

# SURPRISE!

## I HAD IDENTICAL TRIPLETS



Austin, Rupert and Ethan as bubs

### Tanya Hall, 36, was shocked at her first scan

Hearing the thump thump thump of our baby's heartbeat, I felt a huge rush of relief.

My husband Kris, then 41, squeezed my hand.

Six weeks pregnant, I'd gone to hospital after suffering a bleed.

Thank goodness our baby is okay, I thought.

'Oh hang on... there's another one,' said the sonographer as she moved the doppler across my belly.

Kris and I listened, mouths hanging open, to the second thump, thump, thump.

We were having twins!

Then our sonographer went quiet.

'There's three,' she stuttered. 'It's triplets!'

I burst out laughing in shock and delight.

'You'd better stop counting now,' joked Kris, his mind already whirling ahead to needing a bigger car... a bigger pram...

Marrying in 2016 and eager to start a family, we'd fallen pregnant in 2018... and now this!

Meeting with a doctor, they outlined the risks of a multiple pregnancy, and I began to feel uneasy.

'When do the risks start going down?' asked Kris.

'They don't,' the doctor replied. 'As the pregnancy goes on, the risks to mum and babies go up.'

There was more incredible news. The scan showed the babies all shared a placenta, meaning they were identical.

The chance of this happening is around one in 200 million!

Back home, we tried not to dwell on the doctor's warning, and I bought three identical cots to go in the nursery.

At 12 weeks, when the babies were the size of a lemon, we invited our families over for lunch.

'We have a surprise,' we told our parents, handing over the first lemon.

'You're going to be grandparents... and the baby is currently that big.'

Everyone was delighted, so we waited for the congratulations to die down.

'There's more!'

announced Kris, handing out two more lemons.

It took a moment...

'Triplets?' gasped my dad, John, then 57, amazed.

At 16 weeks, we found out our babies were boys!

But there were signs of twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome (TTTS), or in my case triplet-to-triplet, a potentially fatal condition where blood passes unequally between babies.

At 19 weeks, I logged out of my computer and left my desk, telling my colleagues I'd be back in a hour after my scan.

Famous last words, it turned out...

At hospital, I was advised I had stage three TTTS. It meant the babies were in grave danger.

Baby B was giving his blood to Baby A, so Baby A was at risk of heart failure

and Baby B wasn't getting enough blood. Meanwhile, Baby C's supply was okay.

Kris was called in and there was talk of 'selective reduction' – sacrificing one baby in the hope of saving the others.

'We can't do that!' I gasped.

I was transferred to a more specialist hospital, where they planned to do a procedure called the Solomon technique, where a laser would separate my placenta into three.

I'd be awake during the surgery, and the risks included severing an umbilical cord, which would cause the loss of that baby.

Hearing that information nearly broke me.

All I could do was hold still and hope for the best. Kris was with me for the procedure, holding my hand and feeding me lollies to stop me feeling faint.

Against the odds, it went well, and I was flooded with relief when doctors explained just one more day would have been too late for my triplets.

Sent back to a local hospital, I'd be there until the end of my pregnancy.

We sent our three cots back to the shop, as it felt like too much of a jinx – in case I might not be able to bring home three babies to fill them.

On complete bed rest,



My three lemons – Austin, Ethan and Rupert

I set myself mini goals. My first was to reach 24 weeks, then 26... then 28...

At 30 weeks, doctors wanted to deliver the bubs, but I wanted to keep them safe in my tummy for as long as possible.

But a week later, Baby C stopped growing, so I knew it was time for the triplets to be born.

On April 26, 2019, our three boys, Austin, Rupert and Ethan, were delivered

learning to walk, talk and starting daycare, their individual personalities became apparent.

Austin is our curious little engineer, who was the first

arrived four days early in April 2024. He weighed 4.19 kilos – close to the combined birth weights of his three big brothers.

Austin, Rupert and Ethan, now six, dote on him.

With four little boys I'm rushed off my feet, but love every minute.

When I look at my three healthy lemons now, I just want to give them an extra squeeze. 

Follow the family on Instagram and TikTok @triplettale

to break a child lock! Rupert is creative and independent, and Ethan is a playful entertainer.

In October 2023, we found out we were expecting again.

At my first scan, Kris and I held our breath.

'Definitely just one?' asked Kris.

'Just one,' the sonographer smiled.

When we told the boys they were going to be big brothers, they were excited. But we had to explain there was just one baby – they thought all babies came in threes!

Amazingly, my due date was the triplets' fifth birthday, but baby Joseph



Holding them for the first time

### My boys thought all babies came in threes!

by C-section. Austin was the biggest at 1.8 kilos, and his little cry as he was born filled me with hope.

Rupert was 1.2 kilos and Ethan was 1.16 kilos, and both arrived safely too.

They needed oxygen therapy and special care, but were incredibly healthy considering everything they'd been through.

And within six weeks we took them home, colour-coding their clothes and blankets, although we could tell them apart by size.

Determined to breastfeed my boys, and with eight feeds a day each, I pumped and pumped.

As they ticked off their milestones – weaning,



Pregnant with the triplets



Me and my four beautiful boys



Our family