

PROUD



Dean Atta
How to Come Out as Gay
 A poem celebrating coming out
 Art by Leo Greenfield



Fox Benwell
The Courage of Dragons
 A band of D&D players plan a heist with a difference
 - to make their school gender inclusive
 Art by Kristen Van Dam



Caroline Bird
Dive Bar
 A poem exploring denial and secrets - and finding the strength
 to be your true self
 Art by Saffa Khan



Tanya Byrne
Almost Certain
 A girl finds acceptance - and a love of music - in a record shop
 in Brighton
 Art by Frank Duffy



Moira Fowley-Doyle
Love Poems to the City
 Two girls write poems to a Dublin on the brink of the marriage
 equality referendum
 Art by Fatti Burke



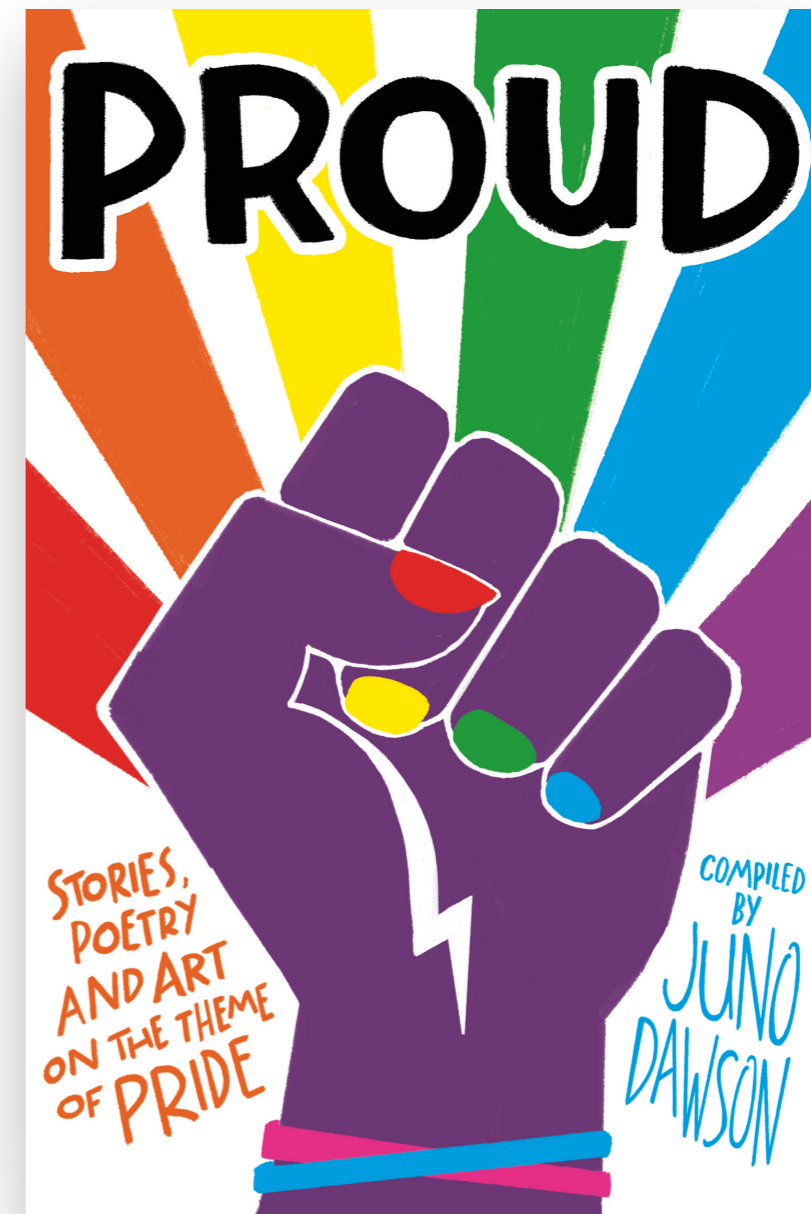
Simon James Green
Penguins
 Cameron's coming-out moment is overshadowed by two gay
 penguins at the local zoo
 Art by Alice Oseman



David Levithan
*As the Philadelphia Queer Youth Choir sings
 Katy Perry's 'Firework'...*
 Many different voices tell their stories - all louder together
 than apart
 Art by Steve Antony



Jess Vallance
The Instructor
 A shy learner driver meets an eccentric instructor
 Art by Kate Alizadeh



March 2019 #ProudBook

Introducing four new writers:



Karen Lawler
I Hate Darcy Pemberley
 Can Lizzie and Darcy put pride to one
 side and admit that their prejudices are
 stopping them from finding happiness?
 Art by Kameron White



Cynthia So
The Phoenix's Fault
 Jingzhi the lantern maker is forced to
 question why she doesn't want to marry
 the Emperor
 Art by Priyanka Meenakshi



Michael Lee Richardson
The Other Team
 A ragtag football team support their
 trans star player
 Art by David Roberts



Kay Staples
On the Run
 Two teens have the chance to escape
 their lives and families, and be together
 Art by Alex Bertie

How to come out as gay

Dean Atta

Don't

Don't come out unless you want to

Don't come out for anyone else's sake

Don't come out because you think society expects you to

Come out for yourself

Come out to yourself

Shout, sing it

Softly stutter

Correct those who say they knew before you did
that's not how sexuality works, it's yours to define

Being effeminate doesn't make you gay

Being sensitive doesn't make you gay

Being gay makes you gay

Be a bit gay, be very gay

Be the glitter that shows up in unexpected places

Be *Typing...* on WhatsApp but leave them waiting

Throw a party for yourself

but don't invite anyone else

Invite everyone to your party

but show up late or not at all

If you're unhappy in the closet but afraid of what's outside

leave the door ajar and call out

If you're happy in the closet for the time being

play dress up until you find the right outfit

Don't worry, it's OK to say you're gay and later exchange it for
something else that suits you, fits, feels better

Watch movies that make it seem a little less scary

Beautiful Thing, Moonlight

Be South East London council estate, a daytime dance floor

his head resting on your shoulder

Be South Beach, Miami, night of water and fire

your head resting on his shoulder

Be the fabric of his shirt

the muscles in his shoulder, your shoulder

Be the bricks, be the sand

Be the river, be the ocean

Remember your life is not a movie

and do it with a poem

Email your poem titled "Young, Black and Gay" to your father
to which he will reply, "Nice poem"

Accept you will be coming out for your whole life

Accept advice from people and sources you trust

If your mother warns you about HIV within minutes of you coming out

try to understand that she loves you and is afraid

If you come out at 15, this is not a badge of honour

it doesn't matter what age you come out

Be a beautiful thing

Be the moonlight too

Remember you have the right to be proud

Remember you have the right to be you.