectively attempting to close the door after the horse has bolted. The Justifying Zone will always appear when a man fails to live up to the initial promise that he first exhibited or does something inappropriate that raises a major red flag that could potentially scupper the possibility of the relationship. So for instance, when the ambiguity increases along with all of his other core behaviours, the potential to stay in the zone and cling to it for dear life becomes even bigger.

As women, we tend to look for the smallest of things to make ourselves feel better about sleeping with someone or just plain 'ole liking/loving them, and this often causes us to spend more time on a relationship than is necessary. We see gold when in fact, it's brass, or even rusty 'ole copper, and often we use the Justifying Zone as the launch pad for betting on potential and basically hoping that a cockroach will turn into a frog, and then eventually into a prince.

Why? Well to be fair, who wants to feel like they've had Yet Another Dubious Dating Experience? You have to remember that you have unhealthy relationship habits and measure the value of yourself based on your interactions with men. You don't want to have another Here We Go Again Moment and you'll bet on the potential, even if he never shows an ounce of decency ever again.

Sex of course, is the biggest booby trap. You will definitely find yourself in this zone if you sleep with him too soon, or sleep with him and things don't prosper and develop as expected. Many women still equate sex with someone as a signal of a bigger, deeper connection and if we're left feeling empty, unfulfilled, confused, and a whole host of other negative feelings, we'll remind ourselves that there *must* be a strong potential if we slept with him in the first place. This is *too* big an assumption to make. That expectation may have arisen because of their Future Faking and Fast Forwarding, but sometimes it's also because you had no basis for your expectations beyond chasing a feeling.

You don't want to feel devalued by the experience even though the subsequent lack of return on investment that you experience by being in The Justifying Zone, actually only serves to devalue you further *anyway*. The Justifying Zone is an excuse, and if you find yourself there, it means that there is something wrong with the relationship. End of.

You don't justify and make excuses or accept crumbs in healthy relationships with good men, period.

We spend a lot of time agonising over what is behind a man's behaviour – ‘He didn't turn up/He spoke to me inappropriately/He doesn't show affection’ can easily turn into ‘He's got a lot going on/He's deep and complicated/I need to not be so needy so that he'll be more comfortable.’ Too much thinking and too much allowing these men to use sex as a weapon is like literally rolling over and saying ‘Kick me’.

IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS NEED FOUNDATIONS

Trying to work at the sex or a relationship needs the *foundation* of a relationship and fairly healthy communication, because if you can't even talk about the future and make solid plans, and have general intimacy, how do you expect him to be receptive about the fact that you don't appreciate him dry riding you like you don't even exist, shutting you out, or treating you like an unpaid hooker? But this is actually beyond the sex. This is about the fact that there doesn't seem to be a cut off point.

How bad do things have to be? How many excuses can you make for one man?

Being sexually rejected, whether you're used for sex or experiencing bad or no sex represents another area of selfishness and meanness in an already pitiful relationship. It's yet another red flag and another indication that you're accepting crumbs. Allowing him to use sex as a weapon and then justifying his behaviour, just makes it so damn easy for him. No matter what he does, you're worrying, thinking, talking about, and rationalising it so he can pretty much live conscience free about how he is treating you and continue to charm, disarm, and confuse the hell out of you with the sexual frisson and supposed connection. This is all while you carry the burden of the baggage of your relationship.

Trust me, the sex is the *least* of your concerns for what you need to work on in this relationship and if you think that it's all that stands between you and a successful relationship with your Mr Unavailable, you are *sorely* mistaken. Sex is an important component of a relationship, but you *need* the relationship first if a healthy, mutually fulfilling relationship with love, care, trust, and respect is what you actually want.

The truth is, focusing on the sex or lack thereof and trying to work at it, is avoidance.

The primary issue isn't the sex, even if it is an issue. The *real* issue is that you're involved with Mr Unavailable. You can go left, right, up, down, round the houses about it, but no matter what way you choose to go around it, you're trying to work at a relationship with someone who is unavailable, with a limited capacity, generating a limited relationship. The sex isn't what needs to be worked at - it's his availability - and the only person who can work at that unavailability is *him*. This means you're wasting your time and if you put both feet in reality and strip the denial and excuses out of the relationship, you will see that not only are there many other things wrong with the relationship but that it's not the sex that's caused it.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Boundary: I will not allow someone to use me for sex, devalue me sexually, or treat me in a less than manner.

Boundary: I will not allow myself to be love-blind or trust-blind and will be 100% responsible for ensuring that I am engaging in genuine relationships that don't detract from me.

Boundary: While sex isn't the most important thing, I won't imprison myself in a relationship with a Mr Unavailable where to add insult to injury, I'm rejected on an ongoing basis sexually because to participate is to reject myself.

Don't try to have the type of relationship or feelings that some people manage in years, in just a few short days, weeks, or months. Take your time otherwise you will set yourself up for some mighty falls.

De-prioritise sex. This doesn't mean that sex is not important, but it's not *that* important that it should be used as an excuse to continue going back to an unhealthy situation, especially when you're saying you actually want a relationship.

Don't mix the business of getting to know someone with the pleasure of sex. It gets *very* confusing if you are not self aware enough.

Unless you are OK with being casually regarded, do not participate in 'casual relationships'. If you want something 'light' don't let it go beyond 3 or 4 occasions and for no more than a month.

Never, ever, ever, ever, ever allow yourself to be demoted from girlfriend, to Friends With Benefits, to booty call. If you're not good enough to be in a relationship with, you're not good enough to screw.

The sex is only a part of the issue here, so if you're thinking you can sex your way out of the problems, you might as well get out now and save yourself the energy, lubricant, lingerie, and the headache.

Just because someone can sex you well, doesn't mean they are The One - It means they're good at sex and pleasing you. Lose any ideas out of your head that someone who you have a sexual connection with is someone that you can have a relationship with. Fast.

I suggest you get the relationship connection first before you go and stake yourself on a sexual connection. Sex can be worked at, so can relationships, but it's the latter that needs the focus *first*.

You are better than *this*. If you stay in a relationship where you're controlled by sex or feel sexually rejected, all that's going to happen is that you're going to be controlled or rejected *further*.

If you know that you are not in a position to handle the emotional consequences that come with sleeping with someone, don't sleep with them until you can. Get to know and respect you and if you're the type of person that sex means a lot to and goes through a lot emotionally post sex, honour yourself by going slowly.

This is an excerpt from the soon to be released (May 2011) print version of Mr Unavailable and the Fallback Girl.

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