

COMING OUT IN UNEXPECTED PLACES

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Jamie awoke to the sounds of plates crashing and annoying pop music playing on the radio her family kept in the kitchen. She slowly got out of bed and started to get ready. Her uniform was ironed and laid out on her desk, ready to be worn. She got the uniform in year eight and had grown substantially since then, her tights had rips and tears in them. This only made her mother angry though, and that might have been why she hadn't replaced them yet.

She felt unusually uncomfortable, most days before she went to school she felt on edge but nothing like this before. It wasn't the fact that she had three weeks of overdue homework or that she accidentally drank expired milk this morning. It was because the night before she finally had the courage to come out to her parents. Her parents accepted her but at school that was a whole other story.

Homophobia was everywhere at Jamie's school, people wrote slurs on the toilet door. And queer people were often bullied. Teachers never did anything about it because they just didn't care. Jamie walked into school feeling incredibly nervous. There was nothing else she could think of except that if her joy and happiness was dependent on one factor that could get her bullied that couldn't be changed by anything, then is it really worth it?

Jamie decided to only tell her closest friends about the person she really was. The bell rang for lunch and Jamie walked out of the class terrified of what they might do to her, they seemed supportive but could that be a lie?



They all sat down at their usual lunch table and began eating. "I have to tell you something" Jamie said "I think it's important for you guys to know something that I should have told you much earlier, "I'm lesbian, I'm the same person I've always been and I always will be this way"

Jamie's friends smiled and gave her a hug, "We love you anyway you are" Jamie smiled and hugged them back. Students overheard Jamie and told others too, some were not very supportive, but this led Jamie and some of her friends to start a QSA at their school. Support for queer people intensified and many people felt safer to come out than ever. All from Jamie having the courage to tell her so-called "secret" to the world.

