



Prom  
Kings

TONY CORREIA

# What will Charlie do to get his dream date to queer prom?

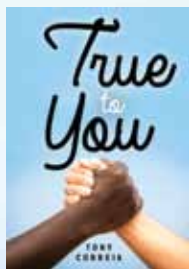
When the queer prom committee asks Charlie to join them, Charlie figures it'll be a good way to get closer to cute new guy Andre — and maybe even ask him to be his prom date! The only problem is that Charlie has competition for Andre's attention in rich, good-looking Chad, whom Charlie can't stand.

Charlie and his pal Luis come up with a plan to get Andre's attention — to woo Andre as a secret admirer and then reveal Charlie's true identity with a spectacular promposal that Andre can't refuse. But when the promposal starts to go wrong, will Charlie be able to turn things around?

**TONY CORREIA** is the author of the Lorimer Real Love novels *Same Love* and *True to You*. His memoir, *Foodsluts at Doll & Penny's Cafe* was published in 2012. He lives in Vancouver, British Columbia.

## Real Love

Don't miss Tony Correia's other Real Love books



RL 2.7 | Teen fiction

**LORIMER**

James Lorimer & Company Ltd., Publishers  
www.lorimer.ca



eBook also available

\$14.95 CAN / \$8.99 US

ISBN-10: 1-4594-1407-1

ISBN-13: 978-1-4594-1407-5



9 781459 414075

Prom Kings

TONY CORREIA

LORIMER

# Prom Kings

TONY CORREIA

JAMES LORIMER & COMPANY LTD., PUBLISHERS  
TORONTO

Copyright © 2019 by Tony Correia

Published in Canada in 2019. Published in the United States in 2020.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

James Lorimer & Company Ltd., Publishers acknowledges funding support from the Ontario Arts Council (OAC), an agency of the Government of Ontario. We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts, which last year invested \$153 million to bring the arts to Canadians throughout the country. This project has been made possible in part by the Government of Canada and with the support of Ontario Creates.

Canada



Canada Council  
for the Arts

Conseil des arts  
du Canada



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL  
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO  
an Ontario government agency  
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



ONTARIO  
CREATES

Cover design: Tyler Cleroux

Cover image: iStock

---

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Correia, Tony, author

Prom kings / Tony Correia.

(Real love)

Issued in print and electronic formats.

ISBN 978-1-4594-1407-5 (softcover).--ISBN 978-1-4594-1408-2 (EPUB)

I. Title. II. Series: Real love (Series)

PS8605.O768P76 2019

jC813'.6

C2018-905319-4

C2018-905320-8

Published by:

James Lorimer &  
Company Ltd., Publishers  
117 Peter Street, Suite 304  
Toronto, ON, Canada  
M5V 0M3  
www.lorimer.ca

Distributed in Canada by:

Formac Lorimer Books  
5502 Atlantic Street  
Halifax, NS, Canada  
B3H 1G4

Distributed in the US by:

Lerner Publisher Services  
1251 Washington Ave. N.  
Minneapolis, MN, USA  
55401  
www.lernerbooks.com

Printed and bound in Canada.

Manufactured by Friesens Corporation in Altona, Manitoba,  
Canada in December 2018.

Job # 250168

This digital edition first published in 2018 as 978-1-4594-1410-5

Originally published in 2018 as 978-1-4594-1407-5

*For Dean Mirau.*



# 01 The Wreck Room

On my last report card, my English teacher wrote, “Charlie is outgoing and a self-starter. But he can be bossy.” I thought it was a compliment. But my dad didn’t see it that way.

“What’s so wrong with being bossy?” I asked at the time. “I get stuff done.”

“You need to socialize more with people your age. Outside of sitting on committees at school, that is,” Dad had said.

That was how I ended up going to the youth drop-in at outNproud. The name is kind of last week if you ask me. It sounds more like a gay breakfast cereal than a queer community centre in downtown Vancouver. I'm not complaining, though. Dave, our ginger-bear peer counsellor, loves to remind us how lucky we are. We have a place to come to twice a week and hang out with queers our age.

“It's not like when I was your age,” Dave says. “I had to sneak into gay bars to meet other people like me.” I like Dave a lot, but he can sound like a parent trying to get their kid to eat their veggies.

I used to think outNproud was where depressed LGBTQ teens went to discuss their feelings. My friend Geeda told me what it really was like. Geeda and I met at our school's gay-straight alliance. Unlike me, Geeda has no problem socializing. Geeda is Asian and is always trying new stuff with her hair and clothes. People flock to her at school. She's also bi, which means she can have just about anyone she wants at school.

The youth drop-in is nicknamed the Wreck Room,



after Wreck Beach, the nude beach near the University of British Columbia campus. It's decorated with IKEA couches and wood shelves with board games and books. In one corner there's an old clothing rack crammed with clothes that are free for the taking. Once I found a polo shirt with the price tags still on it. They also offer also a bra and binder exchange for trans kids.

My favourite part of outNproud is *RuPaul's Drag Race*! I hate most reality shows, but I can't get enough of that show. Dave has a subscription to gay Netflix. The crowd at outNproud varies depending on the night. But a core group of five of us has been working our way through all the seasons of *Drag Race*. We meet every Friday night. Watching *Drag Race* with Geeda, Lottie, Luis, and Chad is what it must be like to go a hockey game. All that cheering and jeering makes me feel like I belong.

We have a strict "no spoilers" rule for anyone who has already seen an episode. We are pretty good about obeying it, except for Chad.

"You kind of remind me of The Vixen, Chuckles,"

Chad says. He's comparing me to one of the season ten queens. "You're both social warriors. And kind of intense."

I hate it when Chad calls me Chuckles. It's his "cute" way of helping people keep our names straight because they both start with C-H-A. As if anyone would mistake me for Chad. We're polar opposites.

Chad is too handsome for his own good. He's got chiselled features and a cleft chin. His body was hot to start with and is made hotter by CrossFit. Chad strikes me as someone who has never been disappointed a day in his life. I would almost find him attractive, except for the stupid man bun on his head.

"I see Charlie as more like Tina Fey," Lottie says.

"Thanks, Lottie," I say.

Lottie is gender-fluid but presents themselves as slightly more masculine or boyish. Lottie is short with thick black hair, and a little bit of facial hair on their chin. No matter the weather, Lottie is dressed in a T-shirt, with 501s that have their wallet attached by a chain. They have a deep, raspy voice that sounds like

they've been smoking since they were six. But Lottie insists they've never held a cigarette, much less smoked one.

“What do you think, Luis?” Chad asks.

Luis is the quietest person in our little group. He's Mexican and speaks perfect English, but he always seems embarrassed of his accent. I love the way he talks. Everything he says sounds like it should have a guitar strumming in the background.

I admire how Luis dresses. His plaid shirts are always pressed and buttoned all the way up to the collar. His jeans look like they just came out of the wash. His white Adidas runners could light the way in the dark.

“Well...” Luis says, slowly. He's choosing his words carefully. “I agree that The Vixen and Charlie want to change the world. But I think both of them need to learn how to communicate better.”

“Told you so, Chuckles,” Chad says.

Luis holds up his finger. “I'm not finished. I have never seen Charlie attack someone the way The Vixen attacked Eureka in front of the judges.”

“That’s what I’ve been saying!” Lottie says. They point at me with one stubby finger. “Charlie is Tina Fey.”

The episode we’re watching ends with The Vixen and Monique Heart lip-synching for their lives. I’m cheering for Monique, but you can see she doesn’t know the words to the song. Not knowing your words is the kiss of death on *Drag Race*. Sure enough, RuPaul orders Monique to “sashay away.”

Dave stands in front of the TV as the show’s credits start to roll.

“I have a quick announcement to make,” he says. “OutNproud is starting to plan the queer prom in June. We’re looking for volunteers to be on the youth advisory committee. Any takers?”

Chad’s hand shoots right up. So does Geeda’s. Lottie puts their hand up next. Then, ever so slowly, Luis’s hand goes up.

“Don’t you want to be part of the committee, Charlie?” Dave asks me. “It’s not a lot of work. We just want some input on a theme, a song, and a DJ.”

I didn’t know there was such a thing as a queer

prom until this very moment. The truth is I really want to be on the advisory committee. But Chad just described me as some sort of militant activist. I worry that joining would open me up to more of his attacks.

“I don’t know,” I say. “I’m already on the GSA at school. And I’m the treasurer for the student council. I’m not sure I have the time.”

“You know you want to,” Chad teases.

I try not to let my hatred for Chad make me join the committee. But I’m worried that, with Chad on board, the theme of the prom will be Under the Sea.

“Fine! I’ll do it,” I say, raising my hand.

“I knew you would,” says Chad.

It’s a good thing I don’t have a pair of scissors in my hand. That man bun would be on the floor already. I pull my bullet journal out of my backpack and open it to my monthly log.

“When do we meet?” I ask.