

**Title: *How to be Remy Cameron***  
**Author: Julian Winters**  
**Genre: Realistic Fiction**

**Reviewer Name and Grade: Charley D. 9<sup>th</sup> grade**

**Date Reviewed: April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

*How to be Remy Cameron* is a novel written by Julian Winters that tells the story of 17-year-old Remy Cameron. Remy is a junior attending Maplewood Highschool in Atlanta who is black, gay, and adopted. The story focuses on several aspects of Remy's life - a relationship with his boyfriend, finding out about his birth family, and most of all, getting to know about his own identity. This book takes place at the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It can seem that Remy has a satisfactory and laid-back life. He has a large group of friends, and is generally known to be likeable as well as somewhat popular at Maplewood high school. He maintains a healthy relationship with his parents, who are both always supportive of him and do not judge him any differently due to his sexuality. Remy is also developing a relationship with his new boyfriend, Ian, a shy but energetic teen. The main conflict in the book comes when Remy is assigned to write an essay in AP Literature class about his own identity, causing Remy's mind to be plagued with the dreaded question of who he actually is throughout the novel.

Another important plotline in the book involves Remy finding out about his birth parents. During the middle of the book, Remy receives a friend request from someone named Free Williams through social media. At first, Remy has no idea who she is, but later he finds out that Free is his half-sister. Through Free, Remy is able to learn about what his birth mother was like, as well as the troubles in her relationship with Remy's birth father. This plotline eventually connects back to his journey to find his own identity. Ultimately, the most important lesson learned by Remy by the end of the book is this: while he has no control over the labels other people give him, he can define who he is by choosing which labels he wants to describe himself.

*Did the plot (for fiction) or presentation of information (for non-fiction) keep you interested?*

While I do feel that the plot of *How to be Remy Cameron* was very engaging, I also think that it definitely was more of a character-driven book. Half of what makes the plot interesting is the character dynamics between Remy and his friends/family members.

*Was the pace of the book too fast, too slow, or just right?*

I felt like this book was paced perfectly. It was slow enough that I could take time to immerse myself into Remy's personal life, but also fast enough that the events in the story were still happening at a reasonable pace, keeping me captivated in the plot.

*What grade level(s) is this book appropriate for?*

I think that this book is appropriate for grade levels of 9-12. This is because the book takes place in a high school setting, and it deals with heavy coming-of-age themes that a teenager may relate to.

*What type of reader would you recommend this book to?*

I would highly recommend this book to any LGBT readers, or anyone that is looking for a book with a diverse cast of characters. The author does an exceptional job on avoiding stereotypes and giving each of them their own characteristics so that they each seem like a real person.

*What other information do you think would be helpful for teens to know about this book?*

I think it is important to note that this book deals with a lot of sensitive topics such as racism or homophobia, as these are some struggles Remy has to overcome in his journey to find himself. An example is how some of However, I do think that the author deals with these topics with a degree of nuance.

*My rating of *How to be Remy Cameron* would easily be 5 stars: I'm really glad I read this book; it was awesome!*

The reason I give this rating is because I cannot see a single aspect in which the book might improve on so I can enjoy it better. The plot is intriguing, but the characters are especially remarkable-It is always very engaging to see moments of Remy interacting with another character, whether it's a charming moment of them cracking light-hearted jokes at each other, or a heartwarming moment of someone trying to support Remy in a struggle he has. The story is told in first-person view, and this especially allows the reader to connect to the main protagonist and understand what's going on in his mind. Remy is also a very dynamic character, and he goes through many changes throughout the book. Overall, this book is amazingly written and I cannot recommend it enough.