

How to Be Remy Cameron

Julian Winters

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Teen drama and the ups and downs of being gay and out in high school dominate Julian Winters's heartfelt young adult novel *How to Be Remy Cameron*.

Remy—who's a teenager, gay, adopted, and black—has been assigned an AP English essay about his identity, but he is worried that he doesn't know who he is quite yet. He has many close friends, is dealing with recent heartbreak, and is interested in someone who isn't themselves out.

As Remy explores the choices ahead, he encounters the less charted waters of moving from LGBTQ+ acceptance toward actual celebration of diversity in teen communities. This transition leaves Remy turning to mentors for guidance that they cannot always offer with ease. The story remains upbeat because Remy and his friends can always find comic relief in what they're thinking about, from homecoming to post-high school plans.

Remy's family members are his rock. Their acceptance and love hold steady when everything else shifts. His community supported his coming out, though three years later, he still feels like he has to "keep coming out to each new person" he meets. As the novel progresses, Remy learns to rely on his many close relationships and finds answers regarding his birth family.

The cast is complex and diverse. Remy's friends live in a wide variety of realistic home situations, dealing with semi-absent parents and great levels of privilege. Their conversations are full of sharp repartee, humor, and teenage snark.

How to Be Remy Cameron is a spirit-lifting and surprising coming-of-age story.

LAURA LEAVITT (September / October 2019)

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