

THE DREAM SCHOOL FOR RAINBOWS

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Nikki looked around. Everywhere she looked, she could see people. Crowding the corridors, chatting, opening random lockers, bullies. Basically everything from last year. Now, what was her locker number again? Oh, yes. S64. Right next to the toilets. Nikki hated the toilets. Though it may be useful in some respects, what was she supposed to do when her gender slipped and changed to non-binary? Couldn't they just have any unisex toilets? Of course there weren't. She just couldn't bring herself to be open about how she was gender-fluid and asexual. Look how well that went at her old school! She ended up getting into fights three times a week! Even though she was sure that no one would really mind, she was not going to take any chances.

Suddenly, a commotion further down the hall caught her attention.

"Nasty, smelling slimy gay dog!" Someone shouted. Nikki narrowed her eyes. Whenever someone was being homophobic, there was another LGBTQ+ person getting bullied. She was not going to let that happen. She stormed down the corridor towards the bullying to assess the situation. Two bullies were leering at a younger boy in front of them. "What about it then, servant? Have you found your Prince Charming yet?" The boy who was getting bullied pushed his glasses further up his nose.

"Prince Charming is only fictional. I can't have found him." The boy said in a squeaky voice. The bully growled.

"Give him a knuckle sandwich, Thom. Maybe that'll bring him to his senses!" The henchman stepped forward, cracking his knuckles.

"Hey!" Nikki shouted. "Leave him alone!" Both boys whipped around to face her. "What are you going to do about it, princess? Wear a pink frilly dress and sing Lalala in a field while picking daisies?" Thom jeered.

Blood rushed to Nikki's face. She clenched her fists.



“Never. Assume. My. Gender!” Nikki growled under her breath. She struggled to get control of her temper. She strode forward and hooked an arm over the victim's shoulder.

“See this person?” Nikki said. “He is coming with me. If I hear about you bullying him again, I have three words. Go. To. Hell.” She forcefully steered the boy away.

“I’ll come after you!” The bully yelled.

“Stick your nose somewhere it’s useful!” Nikki hollered back. When they were a safe distance away from the bully, Nikki spun to the boy and put her hands on his shoulders.

“What are you doing there? People like us can’t just go around telling people who or what we are. You get bullied for it!” Understanding flashed across the boy’s face.

“What do you associate with?” He asked.

“Asexual and Gender-fluid.” she replied.

“Nice to meet you! My name is Alex, and I am gay.” Alex smiled, all happy and cheerful, and Nikki couldn’t resist smiling back.

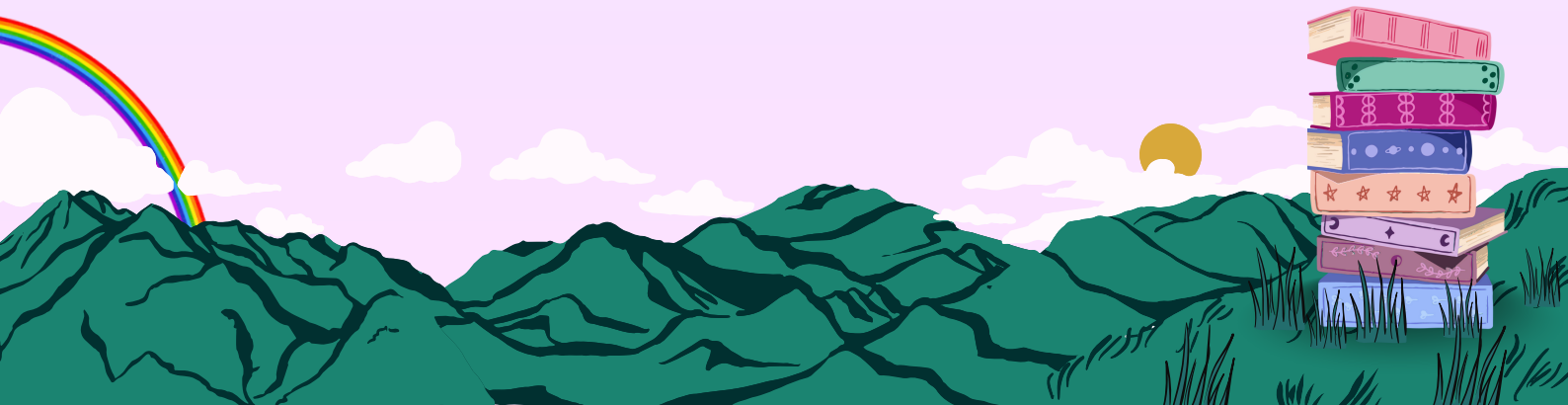
“What year are you in?” She asked.

“I’m in year 11.” Alex replied. Nikki rifled through her timetable, looking at the brightly coloured rows.

“I’m in year 13, so we have Math fourth period. Try to stay alive until then???” Nikki pleaded.

“I’ll try.” Alex replied. The bell rang. “Oh shoot.” He said. “That was the warning bell, wasn’t it? I’ve got to get to Music!” He sprinted off down the corridor. Nikki swore under her breath as she realised she still had to get her books from her locker. She jogged back to it and grabbed a pile of books and stationery. Luckily, the English classroom was quite close. She dropped all her books on her desk. Miss Hewett looked at her watch.

“Cutting it close, Nikki. I’ll let it pass, since it’s the first day of term.”



“Thank you, Miss Hewett.” Nikki took a long, deep breath and relaxed. She thought about the strange gay boy- Alex- and wondered what his story was. Was he here last year? How did he end up being bullied? How does he know he’s gay?

“Nikki?” Nikki whipped her head around to look at Miss Hewett and the rest of the class, who were staring at her.

“Sorry, what?” Nikki asked. Miss Hewett sighed and ruffled through her notes.

“Nikki, you’ve got to pay attention in this class, or you’ll get a C-. We were talking about WW2 and how it affected writing and literature....” The rest of Miss Hewett’s words slipped away, like water down a stream. She couldn’t concentrate for the next three periods. She was more interested in pondering her life, and fate. How many other people at this school were LGBTQ+? When it was time for Maths, Nikki ran so fast she sent the top book spiralling off her stack. Now, where was mystery Alex? Oh. Naturally. There he was, at the front of the class, waving his hand. Nikki huffed and sat down next to him.

“By the way, what’s your name? I never asked.” Alex inquired.

“Oh. It’s Nikki” Nikki replied. “Do you want to hang out at lunch?”

“Sure!” Alex replied. Nikki paid close attention to Maths, asked questions, and by the end of the lesson, she had achieved some work. She got a slop of gruel from the cafeteria- (it said it was mushroom stew!) and looked around for Alex. He was sitting at a table, enthusiastically chatting to one of the lunch ladies. She also saw a wink and a bar of chocolate slip into Alex’s pocket. Naturally, only Alex could woo the lunch people.

She had had something bugging her, since, well, this morning. She explained her idea to Alex, and he agreed. Something had to be done. A little before the end of the day, Nikki excused herself from class to go to the principal's office. She knocked three times.

“Come in.” A voice said. She peeked around the door. “Come in, Nikki. What can I do for you?” Miss Rodney asked. She came in and sat down.



“Well, Miss, there is something bothering me. You see, I’m gender-fluid and asexual, and I know someone who was bullied this morning for being gay. There is so much here for your average person, but none for us. What happens if a non-binary kid comes to school and doesn’t know what toilet to use? We get an awful lot of criticism pointed at us for no reason. Even little things like toilets and doing girls vs. boys in PE mean a lot to who we are. Would it be possible for you to change this?” Miss Rodney took that all in and considered.

“Well, I can’t promise changes right away, but I will see what I can do to improve that. Maybe changing one of the old bathrooms to unisex?” Nikki smiled. It wasn’t much, but it was a start.

“Thank you, Miss.”

The next day, there was an assembly in the morning, and that was unusual, because they usually only have assemblies once a term.

“Listen up, folks.” Miss Rodney said. “Yesterday, something was brought to my attention concerning the LGBTQ+ community. There have been reports of bullying and unrest, so I am looking to change that. So, starting next week, we shall have a pride week, where we embrace everyone at this school and make them feel at home. I apologise sincerely for not putting this together sooner.” Miss Rodney let that sink into the room.

“Now, early morning tea for all of you!” Everyone cheered. The rest of the week passed in a flash, and soon it was Monday. There were pride flags hung in the halls, bunting strewn everywhere, and several pride-themed activities. Nikki laughed and spun around. Life was amazing! Classes were a ginormous success, with everything being about pride. And best of all, she didn’t see any sign of those people who had bullied Alex. She did still feel a deepening sadness, though, about how she had had to ask Miss Rodney to put this together. It was only a small success, and there are people in all different schools who received nothing but bullying. But for the meantime... She was happy.

