

COMING OUT ON SNAP

Marnix was athletic, popular, gorgeous and nice. He had girls swooning for his attention and had already had five girlfriends. His relationships never lasted long and he had a reputation of being quite the ladies man.

One of Marnix' best friends, Eric, was a specialist at hijacking people's phones to send a quick image to everyone via snap. Everyone accepted this and knew they might just be the next victim.

One day as he walked towards the bus stop, Eric saw Marnix staring into his phone oblivious to the fact that anyone was around. He immediately took the opportunity and snatched Marnix' phone. "Dude seriously, not again." Marnix laughed, happy to see his friend.

When he got his phone back he saw the snap. A simple picture of him with the comment "It's time I tell you all, I'm gay!" Marnix laughed nervously as Eric slapped his shoulder. "Bro, everyone knows this is just a joke. Dude, you are the womanizer of the school."

Right away, Marnix started receiving some pretty funny reactions. A few were a bit homophobic even though the school they attended prided itself as being progressive and there were also a few students and teachers who had come out.

Marnix felt a bit sick but was trying to hide it from Eric who was now sitting next to him on the bus. His head was spinning. The truth was that Marnix was gay and had known it for some time. His relationships ended because he was never into the girls and just wanted to get away from them. He did not think this would be accepted in his friend group and even less so by his family. No one knew or at least he thought no one knew.

Then a message came in from a childhood friend who lived back home. "Dude, I am happy you came out. I always thought you might be gay." Tom had known Marnix since he was two. Marnix was shocked, wondering why Tom had thought he might be gay. Thinking Tom might mention something to his parents who still kept in touch with his own, he quickly replied, "Noooooo! That message was posted by a friend as a joke." This was awkward but he just felt he wasn't ready to tell everyone.

That night when Marnix went to bed, he wished he could have owned that snap and was thinking about how and when he should come out.

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Guiding Questions:

- Many teens hijack other people's phones as a prank. Why did Eric think that his pranks were acceptable? How do you feel about someone hijacking your phone?
- How can making jokes about relationship statuses, sexual orientation, or being accepted to universities go wrong?
- Give examples of how you have seen social media used in announcements about
- relationship status, and sexual orientation. Is social media a good platform for this? Why / why not?
- What are some of the advantages and risks of announcing something on social media?

Topic: Digital Literacy

Age: Middle and High School