

Imagine two ordinary scenarios.

Pulsing lights, heat, anonymity. You've had enough to drink. Feeling bold; staring at a stranger. He speaks up. But above the music you can't hear much more than: L...What? You... What? It's just too hard. The split-second relationship ends there.

A man stands up and presents a report to the gathering. He's smart. He's more than that. Something passes between you. The room empties out, he's caught up in chitchat with another colleague, and the moment has gone.

The two personas described above reveal that, between the public image and a workplace identity, there is a yawning communal gap, which seems to be widening for all that social media technologies facilitate connectivity. Such estrangement permeates urban life, crossing gender boundaries. A modern paradigm captured in Michel Houellebecq's acerbic novel, *Atomised*. The question for single men and women today is not how to meet new people but how you can know them and how you can know yourself with them.



Picture another two scenarios.

It's just after dusk on a blustery winter's night. You come from the dark street into the lounge room, to the smell of a tenderly braised casserole. He walks through the kitchen door towards you. *Oh, my love. I missed you all day.* And there's nothing deeper, nothing more profound than being there, embraced by him.

It's a Tuesday. The restaurant was booked months ago. At the table are three same-sex couples: Sharon and Elaine, John and Steve, and Sandy and Louise. As it happens, the odd one out is the Prime Minister. This leader is dining alone because she can't yet acknowledge, or pretends not to know what the

majority of Australians now believe is a basic human right, the right to marriage equality.

Comparing these situations, many might ask why a timeworn concept of commitment holds such significance. Many might question how an institution that seems to have lost its integrity in the mainstream, marred by high rates of divorce, can represent a case for human rights at all. The answer to these queries is simple. At the core of the marriage union is love; lasting, deep, committed, intelligent and meaningful love.

The celebration of this lost concept of love is the joint project of one extraordinary couple, known in unison as Beau Brummell Introductions. As the prospect of same-sex marriage offers an old tradition new hope, Vinko Anthony and Andrea Zaza are leading the hearts and minds of the nation, encouraging us to look to the future. Their endeavour is visionary, not only as a service that is prepared to invest real time in knowing and uniting men of substance, but as a demonstration of the belief that true love truly exists in gay relationships. It's time to celebrate a new era, and the Beau Brummell table is set for a fabulous dinner tonight.