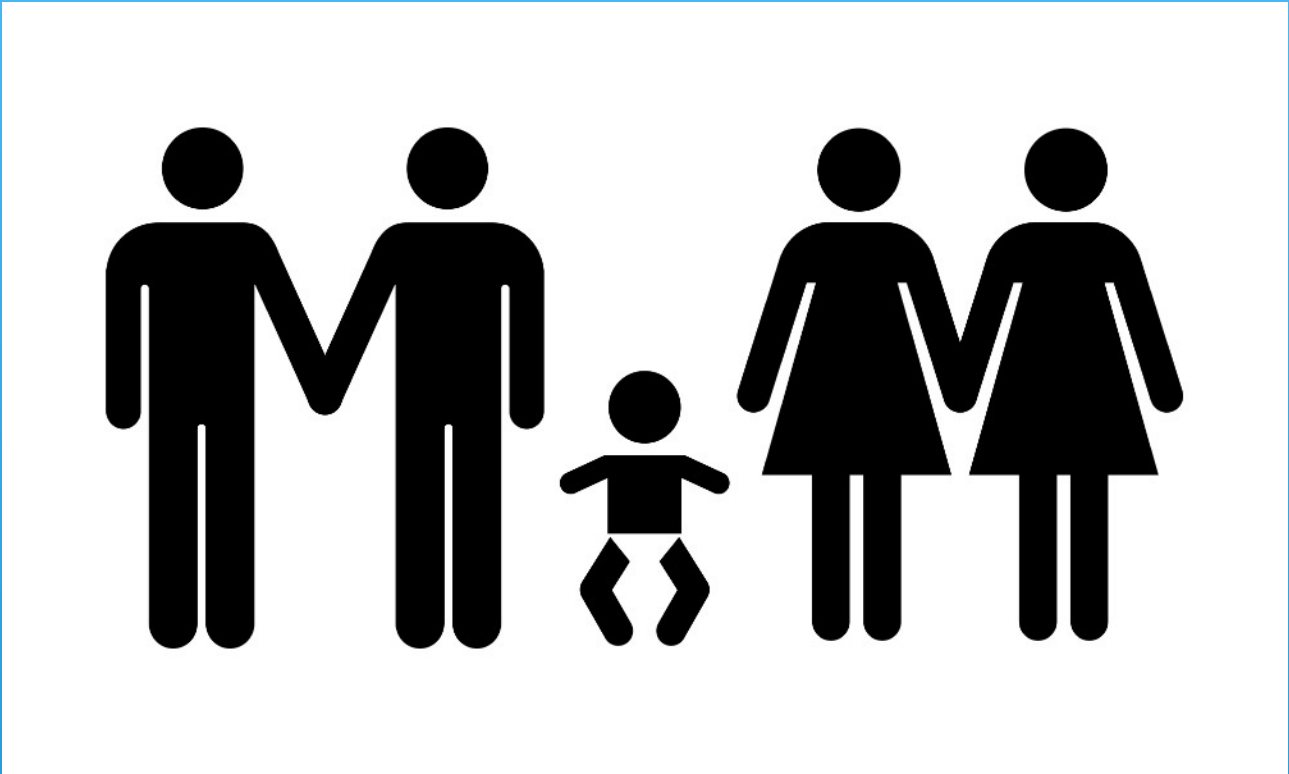


What happens when two sets of same sex partners agree to conceive, deliver and raise a baby together?



Take four modern day individual characters in committed same sex relationships - 2 men and 2 women - happy with their lives, happy with their partners but missing that one important part of life that nature can't provide. Children.

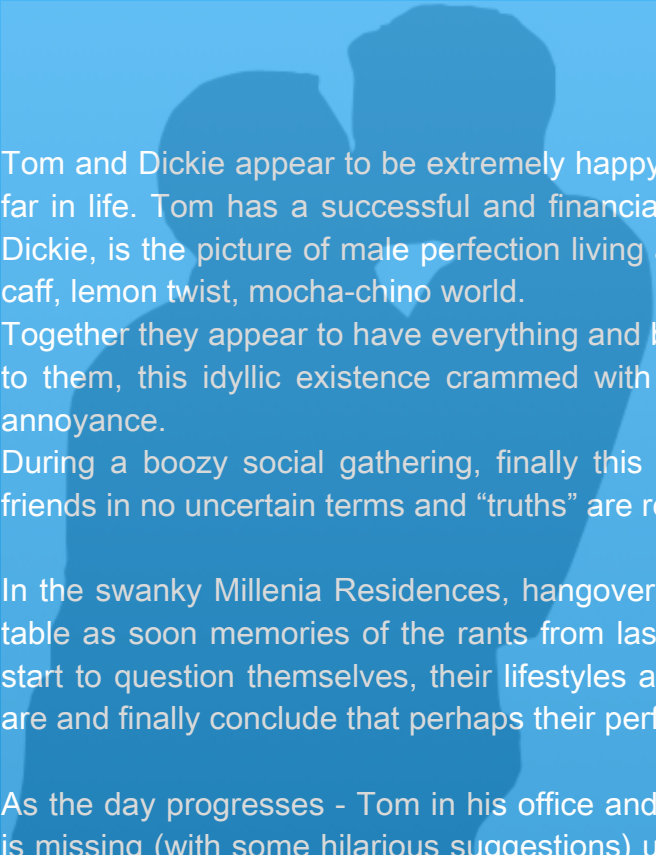
Tom, Dick & Harri... & Jayne

The family of today, when $2 + 2 = 5$

By Australia's Darren Frearson



Episode 01 - Truth of Dare. Tom and Dick's story

A blue-tinted silhouette of two men, Tom and Dickie, standing close together. Tom is on the left, slightly behind Dickie on the right. They appear to be in a social setting, possibly a bar or club, given the context of the text.

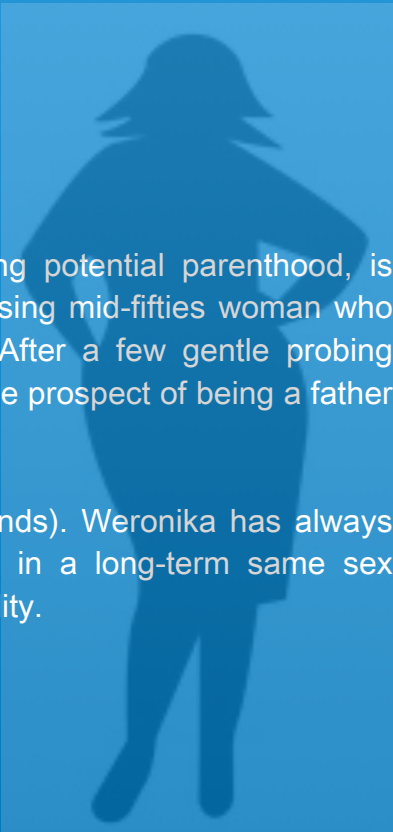
Tom and Dickie appear to be extremely happy with themselves and their achievements so far in life. Tom has a successful and financially rewarding career and his doting partner, Dickie, is the picture of male perfection living a stress free existence in a double shot, de-caff, lemon twist, mocha-chino world.

Together they appear to have everything and be blissfully content however, for those close to them, this idyllic existence crammed with sugary sweet happiness is to the point of annoyance.

During a boozy social gathering, finally this annoyance is highlighted to them by close friends in no uncertain terms and "truths" are revealed through a series of drunken rants.

In the swanky Millenia Residences, hangovers grip both Tom and Dickie at the breakfast table as soon memories of the rants from last night begin to flood back. Tom and Dickie start to question themselves, their lifestyles and their behaviour. They consider who they are and finally conclude that perhaps their perfect life has a gaping hole.

As the day progresses - Tom in his office and Dickie at the gym - both try to identify what is missing (with some hilarious suggestions) until they both arrive at the same conclusion. They want to have a child.

A blue-tinted silhouette of a woman, Weronika, standing with her hands on her hips. She has short, dark hair and is wearing a dark, form-fitting dress or top and pants. She is looking towards the left of the frame.

The phone conversation between Tom and Dickie discussing potential parenthood, is overheard by Weronika ("not Veronica, W-Ronika...!"), an amusing mid-fifties woman who manages the gym where Dickie spends most of his days. After a few gentle probing questions from Weronika, Dickie can't hide his excitement at the prospect of being a father and his news gushes out.

Weronika is the mother of Harriet Lebowski (Harri to her friends). Weronika has always dreamt of becoming a grandmother but with her only child in a long-term same sex relationship, that dream has seemed like a very remote possibility.

Until now.

Episode 02 - From Small Acorns. Harri and Jayne's story

Thursday morning in the less than desirable Fulcrum Tower Apartments sees a regular routine of Harri choosing which of her many vintage rock band tour t-shirts she will be wearing to work today (Metallica '98 or Slipknot '02) whilst Jayne lies in bed gabbling about her latest unorthodox fund-raising "event".

Harri is not paying attention, just occasionally speaking out the odd "uh-huh" response. On realising this, Jayne decides to include some random phrases to see if she can catch her out. The first few phrases are obscure and fly by without much acknowledgement from Harri:

"You know my first husband was the pope"

"I had a dog once that could actually speak English"

"Orange juice is really blue in colour"

Until the phrase "I'd really like us to have a baby" stops them both dead in their tracks..

Weronika ("not Veronica, W-Onika...!") hasn't slept a wink as she wrestled with the news that a perfect specimen of a man that she knows, albeit a gay man, wants to have a baby... and without any consideration for anyone except herself, she invents a scenario where this man could have a baby with her daughter and give her the grandchild she's always wanted.

Weronika goes on to play puppet master and engineers a "coincidental" chance meeting between Dickie and Harri on the premise that all gay people in this town must know each other.

No sooner has she introduced them, she crowbars into the conversation the idea that the two of them should be having a baby together.

Dickie is furious; how dare she! That conversation was private and personal. She had no right.

Harri too; Firstly, how could she possibly know about the baby discussion with Jayne this morning. Has she got the apartment bugged? And secondly, what fucking business is it of hers anyway. My mother yes... but this is too much.

The contrived meeting ends badly and eventuates with both of them storming away, both extremely angry with Weronika.

But the seed is sown. Dickie and Harri go back to their respective partners. Still angry but brooding; neither of them telling their partner about the meeting. That night, they both lay awake contemplating if, perhaps, there was some merit in this Weronika's idea after all.

Episode 03 - Say what now?

There is a solemn mood over breakfast at Millenia Residencies and Tom is eager to understand why, asking many questions of Dickie. Tom wonders if the discussion they'd had about them becoming parents was bothering Dickie and he probes deeper to see if this is the cause of the uneasy atmosphere.

Eventually Dickie folds and recounts the story of the "chance" meeting he'd had with Harri and how it had all been engineered by Weronika ("not Veronica, W-Ronika...!") so she could have a grandchild.

In Fulcrum Towers, Harri is still fuming over the "chance meeting" stunt that her mother had pulled and she has no hesitation in going through a complete "he said, she said" detailed account for Jayne.

Jayne is uncharacteristically quiet, which annoys Harri as she'd expected Jayne to be equally as outraged as she was. As her frustration with Jayne grows she asks "don't tell me you think we should actually do this?" And Jayne softly answers "well perhaps we could consider it".

Back in Millenia Residencies, the mood is now one of intrigue and has led to an exploratory discussion as to how this proposed situation might possible work. Tom explains that when they had first talked of becoming parents, he had assumed adoption would be the way to go, commonplace now for same sex parents. The whole thinking behind actually fathering a child had not occurred to Tom and together they discuss the options including the unthinkable option of actually needing to have sex with a woman.

Harri is shocked to learn that Jayne would even consider this as an option but wants to know more. Yesterday's involuntary statement that Jayne would "really like us to have a baby" had been ricocheting around in Harri's head and is now further complicated by the actual possibility.

Simultaneously (to the viewer at least) both couples decide that there would be no harm in taking things to the next step. A meet up - just for a chat... not for anything serious.... Just a discussion... no commitment... it can't do any harm... can it?

Episode 04 - Who's womb is it anyway?

A meeting between the couples is agreed and neutral ground is thought to be best. Weronika ("not Veronica, W-Ronika...!") offers to host the event and after much uncertainty and mulling from both Harri and Dickie, she is allowed to host and fixes the meeting for Tuesday evening, 7:00pm.

The couples arrive and Weronika does the introductions. She then immediately tries to jump the conversation post birth and wants to know about baby names, about religion and especially about baby sitting duties. Both couples insist Weronika leaves immediately.

There is a strange calm as our four main characters regard each other and probe with small but telling questions. White wine is shared but only as a means to break the ice and take the edge off the somehow brittle situation.

As the wine works its magic, the questions get more detailed and we see each of our characters starting to express their own concerns. There are many things to consider: where would the baby live? Who would be the legal guardians? How does the child address its parents? (Mom 1, Dad 2?), How do you prioritise four sets of grandparents? Where does the child go to school? Is the baby Catholic, Jewish....? Who pays for the child? Where does the child spend Christmas?

Do the biological parents have more rights and a greater say in the child's life?

For the first time, all four of our characters are consumed with the gravity of the decision they are planning on making. So many questions.....

But there is one topic of conversation they all avoid discussing. The conception.

Who and how? Where and when? Traditional or turkey baster? Is everyone in the room?

Episode 05 - The Contract (don't know much about biology)

The following morning and it seems that the “should they” question has long been answered.

Questions of who would be the biological parents are very much at the forefront of everyone's mind, there is trepidation around would they all have an equal “share” of the child even if they are not a biological parent.

Because of the initial thinking of Weronika (“not Veronica, W-Ronika...!”) there has been a general assumption that the baby - “assuming there was going to be a baby” - would be biologically conceived between Dickie and Harri. But now all four characters had talked it through, had chance to think a little harder and had started to face up to the realities, the situation seems somewhat different for everyone.

What about genetics - do some have more preferable genes than others and does this make them the better biological parents? If a handsome man and a pretty woman conceive a child, does this guarantee that they will have a good looking baby?

What about the physical effects on the woman that will be carrying the child for nine months.

With these biological questions, the practical questions from yesterday and the BIG question of a conception method remains unanswered, a second meeting is called. After vibrant discussion and the scribbling of many notes and lists, the four agree that the only way forward is for them all to be part of a legally binding contract.

Tom has a lawyer friend and he is engaged to write the most unusual contract with contributions from all of our characters. (The audience only gets snippets of information and never knows the full extent of the contract).

The very last item in the contract - conception - is discussed but “who and how” is not revealed to the audience in this episode.

Episode 06 - Bonk or Blaster

It's the day that everyone has agreed is "conception day". Tom and Dickie have needed to (and struggled to) refrain from sexual activity for at least 5 days to ensure a high sperm count. Meanwhile, Harri and Jayne have been taking fertility boosters and monitoring ovulation patterns.

We see all of our characters going about their daily routines but all are flustered and clearly bothered by the prospect of this evening's activity.

It had been agreed that for the comfort of Harri and Jayne, conception by artificial insemination will be attempted at their apartment, at Fulcrum Towers (much to the disgust of Tom who is a snob about the quality of the area and believes that any child of theirs should be conceived in a far more upmarket neighbourhood). A qualified nurse has been hired to perform the minor, but very specialised procedure.

We see two identical beakers containing sperm, sitting on the table as Tom and Dickie leave the room. It is not clear whose is whose.

Harri and Jayne both enter the room and take one sample each, then both leave the room through a different door to the welcoming nurse. The insemination procedure is not revealed to the audience.

There is a strange air of disappointment as the nurse leaves and the four characters find themselves somehow deflated by the whole event. It went well. There were no apparent problems but each of them find themselves struggling to be upbeat. The excitement and hysteria that created this situation was now over and a period of reflection seems somehow appropriate.

We take a wider view of our characters as they return to their lives, to normality, and attempt to fit back into where they had put their lives on hold, just a few weeks before.

For Tom this means throwing himself into work and for Dickie, he is working out every day to extremes. Weronika ("not Veronica, W-Onika...!") is always at the gym as the manager, but there are no words between them, just glances across the equipment.

Of significance, neither Tom nor Dickie are brave enough to mention anything to each other, possibly in the belief that if it is mentioned then it may not come true.

Harri and Jayne are a little more open with each other and nervously await any signs of pregnancy. They read magazine articles on pregnancy and eat weird foodstuffs whilst attempting yoga poses in an effort to ensure the best prospects for pregnancy.

Tom's cell phone rings - his mouth drops open and his eyes widen - he turns to Dickie who, having witnessed Tom's expression, is demanding to know who is in the phone and what is the issue?

After a breath for composure, Tom smiles and says "we're pregnant".

Tom, Dick & Harri... & Jayne

Tom

Tommasos Bianchi is of Italian background and a white collar professional in his mid thirties. He loves his family and has numerous brothers and sister whom he dotes upon. His mother refuses to acknowledge his sexuality and consistently tries to arrange dates for him with eligible neighbourhood girls.



Dick

Richard “Dickie” Morecambe, is early thirties and hops between casual jobs on a weekly basis. He is very forthright about his sexuality and flaunts it whenever the situations allows. Dicky lives for the gym and he is fit, buff and very aware of how physically attractive he is to both men and women.



Tom is the “Ying” to Dickie’s “Yang” and although individually they present as completely different souls, together they are the picture of gay coupledom bliss.

Tom, Dick & Harri... & Jayne

Harri

Harriet "Harri" Lisowski grew up as an only child in a traditional Polish family. She was named after Harriet Beecher Stowe, the American author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and she has hated her name - and her parents for giving to her - for as long as she can remember.

She is 34 and employed as a "social media strategist": no one really knows what she actually does but it allows her the freedom to wear black jeans and t-shirts to her office everyday.



Jayne

Jayne Smith is a 29 year old British woman who left her native land after her first marriage failed. She married young and her former, significantly older, CEO husband had multiple affairs that led to the ruin of their marriage. She still keeps her married surname (Smith) but will never forgive her ex-husband and will forever hold a grudge, struggling sometimes to get past it and move on with her life.



Harri and Jayne have been a couple for 3 years and although Harri has spent her life knowing exactly who she is, this is Jayne's first same sex relationship and there are often signs of her questioning her decisions.

Tom, Dick & Harri... & Jayne

This is a story waiting to be told. It's real, it's heartfelt and it's current.

It is light and fresh with a story line that is of today. As our story unfolds you will laugh with the characters, you will cry with the characters but most importantly, you will fall in love with the characters.

Tom, Dick & Harri... & Jayne. The family of today, when $2 + 2 = 5$

“Is that a Turkey baster in your pocket or are you just pleased to inseminate me?”
- Harri Lebowski -

“You're more annoying than a yeast infection”
-Jayne Smith-

“Your real name is Jayne Payne?... Your parents must have totally hated you”
-Tom Bianchi-

“Sex with a woman, that's so unnatural”
- Tom Bianchi-

“I'm working at a gay newsagents. It's called Mags and Fags”
-Dicky Morecambe-

“We're pregnant”
-Tom, Dick & Harri & Jayne-