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IT'S SO TRUE!



My brave lad... **TAKING LIFE ON THE CHIN**



PLUS 4 PAGES OF KIDS' FUN!

Real people

Beat the boredom!

No.37 17/9/20



Do you take this **BURNING MAN?**

TRIAL BY TORTURE



SCALDED with IRONS to see if I was CHEATING!



EVIL HOTHEAD!

POISONED ON OUR HOLIDAY

From a unicorn **LILO** to her **GRAVE**



In the doghouse... **I GAVE MY POOCH COVID!**

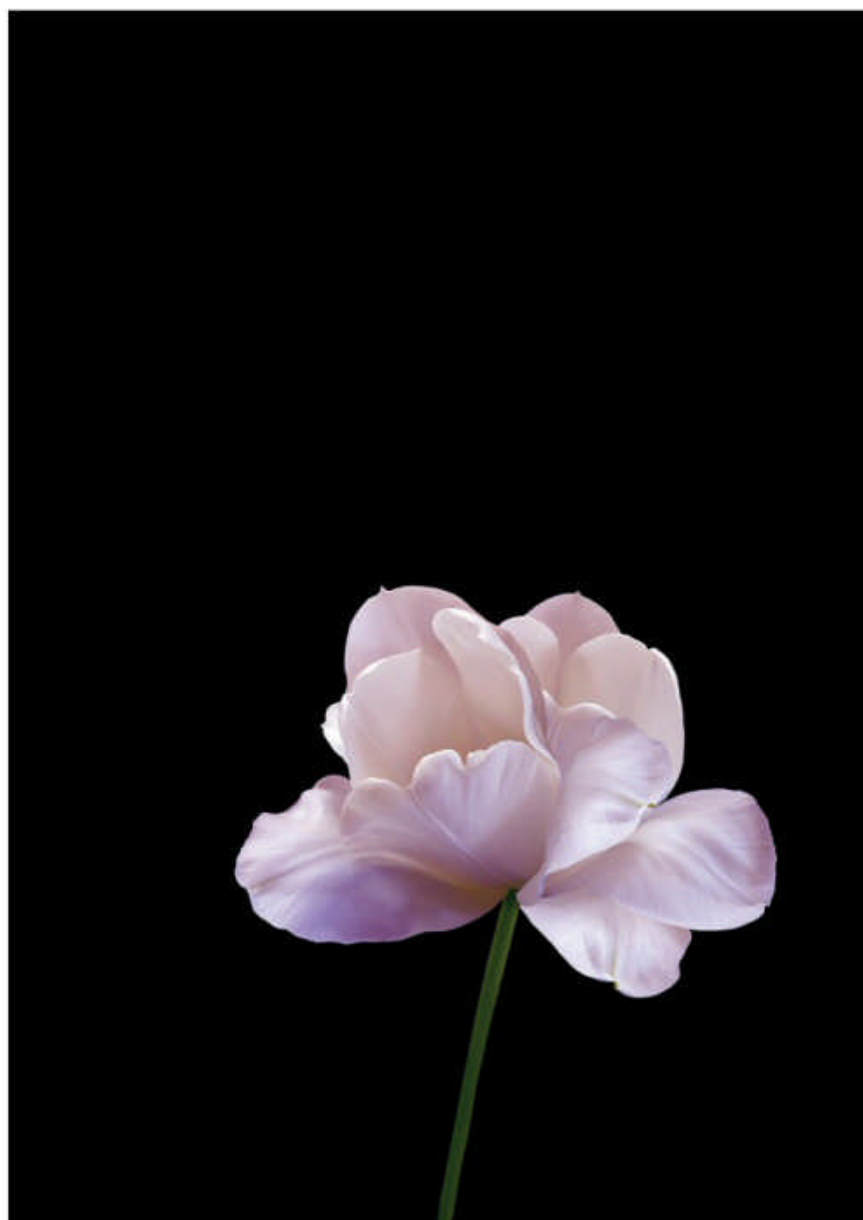


BUTCHERED AFTER HER BABY SHOWER

Share your story at scentmemories.org

Fragrance lasts

He doesn't remember what you wore
Or where you went
He doesn't remember the day
(Or sometimes even the month)
But he remembers the perfume on his pillow
That lingered long after your early-morning
e x i t
When you thought you'd never see him again
But you did
And you do



THE FRAGRANCE FOUNDATION UK

This week in YOUR FAB VALUE

Real people

14

Young
Reilly is a
cut above
the rest



The first time my hubby proposed to me, I was up to my elbows in Fairy Liquid. 'Will you marry me?' *Splish, splash, scrub, scrub...* 'What are you talking about? Pick up that tea-towel and dry,' I said. I didn't think he was serious. He was very offended. But a woman wants a bit of popping-the-question-pizazz, does she not? And

he did much better next time. But now, an apology to any fellas out there thinking of proposing to *Real People* readers. With this week's issue, you're going to have to rethink your plans, whatever they are... Ricky has just upped the ante for all mankind. I guess when you are 5ft 3in and the woman of your dreams is a whole foot taller, you've got to think big. And it helps to be a stuntman. But still... Did she say yes? The heat was on! Find out the answer on p38! Josephine faced a trial of fire too, but her man was anything but brave and charming. The jealous coward put her through a terrifying ordeal (p10). But thankfully, he was soon where he belonged – banged-up behind iron bars.

Karen
X

Karen Bryans, Editor
(stories@realpeoplemag.co.uk)

10 Trial by torture
Scalded with irons to see if I was cheating!

16 Kids' fun!
Four pages of puzzles

28 In the doghouse...
I gave my pooch Covid!

32 Butchered...
...after her baby shower

38 Do you take this...
burning man?

44 My brave lad...
Taking life on the chin

20 Papa don't prey
Mum married into evil

22 Health & happiness
A cry for help

23 Cuppa load of this
Brain-boost brews

25 Cookery
Tray-mendous!

27 Mum to mum
The long goodnight

30 Your stars
37 Showstopper
Theatre play after-party turns into real-life horror

40 Bob's big treasure hunt

Puzzle Trail

- 3 Cash Cow**
- 5 Reader Puzzles**
- 9 The Whopper!**
- 12 Real People Roulette**
- 26 WIN! An excellent Epson printer!**
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- 35 Puzzles & Solutions**
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From a unicorn lilo to her grave

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Short stories

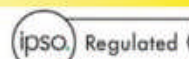
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CASH COW WEEK 1

Real People's Puzzle Trail starts here!

Use the arrows to take you directly to the next puzzling page.

Our beautiful bovine puzzle mascot, Florence, will kick things off with her Cash Cow comp...

Venture into the land of milk and money here and get your hands on a grand prize indeed! For your chance to win £1,000, collect the letter that appears with Flo, right, every week for eight weeks. When you've collected them all, rearrange them into an eight-letter word and write this on the entry coupon in issue 44.

WIN £1,000!



It's
udderly
FAB!

Enter online at www.realpeoplemag.co.uk

FOLLOW FLORENCE TO PAGE 5

Our MAD WORLD!

Guaranteed to make you smile!

CLAIM GAME

Forget about putting a 99p Post-It pack on expenses, cheeky bosses have waved through all sorts...

- Botox
- Sex toys
- Speeding tickets
- Personal grooming
- Cocktails
- Holidays
- A Donald Trump wig
- Doggy day care
- Fitness trackers
- Games consoles

SOURCE: Pro Active Resolutions survey



Cute TOT

KICK START

Look at that little face! My boy Ronnie is almost two and has started in a Little Kickers football team, he absolutely loves it!

Alexandra Low,
Halesowen,
West Mids



I'm on the ball!

USA

Best not to browse Twitter while sat on the toilet. You could chance upon this tweet from a fella in Texas who found a snake slithering from the bottom of his bowl! He tried to hook it out with a golf club. *Shivers* It's enough to give anyone the willies.



UK

You wouldn't think you'd come to much mischief ringing church bells on a Sunday, but a man in his 40s got hoisted up 100ft to the Llandaff Cathedral ceiling in Cardiff! He had to be stretchered down with a broken arm by firefighters. Hell-th 'n' safety, anyone?!



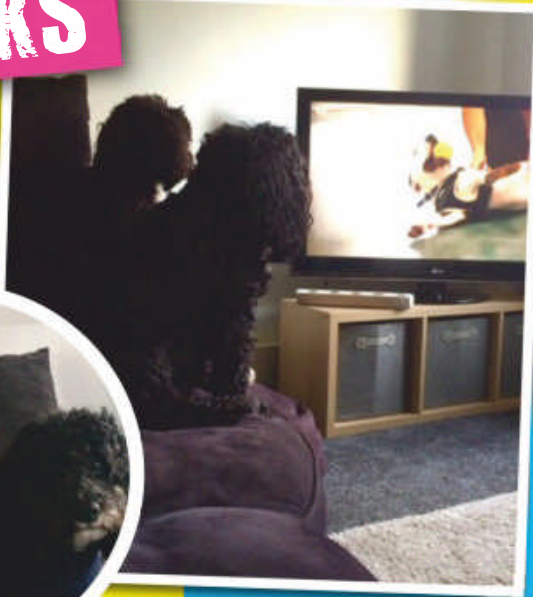
I'LL BE MOTHER



GOGGLE COCKS

Quick, Milly, it's that show we like, my cockapoo Rupert is saying to his 'sister'. It's Paul O'Grady: For The Love of Dogs – ha ha!

Carla Clarke,
Liverpool



INDIA

Guess what happens when one village lines up to throw rocks over the river at another village, as part of an annual festival? A hundred injuries, that's what! Still, the do last year in Pandhurna in northern India had 400, so they're getting better at dodging!



Reach for a tissue and watch this step mum unwrap the dream she's held for so long in her heart. For her birthday, her adult step son and daughter present her with adoption papers, asking her to be their real mum. 'Are you serious?' she gasps. 'I can't talk, you don't know how much I love this!'

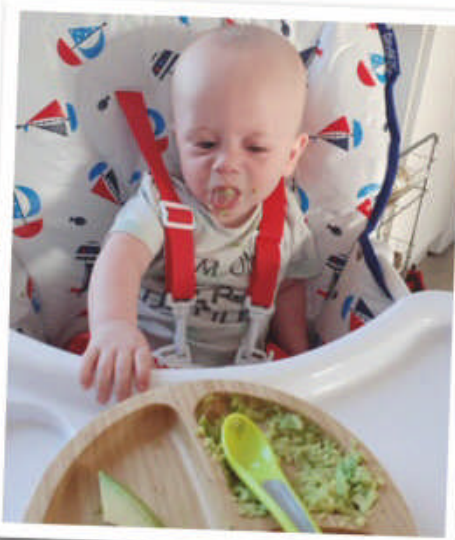
Search 'Step mom receives adoption papers from step children' on YouTube



WOT'S GOING ON HERE?

Feeding the toy cat Wotsits is tiring work for my little Vince, 16 months. Though I reckon he nabbed a few for himself!

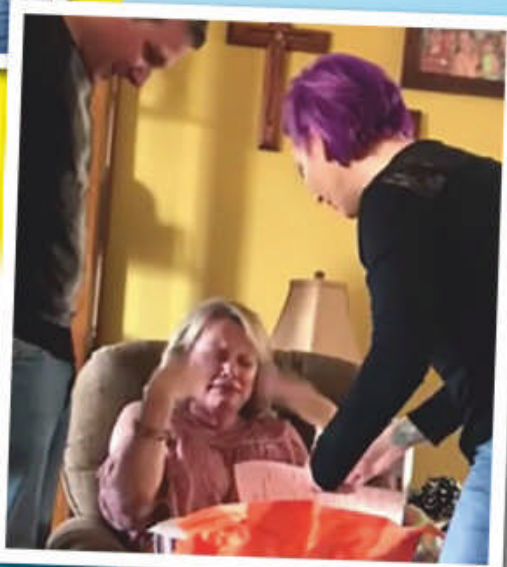
Gemma Davies, Gloucester



'AVO WORD, MUM!

My six-month-old Joshua tried avocado for the first time and I don't think he's a huge fan!

Joanne Pitt, Wymondham, Norfolk



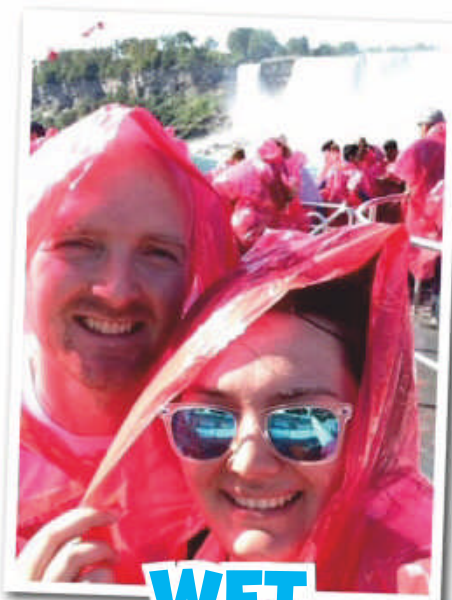
£25

for each one printed. Send letters and original pics to letters@realpeoplemag.co.uk via email. Please include your name, address & phone number. If your picture is not original, we will not be able to pay you.



AUSTRALIA

A truckie dad has been taken to court by his ex for signing a consent form allowing their 16-year-old daughter to get a dreamcatcher tattooed on her calf. He's pleaded not guilty to ABH, and the daughter says, 'It's horrible... Dad's done nothing wrong!'



WET WEEKEND

No, me and my boyfriend Matt haven't been put out for collection in recycling bags! We're on holiday at a rather wet Niagra Falls.

Chani Saunders, Great Torrington, Devon



SPAIN

Hercules the sea horse is feeling really rather buoyant after he had his organs pushed back inside him in a specialist microsurgery op. It was a first for the aquarium in La Coruna, who spotted Hercules's innards growing outside his 3in body.

WE WANT YOUR LETTERS!



Reader PUZZLES

JUST FOR FUN

Match each colour, below, to another word to make 12 well-known two-word phrases. Keep making pairs until one answer remains. Georgia's given you one to get you started. Solution on p35.

| | | | | |
|-------|--------|---------|-------|--------|
| Black | Juice | Grey | Hole | Gold |
| Dust | Orange | Herring | Red | Matter |
| Brown | Yellow | Belly | Green | Moon |
| Room | Lady | Blue | Fox | Silver |
| Pink | Noise | Purple | White | Sugar |

£30 goes to Georgia Lyle, Luton, Bedfordshire

SEND US YOUR PUZZLES, WE'LL SEND YOU £30!

Fill in the grid using the letters from the word EDINBURGH only. Each letter must appear once in every column, row and 3x3 square. Solution on page 35.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| U | H | E | | | I | | G | |
| B | I | N | | D | H | | R | |
| | | | E | | B | I | H | N |
| I | | | D | H | G | R | | B |
| | G | B | | | | D | E | |
| R | | D | B | I | E | | | H |
| G | D | H | I | | | | B | |
| | B | | R | G | U | H | | E |
| | U | | H | | | N | I | G |

£30 goes to Rebecca Davidson, Portobello, Edinburgh

Thanks to Georgia and Rebecca for their brilliant teasers. Hopefully, they'll have inspired you all! So, let's have your quizzes and crosswords, riddles and sudokus, anagrams and wordsearches – or perhaps you've invented a new kind of puzzle? Just send it into us at: Real People Reader Puzzles, Hearst Magazines UK, House Of Hearst, 30 Pantom Street, London, SW1Y 4AJ.



FOLLOW FLO TO PAGE 9

HER LAST RESORT

Katie's little toddler played happily in the sunshine as the rest of them dropped like flies. But she was in the most danger of all...



Walking onto the 'ward', I chuckled. A line of dollies and two dogs lolled beside my two-year-old, Allie.

Next to her was a box of sticking plasters.

Carefully she removed the backs of one of the plasters.

Then, concentration etched on her face, moved towards a doll and expertly stuck the plaster on its leg.

'Better,' she said.

Another plaster...

This time she went towards Penny, our six-year-old pug.

Slap! – onto her leg too it went.

Then to our other pug, Summer, five. The plaster went on her paw.

Allie was going to love the nurse's outfit, bag and stethoscope I'd bought for her birthday in a few weeks' time.

But before then, in July 2019, we were off to Turkey on holiday.

Five of us had been to Bodrum the previous year – me, Allie, my partner Wayne, 35, our eight-year-old son, Bobbi, and Casey, 15, my daughter from an earlier relationship.

This time we'd be going Turkish all-inclusive again, but to a different resort – the Crystal Sunset Resort and Spa, a four-star hotel near Antalya.

Me and Wayne had been working hard at our window cleaning business and we were looking forward to hanging up the chamois for a while.

Relaxing, being a family...

Excited, we flew to Turkey from Manchester airport in July for our 10-day break.

But first morning at breakfast, there was a queue of people waiting to be seated.

I gazed around the dining hall.

'This place is heaving with people,' I said to Wayne, holding Allie's hand.

'There's not enough tables.'

We waited patiently, moving out the way when other guests squeezed past us on their way out.

'It's all a bit chaotic,' I said, as I watched the free-for-all at the food laid out in a buffet.

Hordes of people in shorts and flip-flops were leaning over each other to reach for plates and food.

Eventually we were directed to a table. But as we sat down, I noticed crumbs and grease on the table top.

'It hasn't been cleaned properly,' I said.

I tried to beckon a waiter, but

they were all rushing around.

Eventually I caught the eye of one of them and asked him to wipe the table.

Then we went over to the buffet and tried to manoeuvre our way between the other guests to get something.

I hoisted Allie onto my hip and leaned over to pick up some toast, cereal and eggs.

Back at the table, as we ate, I looked up and saw something.

Birds!

Birds were flying around in the dining hall.

'What about their droppings?' I said to Wayne.

I peered closely to check our food was OK.

After breakfast, we went back upstairs to get into our swimming cossies.

Allie looked so cute in her frilly pink shirt and sun hat.

We headed straight to the kiddies' pool.

She was confident in the water – she couldn't swim, but I'd taken her into the pool when Bobbi had his lessons at the swimming baths near our home.

She was used to swishing round with me.

So she beamed as I placed her unicorn lilo on the water.

I steadied her on it then began to weave through the crystal blue, pushing her ahead of me.

I was relishing the warmth of the sun on my back and the joyful giggles from my little girl...

Later, I decided to take Allie to the kids' toilets near the pool.

We scrambled out of the water and walked into the loos.

Ew! Poo was smeared on the walls of the cubicle.

The same horrible sight hit me in the next one.

Quickly I stopped Allie going any further.

'We'll go to the toilet in our room,' I said.

Surely those toilets should be cleaned!

But we were on holiday, and I tried to relax.

For three days, we slapped on the sun cream, splashed in the pools and plonked ourselves on the sun-loungers...

But on the third day, I lurched as a stomach cramp suddenly rippled through my tummy.

I knew the signs and hurried up to our room.

Diarrhoea. Yuck!

We'd only been eating plain food – rice, pasta, meat – nothing spicy. But I had an upset tum all the same.

I stayed in our room, close to the loo, while Wayne took the kids out.

But as he came back in the afternoon, he said, 'I brought them out of the pool. We won't go back in today.'

'Why?' I frowned.

'There was some poo floating in it,' he answered.

'Oh, that's disgusting,' I croaked.

'The staff didn't change the water,' explained Wayne. 'Just took the faeces out.'

Good job Wayne brought the kids back.

The next day my diarrhoea eased, but Casey said, 'I've got it as well, Mum.'

And then Bobbi caught it too.

We were



Me with Allie (left), Bobbi and Casey

Real people 6

■ **As told to Moira Holden**
(stories@realpeoplemag.co.uk)

She always had one of our pugs nearby



Sun, sand and SORROW

Allie looked so cute in her pink sun hat



I was planning a special third birthday for her



She loved swishing around in the hotel pool on her unicorn lilo

dropping like flies!

But little Allie was well, so, with me feeling better, we fetched our bags and strolled down to the kiddies' pool.

At the fence surrounding it, a member of staff was holding something.

We got closer.

Good grief, he's holding a dead bird.

A small brown one, like a sparrow.

And he was tapping its beak against the gate!

Another guest came up to us – the father of a boy Bobbi had become friends with.

'I saw that bird lying dead in the water,' he said to me.

I turned and decided we'd take our chances in the big pool instead.

Just as we were due to fly back it was Wayne's turn on the toilet.

It was clearing by the time we'd settled back in Manchester on 23 July.

And we still had Allie's birthday to look forward to.

Four days on, she nodded off in the car as we drove home from

seeing her cousin, Jacob.

Unusual.

She'd stopped having naps a while ago.

Allie didn't eat her tea that day and continued to snooze.

At midnight, a shout.

'Need toilet, Mummy!'

But it was too late.

'Doesn't matter,' I soothed, wiping away the accident.

But Allie was upset. She'd been confident in going to the toilet for some time, now.

These toilets should be cleaned!

Next day, pale, she clung to me, sitting on my knee, still not eating.

Just before lunchtime I took her to an out-of-hours GP.

'Turkey... diarrhoea... all been ill,' I explained.

The doctor gave me a leaflet about food poisoning and a pot for me to get a sample of a stool from Allie.

'If she gets worse, take her to hospital,' he said.

That afternoon I managed to get a sample, but I knew Allie was becoming more and more lethargic.

'She's not right,' I said to Wayne, firmly. 'I'm taking her to A&E.'

At the Royal Bolton Hospital, Allie watched *Peppa Pig* on a tablet as we waited, me cuddling her, hoping I was overreacting.

Blood tests were carried out and I handed the stool sample over to doctors.

Gastroenteritis was mentioned. 'If she stops drinking and weeing, bring her back,' they instructed.

I watched Allie

like a hawk – I could see she was still drinking fluids and weeing regularly.

But the following day, she didn't wee.

She drank some Vimto and was promptly sick.

Is there blood in it? But it was too Vimto-purple to see.

'Drink this,' I coaxed, watching her sip some orange and strawberry flavoured water.

She was sick again soon afterwards. And this time, definitely...

'Blood!' I gasped to Wayne.

I ferried her straight to the hospital. It had been less than 48 hours since we'd been there, so Allie was re-admitted.

Doctors monitored her on the high dependency unit.

They hooked her up to antibiotics.

'It could be *E. coli*,'

said the doctor.

My heart began to thump in panic. I knew that that infection could be deadly.

And then, 'We need to transfer Allie to another hospital,' said the doctor. It was getting worse and worse. She'd stopped weeing, which was affecting her kidneys so she needed dialysis at the Manchester Royal Infirmary.

By the time we reached there by ambulance, Allie was only sipping at water, not drinking

properly at all any more.

She was puffy and swollen beneath her gently sun-kissed skin.

'Tummy hurts, Mummy,' she winced, screwing up her face.

'The doctors are going to make it better,' I said.

But a few hours later, Allie became agitated and began pulling at the tubes inserted into her body.

'I want my mummy,' she cried.

I leaned over and spoke into her ear.

'I'm here, I'm here.'

But she didn't seem to know I was right there beside her.

'I want my mummy!' she cried again.

I bent my head and tears poured down my cheeks.

What was happening to her?

The doctors had to put Allie into an induced coma to prevent her pulling out the tubes.

The test results came back.

She'd been poisoned by contracting Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* (STEC). And this had led to haemolytic uraemic syndrome (HUS) – the vessels in her kidneys were clotting, which was causing kidney failure and brain damage.

Only two, she was now hovering between life and death.

I stared down at her gently sleeping face and shook with fear. And as I kept a vigil, I thought back to our holiday.

To Turkey, and that hotel...

She was monitored in hospital after deteriorating



Turn the page to read more...

Allie chilling out in Turkey before she fell ill



EBBING AWAY

Tidal wave of PAIN

The food had tasted OK – me and Allie keeping to plain dishes. But the birds in the dining room... the poo in the pool... the dead sparrow... Had these caused this? Poisoned my child?

I prayed for her to fight.

Doctors tried a trial drug as well as platelet transfusions.

But it was no good. When they checked Allie's pupils, they were lifeless.

And an MRI scan showed severe brain damage.

There was no hope.

When I'd stopped wailing, me and Wayne had to make a decision.

We cradled our darling daughter, our cheeks wet with tears.

'I love you,' I told her.

Allie's life support was switched off on 3 August.

And with it, I felt like my life had been switched off too.

Individually, I took Bobbi and then Casey aside to tell them that their baby sister was gone, watching helplessly as their faces crumbled at the news.

And then, in a blur, I was sobbing, watching as a pink coffin



I adored my little nurse's bright eyes and happy smile

festooned with Peppa Pig stickers was carried into the crematorium.

An official in the chapel read out my words.

Grief changes people. When my child died, a big part of me died. I

We're hoping for answers

am not the same person I was and will not be that same person again.

And on 28 August 2019, bereft, we carried our broken hearts as we walked along a stretch of sand.

It was Allie's third birthday. She'd wanted to spend it in a caravan at Primrose Valley, on the coast in north Yorkshire.

'That's what she wanted, so that's what we'll do,' I'd said to Wayne.

Now, here we were.

Just a month earlier I'd been laughing with my little girl as we'd weaved through the water in the pool at the resort in Turkey.

Now I looked out over an English sea.

If you were here, baby girl, you would be hurtling along the sand to paddle in the sea.

Your bright eyes

would turn to me and we'd splash together, running in and out of the waves. But she wasn't here with us.

We'd bought the nurse outfit and toys she'd never play with.

And a Peppa Pig birthday cake. That would definitely have been her choice. And in my arms, I also carried one of her dolls.

I dropped to my knees and began to scoop up handfuls of wet sand.

Then I took the doll, gently placed it in the hole I'd dug out and pushed the sand on top, firming it down.

Maybe it will stay buried in the sand.

Or maybe it'll float way out to sea on the tide? While I'll be stuck, missing Allie every minute of every day.

We've launched a civil action against Jet2, our tour operator, on the grounds they did not provide a hotel fit for purpose.

I fear Allie contracted the E. coli there. I need to know.

So we're hoping for some answers at Allie's inquest.

I don't want anybody else to go through what I'm going through,

Doctors put Allie into an induced coma

turned inside out by grief.

I miss her every minute.

My little nurse, who no plaster could heal...

I won't rest until I know why that was.

Katie Dawson, 36, Atherton, Manchester

● **A spokesperson for Jet2 said,** 'We are very sorry to hear about these tragic circumstances, and we would like to offer our heartfelt condolences to Ms. Dawson and her family at this very difficult time. As lawyers have been instructed, it would be inappropriate for us to make any further comment.'

● **The Crystal Sunset Luxury Resort and Spa released a statement expressing their deepest condolences. They went on to say,** 'The Food and Safety Certificate given by this independent company [auditors Bureau Veritas] has indicated that we follow all requirements of standards regularly. Our hotel has passed successfully on all the international inspections. In light of this, we deny involvement in the death of Allie Birchall.'

Our birthday message to my darling daughter



Real people

8

The funeral was a blur

Solve the crossword and, when complete, the yellow boxes will answer the question below. Enter on page 43.



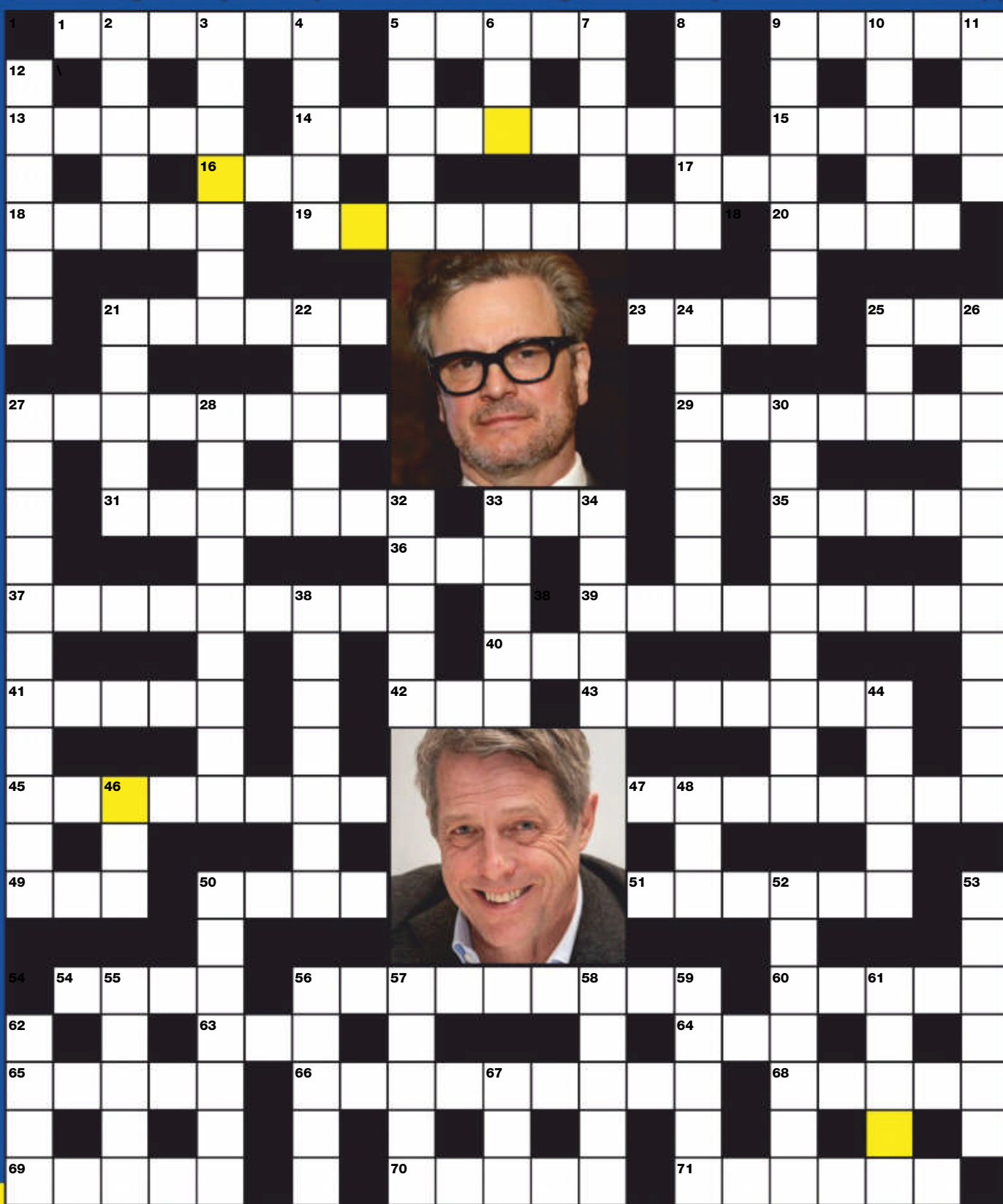
ACROSS

- 1 Cream-filled choux finger (6)
5 ____ Firth, actor who's celebrating a big birthday on 10 September (pictured top) (5)
9 Spell-casting hag (5)
13 From Dublin, eg (5)
14 Required (9)
15 Amid, surrounded by (5)
16 Frozen water (3)
17 Take a seat (3)
18 Grossly overweight (5)
19 Works out to keep fit (9)
20 Notting ____, rom-com starring **11D** (4)
21 *The King's* ____, film that bagged **5A** an Oscar (6)
23 Fibber (4)
25 Dance (slang) (3)
27 Brothers and sisters (8)
29 Purify (7)
31 Gave up work at 65, eg (7)
33 ____ Ritchie, director of *The Gentlemen*, starring **11D** (3)
35 Measure of gold (5)
36 Grecian vase (3)
37 Hobbies, pastimes, eg (9)
39 Telling (a story) (9)
40 Stir-frying vessel (3)
41 Picture (5)
42 Affirmative answer (3)
43 Doubting Thomas (7)
45 Fearless, adventurous (8)
47 *Four ____ And A Funeral*, film with **11D** (8)
49 Japanese currency unit (3)
50 Ride the waves (4)
51 ____ Weisz, co-star of **5A** in *The Mercy* and of **11D** in *About A Boy* (6)
54 ____ *Actually*, rom-com featuring both of our pictured stars (4)
56 Unclear, vague (9)
60 Ape, imitate (5)
63 The sixth sense? (1,1,1)
64 Belonging to him (3)
65 Go over the main points (5)
66 *Pride and ____*, TV series based on Jane Austen novel starring **5A** (9)
68 Short, abrupt (5)
69 Hospital worker (5)
70 Went by car (5)
71 Mix of red and blue (6)

DOWN

- 2 Illegal act (5)
3 Realise your goal (7)
4 ____ Zellweger, **5A** and **11D**'s co-star in the *Bridget Jones* films (5)
5 Go by bike (5)
6 ____ Vegas, US gambling city (3)
7 Draws closer to (5)
8 Deep chasm (5)
9 Rain, sunshine etc (7)
10 Monster who hides under bridges (5)
11 ____ Grant, actor celebrating a big birthday on 9 September (pictured bottom) (4)
12 ____ Kidman, co-star of **5A** in several films and of **11D** in forthcoming miniseries *The Undoing* (6)
21 ____ as a judge, saying (5)
22 Tobacco product (5)
24 Cutting tooth (7)
25 ____ Whishaw, **11D**'s co-star in *A Very English Scandal* and *Paddington 2* (3)
26 Distinguished, highly esteemed (11)
27 *Sense And ____*, film based on a Jane Austen novel starring **11D** (11)
28 Poke your nose in! (9)
30 Bewitched (9)
32 In need of a polish (5)
33 Chews (5)
34 Jerks hard, pulls roughly (5)
38 *Tinker, Tailor, ____*, *Spy*, film with **5A** (7)
44 Man-made waterway (5)
46 Go brown in the sun (3)
48 Historical period (3)
50 Church tower (7)
52 Rodent and popular child's pet (7)
53 *The ____ Garden*, film starring **5A** and Julie Walters, out next month (6)
55 Happen (5)
56 Granny Smith fruit (5)
57 Mix (5)
58 Shade of green (5)
59 Woolly farm animal (5)
61 ____ Streep, **5A**'s co-star in the *Mamma Mia* films and **11D**'s in *Florence Foster Jenkins* (5)
62 Smile – like a Cheshire cat (4)
67 Mysterious spacecraft (1,1,1)

PQ: What big birthday are our pictured stars celebrating within one day of each other this week? (5)



PICTURES: GETTY

TAKE THE Real People TIME CHALLENGE:

- 40 mins or less: Firth prize!
41-50 mins: P-Hugh – stop he clock!
51-60 mins: Colin all brain surgeons!
Over an hour: Hugh should be ashamed



Enter online at www.realpeoplemag.co.uk



FOLLOW FLO TO PAGE 12

MAKING HIS MARK

They'd only been going out three months, but **Josephine's** fella ruled with an iron...



It wasn't long before Perri Springer moved in with me

The doorbell rang. Standing on the doorstep was Perri Springer, 24. 'Got you some shopping,' he smiled, holding up a couple of full carrier bags. 'Brilliant,' I said enthusiastically.

Practical help in terms of groceries was always welcome.

Perri came past me and went into the kitchen.

I watched admiringly as he opened the fridge to stack the perishables and then went to the cupboards to put in the tins.

'I'm cooking tonight,' he announced.

Impressive. A man who shops

and cooks for me.

Hours later I twirled spaghetti around my fork.

I took a mouthful as Perri looked at me expectantly.

'It's good,' I smiled.

Me and Perri had only known each other for a month, but he was starting to stay at mine more.

I was 28 and I'd been on my own for nearly nine years, devoting myself to looking after my daughter, Leanne*, eight.

But I'd felt it was time for me to meet someone.

I went out with some friends to a bar in Oxford in October 2015.

I was wearing a tight black dress with slits – it showed off my figure nicely – and I'd carefully applied mascara and eyeliner.

A short, chatty man with a big smile came over to speak to me.

Perri was four years my junior.

I talked to him about my job as a dental nurse and my daughter.

And now here he was, a permanent fixture in my house, who'd all but taken over my kitchen!

But my sister, Sarah*, who's 11 years older than me, was wary.

'Don't let him move in,' she advised. 'It's too fast.'

But I enjoyed domestic bliss.

If he was king of the kitchen, I was queen of the iron.

It's the least I can do if he's dishing up every night.

I'd give his T-shirts and trousers the neat once-over.

And hand over to him a crisp pile of newly ironed clothes.

'Thanks,' he'd beam.

Typical bloke, I don't think he'd ever touched an iron in his life!

He wasn't working, but he checked the newspaper for job vacancies.

It didn't stop him going out with his mates at night.

Most nights I'd give it a miss, as I had Leanne to look after and work the next morning.

'Aren't you upset I'm going out without you?' he asked one night, putting on a shirt I'd just ironed for him.

He must think I don't trust him.

'You'll come home to me if you want to,' I smiled.

But the odd night out became three or four a week. Too much.

And I worried about all the Jack Daniel's and vodka he necked.

'Don't put that on,' he said one night, as I took my black dress out of the wardrobe.

It was a

rare trip to the pub together.

I reached for a pair of baggy trousers and a top instead.

And when I picked up my mascara, he said, 'You don't need make-up. I prefer you without.'

A man who goes more than skin-deep.

Perri was ticking all the boxes.

But two months on from the start of us dating, he came home drunk, a scowl on his face.

'Come and have a drink,' he said, going into the kitchen.

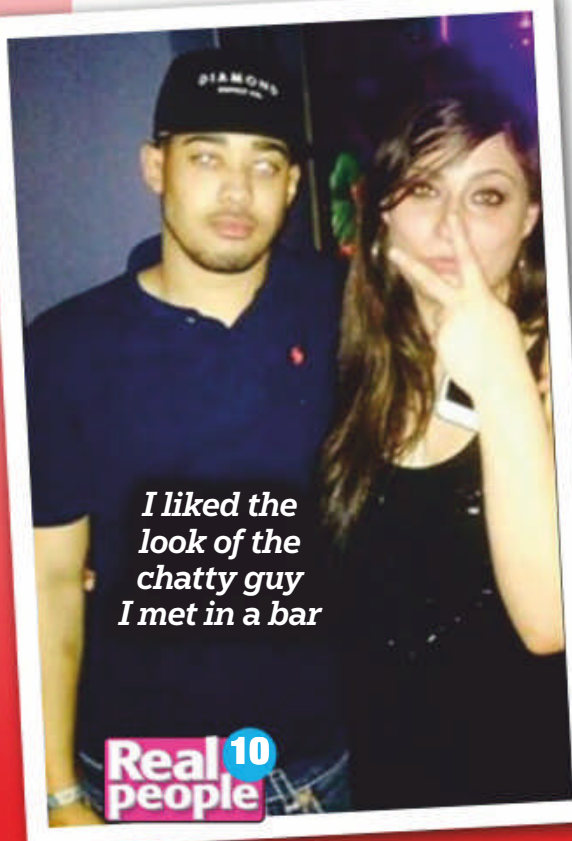
I followed him and sat on a stool. 'Not for me,' I said.

He placed a glass in front of me and fetched a bottle of vodka anyway.

'No,' I repeated. 'I don't want a drink.'

He pushed his face close up to mine. 'Why won't you drink with me?' he said, nastily.

'I just don't,' I snapped, wondering why he was in a bad mood.



I liked the look of the chatty guy I met in a bar

The smell of
burning skin
filled my
nostrils



'You're being rude,' he said.
I stiffened.
'And for being rude, I'm going to take your gold away from you.' Eh?
His hand moved slowly towards my ear.
I was wearing my favourite hooped earrings – they were gold and came from Iran.
Gently he unfastened one and took it out.
I sat stock still, nervous as to what he'd do next.
He unpicked the other earring. Then I watched as he walked over to the bin... and chucked them in.
Don't move. Don't stir. You'll only wind him up. Besides, you can fish them out the bin tomorrow.
But next morning Perri had got up and was in the kitchen. I didn't say anything about the night before.
But later I scrabbled in the pedal bin.
No sign of the earrings. Had he put the rubbish out already?
Quietly, I went outside, opened the lid of the wheelie bin, undid the black bags and rummaged.
The heady, fruity stench wrinkled my nose.
But I couldn't find them.
Gone.
Probably doesn't even remember. He wouldn't have done it if he'd been sober.
If only he didn't drink.
I went out to the Co-op that afternoon.
On the way home, I took my

phone out of my pocket to check it.
Twenty-four missed calls from Perri!
Panicking, I phoned him.
'Who are cheating with?' he yelled.
Cheating?
'I'm at the Co-op paying for the gas and leccy,' I said, flustered.
Why was he so insecure? I needed to reassure him.
That night he told me about his family background.
I listened and felt sad for him.
'None of us have had relationships that have lasted,' he sighed.
'It'll be different if we have children,' I offered.
We'd already discussed the possibility, despite being together only a short time.
He nodded.
But in the following weeks he continued to drink.
In January 2016, he came home from a night out.
I was in the kitchen.
'Have a drink with me,' he commanded.
Not this again!
'No, I've got work tomorrow,' I said.
Suddenly Perri lurched forward, grabbed my hand, and bent his head.
A pain shot through my thumb.
Perri had bitten it... hard.
I yanked it away and rushed upstairs.
Looking down, blood was trickling out of the teeth marks he'd left.
'I'm so sorry,' he said, hanging his head, the next morning when I showed him.
'We'll go out tonight, I'll buy you a dress.'
At TK Maxx he made a beeline for a long-sleeved beige number.
'Here, this one.'
It wasn't something I'd have chosen myself, but I tried it on, careful of my still sore thumb.
That night, I wore it to the pub. Leanne was staying at my mum's.
Towards closing time, Perri left ahead of me.
When I got to the car park, I saw him up close with a girl.
What were they doing? I couldn't see properly in the dark.
He'd accused me of cheating! Was he?
The girl left so I caught up with Perri and strode past him angrily.
But I felt my head snap back.
He'd grabbed my hair.
The force brought me crashing to the ground and he began to pull me through the puddles.
I staggered to get back upright.
Perri ran off.

Crying and shaken, I headed for home.
I was sitting on the stairs when Perri came through the door – with a girl!
She was in a short skirt and heels, while I'd changed out of the muddy dress into vest and shorts.
They were giggling, about me? Enough.
'Get out of my house,' I said to the girl.
Still laughing, she left.
I went upstairs, Perri following me.
His phone went. Same girl, giggling on loud speaker.
'Josie's cheating, she's cheating,' she taunted.
Perri began to question her.
I could hear her laughing and insisting it was true.
I became alarmed – I knew Perri's darker side.
'Shut up,' I yelled.
'Who are you cheating with?' he bellowed.
'No one,' I said. 'You know

round my neck and squeezed. Blackness again.
When I opened my eyes, the iron hovered over my bare leg.
The smell of my skin burning filled my nostrils when he placed it down...
Bubbling, swelling! Excruciating pain. Blackness.
Dimly, I was aware of a hammering at the door.
Police!
Neighbours must have heard my cries.
And Perri began to cry like a baby...
While he was taken away by police, I was taken to hospital.
I shook my head in disbelief – he'd branded me, like cattle, like he owned me.
There were eight or nine burns all over my body.
I spent three long months in John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, undergoing skin grafts.

Blood trickled out of the teeth marks

where I am every second of the day!'
Perri leaned over to the shelf where I kept the iron.
He flicked a switch.
What's he doing? He never irons.
But then I realised.
Oh no, he's going to...
Frantically, I tried to get out through the bedroom door, but Perri blocked me.
I struggled, but his hold overpowered me.
He leant down and picked up the iron.
I flinched as the hot base loomed above my face. I could feel the heat coming off it.
He brought it flat down on my arm.
I shrieked in scorched agony.
I looked down.
There was a huge triangular burn mark.
The steam holes of the iron were outlined on my flesh.
Like teardrops...
I felt faint...
I opened my eyes, Perri was staring down at me.
I scrambled to the side of the bed, my arm throbbing.
'Please, please,' I sobbed, cowering in a ball.
He put his hands

I also needed surgery on my thumb.
In February 2016, Perri Springer appeared at Oxford Crown Court and pleaded guilty to causing grievous bodily harm with intent.
And in April, he was given seven years in jail, with an extended period on licence of three years.
It's not enough.
He left me with dreadful scars and crushing anxiety.
We'd only been together three months!
But I'll remember him for the rest of my life, every time I pick up an iron.

Josephine Azadi, 33, Oxford



I've been left with mental and physical scars

Real people 11

■ As told to Moira Holden and Philippa Cherryson
(stories@realpeplemag.co.uk)

PUZZLE TRAIL

1 What is the international car registration code for Great Britain?

2 What initial is shared by two of the Queen's children?

3 What is the tenth letter of the alphabet?

4 What is the international car registration code for France?

5 What marks the spot on a map showing the whereabouts of buried treasure?

6 Complete the joke: What do you call a fish with no eyes?

7 Find four radio frequencies.

8 What is the international car registration code for Uruguay?

9 In Roman numerals, what letter represents 1,000?

10 According to the grammatical rule, what letter comes 'before E, except after C'?

11 What song includes the lyrics, 'I want your love (I want your love), Give me your love, girl (give me your love), That's how I feel, And I want it to be real, I want your love (I want your love), Give me your love, girl (give me your love), I need your touch and I, I owe you so much... '?

12 What is the international car registration code for South Africa?

13 Pick out the five consonants that have the tile value of '1' in a game of Scrabble.

14 What is the chemical symbol for gold?

15 What are the first three letters of a web address?

16 How will next year look written in Roman numerals?

17 What three letters are the initials of Katy Perry and Orlando Bloom's newborn daughter?

18 Find four acronyms you might see in a lonely hearts ad.

19 What is the international car registration code for America?

20 Alphabetically, what is the first consonant?

21 What letter of the alphabet is also a garment neck shape?

22 If you want a reply to an invitation, what letters would you put on it?

23 In a large business or company, what two letters describe the department that takes care of all computer-related issues?

24 What two letters were the name given to the alien who wanted to phone home in a classic '80s film by Steven Spielberg?

25 What is the international car registration code for Ireland?

Roulette

Here's one to get you in a spin! All of the answers to the questions can be found on **Real People's** Roulette wheel. For your chance to bag £250, have a go at the quiz, eliminating the black or red section containing the answer, or answers, to each question as you go. When completed correctly, you'll be left with just one section, which contains your prize answer. Write this on the entry coupon on page 43.

**WIN
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Real people



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Zara



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£16,
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£25, George
at Asda



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£9, John
Lewis &
Partners

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set,** £10,
George at
Asda



**Serving
plate,** £22,
Oliver
Bonas



Coasters,
£10,
very.co.uk

Dish,
£4, John
Lewis &
Partners

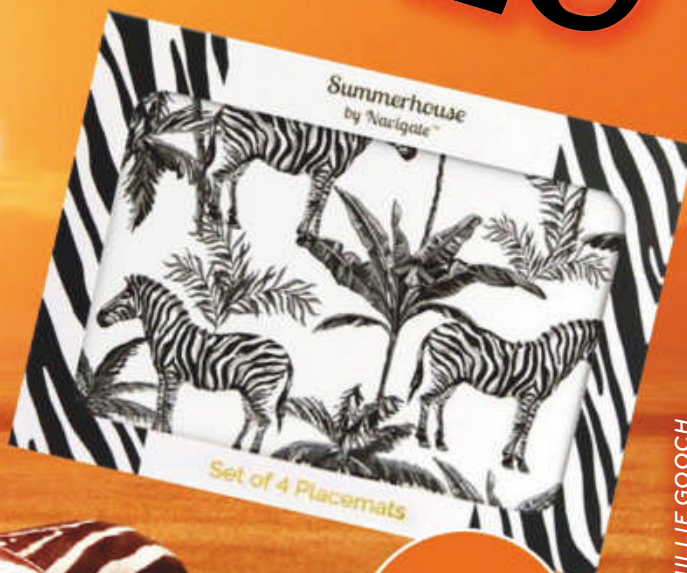


THE RIGHT STRIPES

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LOCK SHOCK

An even bigger cut than
most after lockdown!

Daisy's little Jon Bon Jovi couldn't keep his wig on...

Untangling the knots in my boy's hair, I brushed it out.

'It's long enough to plait,' I teased as Reilly, nine, wrinkled his nose.

In fact, his locks were even longer than his eight-year-old sister's.

It was kinda my fault, I admit.

I'd always liked the idea of having a little boy with long hair, so when Reilly's began to grow, I didn't have the heart to chop it off.

'I'm just going to leave it until he tells me to cut it,' I'd said to his dad Baz, 32.

Reilly's little brother Roman, four, couldn't bear to let his own grow past his ears, but Reilly's was down to his waist!

He was my little Jon Bon Jovi.

It was as if he was singing into a microphone, 'It's my life... It's now or never!'

Not that he had the foggiest who Jon Bon Jovi was!

No, his sandy locks were modelled on his hero, Real Madrid footballer Gareth Bale, who wore his barnet in a top bun.

'But his is nowhere near as long as yours,' I said.

'I know,' he smiled proudly.

But there was a heart-tugging reason for his attachment too.

Reilly had been born with a throat and bowel condition which had meant a fair few hospital stays for him when he was little.

He saw plenty of kids undergoing chemo, losing their hair. I think it made him cherish his own more.

So now, as I brushed out my

Reilly had
hair to
spare -
and a good
cause for it

Living' on A PRAYER

boy's hair last May, he took me by surprise.

'I want to donate my hair for a wig,' Reilly announced to me.

He wanted it all off?!

'That'll be such a big change,' I warned him. 'What if you don't like it?'

'Then I'll grow it back,' he shrugged.

Bless him, he wanted to do his bit, and so set up a GoFundMe page to raise £100 for The Little Princess Trust, a hair

donation charity.

A local newspaper got wind of the story and, with their help, the money started pouring in.

And last month, the day of the big chop arrived.

Measuring Reilly's hair out, we realised his lifetime's work was a whopping 2ft.

At Masters & Misters, our barbers in Little Clacton, Essex, Reilly sat unmoved as the hairdresser tied his hair into a ponytail... and snipped!

'Nearly off,' she told him from behind her visor, cutting through the last few strands.

Holding the ponytail up, she passed it over to Reilly.

'It's so long,' he gasped. 'I wonder how many wigs it'll make.'

What was left of his hair was styled into a '90s David Beckham-style curtains look.

'This feels so strange,' my boy marvelled, running his hands over his head.

His donation page is still up and so far, we've raised a whopping £6,400.

He may have lost his locks but to me and the kids he's helped, he's a cut above.

**Daisy Canny, 30,
Little Clacton, Essex**

I always
wanted a
lad with a
long mane...

...but my charitable
son's even better!

Gareth Bale's
long locks are
no match

Reilly had longer
locks than his sister

WHAT IS AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME-

the biggest Internet portal,
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Sprite NURSE

With **Suzann** splat on the floor, little Isla came dressed for the occasion...

With blue lights flashing, the sirens blared as the van sped through the streets.

'I hope they get there in time,' my little girl, Isla, six, squealed.

Isla was ambulance mad – gasping any time one passed us.

It meant that most nights, she subjected me, her dad Oliver, 39, and her big brother Joshua, 12, to episodes of *Ambulance* on iPlayer.

You'd have thought that working as a nurse it would be the last thing I'd want to put my feet up to, but I loved how excited Isla got.

A few days on, last July, it was just me and my girl at home.

With Oliver at work as a Border Force officer at Manchester Airport and Joshua out with friends, I decided to do some housework.

Only, stepping on a stool in the kitchen to reach the window to clean, I slipped and tumbled backwards.

My arms flung out to hold on to something. But I crashed my back onto the stone floor.

'Oww!' I screamed.

Trapped on the tiles, I heard the scurry of little feet.

Two peepers loomed over me.

'Are you OK, Mummy?' Isla asked.

'No darling,' I winced. 'Mummy's fallen.'

Immediately, my girl scampered out of sight, returning with my phone.

'Look,' Isla instructed, pushing the phone to my face.

It triggered the face recognition, unlocking the phone so she could search through my contacts list for her dad.

'I'm coming home,' I could just about hear him say to her.

'I'll ring 999,' Isla added.

By rights, she should be in floods of tears at the sight of her mum prone and in pain, but Isla relished the opportunity to do some real life nursing!

When paramedics arrived, she let them in, bringing them into the kitchen.

'We'll take it from here,' one of them cooed to her and she disappeared upstairs.

'I can't move,' I explained to them as they helped me onto a stretcher.

'I'll help,' I heard a little voice in the corner announce.

Peering to look, I snorted out a laugh.

Isla had paraded back down the stairs in her nurse's costume!

'Good,' one paramedic said, humouring her. 'You can help me take your mum's blood pressure.'

Handing her control of the machine, Isla pressed the button as the band tightened around my arm.

'Perfect,' the medic said, and Isla

beamed.

As I was wheeled out to the ambulance, Oliver arrived home to stay with Isla while the paramedics took me to Stepping Hill Hospital in Stockport.

'You have a fractured shoulder,' the doctor explained, holding my

X-ray results.

It was nothing a dose of painkillers and a few weeks of rest wouldn't fix.

Back home that night, both me and Oliver praised Isla for her bravery.

'You did brilliantly,' I told her. 'My little superstar.'

My arm's in a sling at the mo, but I needn't worry with nurse Isla on call.

Suzann Harrison, 31, Stockport, Greater Manchester



Super Isla stepped in to save the day



Me, Oliver and Joshua are so proud

Isla loves all things medical

What's your BEEF?

Hazel's bull was a power bottom and he'd tell the whole village...

Baas, moos, honks... who needed an alarm clock when I had that racket outside each morning?!

Me and my hubby Greg, 39, ran a farm – I'd grown up on one as a child, so was used to the early mornings, feeding the animals with sleep still in my eyes.

Now 35, after waking at 6am last March, I was soon dressed and in the fields.

'Morning, Ron,' I chirped to our brown bull as he scratched his bum against a wooden pole.

Ron gave the town a bum deal!



I fed Ron every morning



'Someone's itchy,' Greg joked.

Four-year-old Ron, who weighed over a ton, was always having a go at the electricity pole at the end of his field.

He saw it as his scratching post. I noticed the transformer box at the top of the pole begin to shake.

'Look,' I pointed. 'It's a wonder he doesn't knock the thing down.'

Later that night, I got up to go to the bathroom but, flicking the light switch, I sighed.

'The power's gone out,' I called to Greg.

In the middle of the Scottish countryside, in the small village of

Chapelton in South Lanarkshire, power cuts were a regular hassle.

'Hopefully it'll be back tomorrow,' Greg said before adding, 'It would be funny if it was Ron's fault.'

I laughed, imagining our bull stood in the field right now, his bum wiggling against the electricity pole.

When we woke up, I headed out to feed the cows.

But reaching the field, I stopped in my tracks.

Was that the transformer box?!

It lay poleaxed in the field, surrounded by fallen cables. Nearby stood a guilty-looking Ron.

'What have you done?' I asked him, eyebrow raised.

Really, he was lucky he hadn't trodden on the thing, he'd have got



The power company fixed it all

THE FINAL CUT

an 11,000-volt surprise.

Ringing Scottish Power, they agreed to come round to repair the damage.

'We were actually in your field at 3am this morning trying to fix it,' the man told us. 'Seven hundred homes lost power.'

Ron's itchy behind had done that?! Ooops!

I saw dozens of comments in a local Facebook group, all of them wondering what had happened to their power.

'I should tell them the truth,' I said to Greg.

I'm so sorry, it was my bull, I wrote. He had an itchy bum so scratched it on the electricity pole and knocked the transformer off.

Luckily, they saw the funny side.

You should rename him Sparky, one joked.

The transformer box was refitted, so the lights came back on.

To stop it happening again, and to keep Ron out of harm's way, we've built a wire fence around his beloved scratching post.

I don't want to be making any more 6am booty calls!

Hazel Laughton, 35, Chapelton, South Lanarkshire

Kiddies' stuff!



Listen up, mum, kids can't spend much more than eight hours a day playing hopscotch, counting leaves in trees and winding the dog up! Get them over 'ere, give 'em a pencil, push these puzzles under their noses and listen to their brains start to whizz. What a kindness you're doing. What's that? No it's not wrong to put your feet up and watch Homes Under the Hammer. In fact, it'd be rude not to!

IT'S WICKED!

Have you got a bad feeling about this one? You should do! Round up the Disney villains listed below. All are hidden, except one – which one? Solution on p19.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| N | Q | T | R | K | G | O | B | A | N | R | E | H | C | T | M | S | S |
| E | R | Z | U | A | C | S | C | A | R | P | L | N | C | X | P | N | H |
| E | T | R | I | Y | F | U | Z | Q | U | I | H | J | M | S | F | A | E |
| U | R | Q | S | K | N | A | E | P | V | D | G | B | T | E | N | H | R |
| Q | L | C | H | N | H | O | J | E | C | N | I | R | P | R | K | E | E |
| L | K | Y | A | U | D | E | D | P | L | G | A | Y | Q | M | O | C | K |
| I | X | N | N | B | C | A | G | K | B | E | F | C | I | A | O | N | H |
| V | I | L | Y | L | L | B | V | A | H | P | M | C | C | L | H | I | A |
| E | Y | I | U | L | F | U | D | F | S | Z | U | K | G | E | N | R | N |
| C | Q | L | E | T | R | W | O | F | Y | T | U | E | V | F | I | P | H |
| E | U | U | L | S | O | N | S | O | A | H | O | W | N | I | A | U | U |
| B | R | P | U | L | E | A | H | F | O | T | B | N | C | C | T | B | D |
| C | Y | L | F | E | J | E | F | A | K | F | J | B | C | E | P | I | S |
| Y | A | S | U | B | H | Q | D | P | D | Y | H | P | Q | N | A | C | Y |
| R | J | Q | K | Y | I | K | K | V | Z | E | O | S | C | T | C | T | O |
| U | C | U | Z | D | Q | Q | H | A | R | A | S | T | N | U | A | P | W |

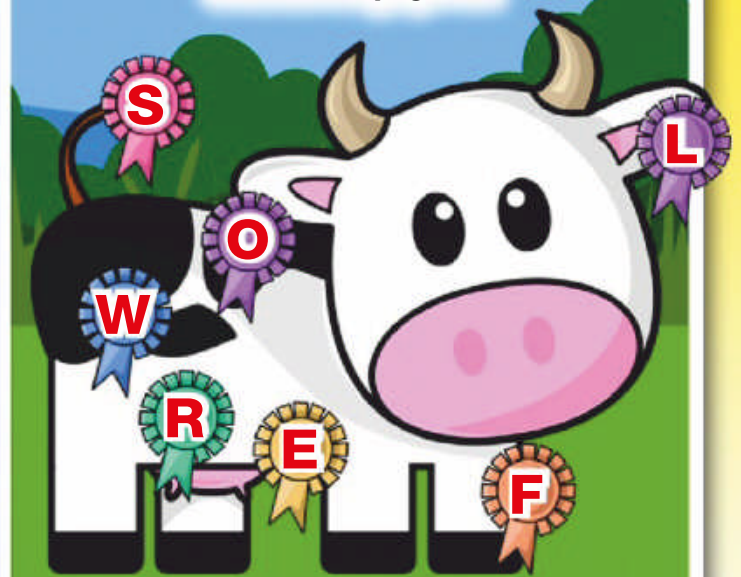
AUNT SARAH
BIG BAD WOLF
CAPTAIN HOOK
CHERNABOG
CRUELLA DE VIL
EVIL QUEEN

GASTON
HADES
JAFAR
MALEFICENT
MOTHER GOTHEL
PRINCE HANS

PRINCE JOHN
QUEEN OF HEARTS
SCAR
SHAN YU
SHERE KHAN
URSULA

MILK SHAKE

We've shaken up all seven letters of an every day word (below). Can you work out what it is? Each letter can only be used once. This is your prize answer. Solution on page 19.



Which Moo-vie character?

Use the picture clues to sound out the name of a Marvel hero. Answer on page 19.

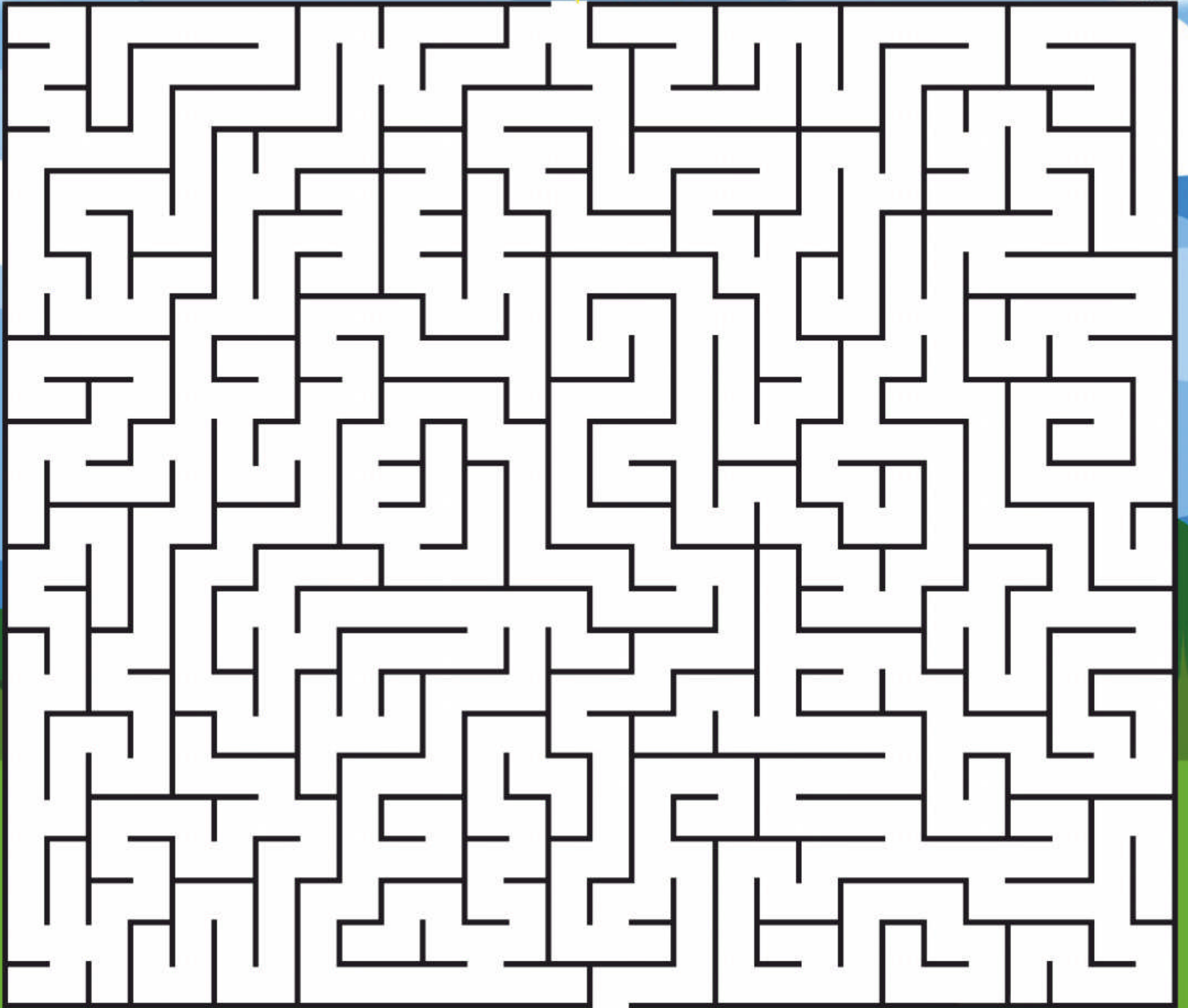


HOW COW POW WOW?

START



Doris isn't happy.
But what's her beef?
Well, she can't work out how to get to
the other field for the cow pow wow now!
Can you help her moo-ve through the maze
until she reaches Flo and the rest of the
gang for the teepee party? Solution on p19.



FINISH



SPY KIDS

All wannabe secret agents need to work hard on sharpening their observational skills. Put yours to the test here by spotting the 10 differences between these two photos of upcoming Disney film *Jungle Cruise*. Check the solution on p19.



SUM BUDDY TO LOVE

| | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|
| | | | | 12 |
| | | | | 18 |
| | | | | 13 |
| | | | | 14 |
| 17 | 12 | 18 | 10 | |
| | | | | |
| 3 | | | | |

Each colour of Florence's rosettes represents a different digit (1-9). The numbers provided in the top grid are the column and row totals. With the value of one of the colours given, can you work out the rest? Answers below.

MOO

Of A Kind

Although the pictures of keep-fit Florence, below, appear to be the same, look very closely and you'll see only two are identical – which two? Solution below.

A

B

C

D

E

F

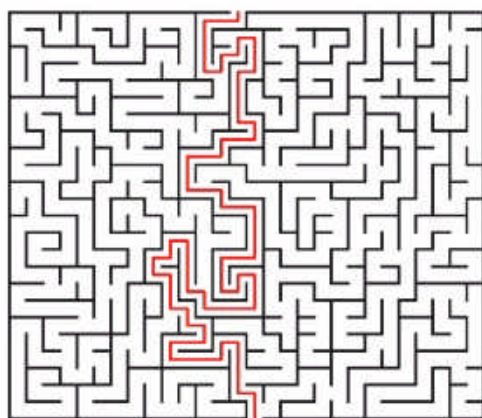
KIDDIES' STUFF SOLUTIONS

P16 – It's Wicked!
Not hidden: Mother Gothel

P16 – Milk Shake
Flowers

P16 – Which Moo-vie character?
Solution: Black + Weed + Dough
= Black Widow

P17 – How Cow Pow Wow!
Turn the page upside down to see the solution.



P18 – I-Spy
A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, B3, B4, B5, C2, C3.

P19 – Sum Buddy To Love



P19 – Moo Of A Kind
B, F.



MURDER MAP

When EVIL is in YOUR town...

Leanne idolised her stepdad. How was she to know her mum had married into evil?

Ever heard or uttered the words, 'My dad could beat up your dad'?

It's not an uncommon saying for kids, boasting their days away on the playground.

Leanne Meecham was no different.

After a rocky early childhood, her parents had split up.

When Leanne was six, her big sister, eight-year-old Carly, went to live with their dad.

Leanne stayed with their mum, Jane.

Three years on, Jane met someone new.

Simon Meecham was homeless at the time.

But, within six weeks, he and Jane were married.

Simon became Leanne's stepdad and her surname changed to Meecham.

Far from seeming unsettled, Leanne idolised the new father figure in her life.

Best of all, he was a hard man, with more than 100 convictions for everything from drugs to anti-social behaviour.

So when Leanne told her little friends Simon was a tough nut she meant it.

She loved the new male figure in her life.

And the feeling appeared to be mutual.

But this was no father-daughter bond...

'He was obsessed with her because she was beautiful,' Carly remembered.

Friends too noticed the strange way Simon looked at Leanne.

Almost lustful.

Pals brought it up with her but she brushed it off.

Leanne grew into a beautiful, kind-hearted young woman but her strange relationship with stepdad Simon only grew along with her.

By 16, she was hitting the pubs.

Simon, who drank heavily himself and had issues with drugs, happily ferried his underage stepdaughter back and forth to the boozer, laughing at her drunken antics.

But there was an element of Leanne growing up he wasn't on board with.

When she began dating, Simon was furious.

He suddenly seemed to find every excuse he could to ground her and keep her away from her boyfriends.

At first, Leanne assumed he was just being an overprotective dad.

But not long after she left home, her mum and Simon split.

When Leanne was 20, in 2007, she, too, had the heartache of breaking up with her latest boyfriend.

Feeling lost and alone, she turned to the strongest male figure she had in her life – Simon.

She was vulnerable, and Simon, 16 years older than her, offered a shoulder to cry on.

But things became more physical than a hug.

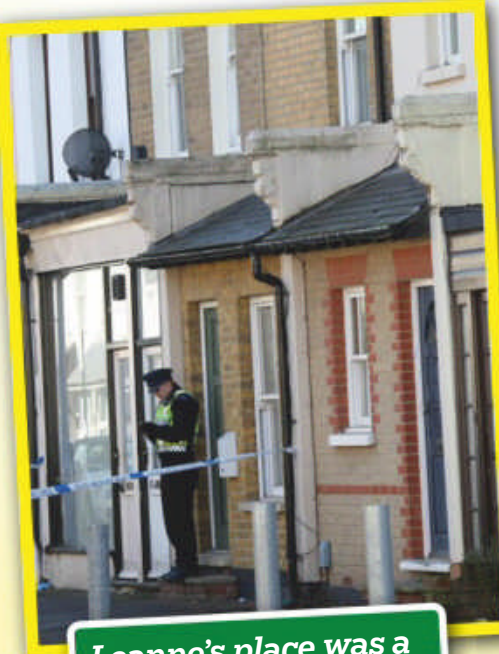
Simon and Leanne, the stepdaughter he'd brought up from the age of nine, began a sexual relationship.

Likely to get away from disapproval and disgust, the couple moved from Brentwood across Essex to Westcliff-on-Sea.

A suburb of Southend, it's set on cliffs overlooking the Thames Estuary.

With its stunning views and popular yacht club, Westcliff was once a place to be seen.

Hamlet Court Road, the area's



Leanne's place was a top priority for police

Papa o PR

primary shopping street, was once known as the Bond Street of Essex.

But the recessions of the '80s and '90s hit hard.

By the time Leanne and Simon moved in, they were among many struggling to get by.

Simon had promised Leanne the world – making her quit her job and telling her he'd take care of everything.

But that meant he held the purse strings.

While he spent what he wanted, Leanne was skint.

Eventually, the pair had a son together.

Hospital and nursery staff likely assumed Leanne and Simon were married, seeing as they had the same surname.

The truth was too gruesome to imagine.

But being a biological father this time did little to change Simon's ways.

Not only did he control the money, he controlled Leanne too.

Police were called to their address in Park Street six times over the years where Simon had attacked his stepdaughter who'd become the mother of his child.

Now miles from her friends and family, Leanne was desperate.

But every time she left Simon, she ended up coming right back.

Maybe it was fear?

Maybe, just maybe, Leanne couldn't imagine a life without a man who'd groomed her since she was a teenager?

In January 2014, Simon pushed her over.

She called the police and he was arrested.

'I don't wanna get back with that bloke ever again,' Leanne told Carly.

This time, she meant it.

While Simon was in custody, she moved on and began a new relationship.

But when Simon appeared in court, on 29 January, and pleaded guilty to common assault against



Simon Meecham groomed his stepdaughter

Leanne, he was released on bail to await sentence.

That left him a free, angry, scorned man.

With nowhere to go, Simon moved in with his sister in Shoeburyness, four-and-a-half miles down the coast.

He bombarded Leanne with phone calls, begging her to take him back and threatening her.

She spotted him in the streets, sitting in his car watching her.

Worried for her sister's safety, Carly asked Leanne to move in with her for a while.

But Leanne refused.

She didn't like people to worry about her.

And now she finally seemed to see things so clearly.

She knew she shouldn't have

Westcliff-on-Sea ESSEX

Don't KEY

*Recessions
had hit
swanky
Westcliff
badly*

*Leanne found it tough to
cut Simon from her life*



*Simon was found bleeding to
death in his Land Rover nearby*

begun a relationship with her stepfather, knew what people thought of her.

But Leanne was a mother now and she was determined to sort things out herself.

So she changed the locks on her doors and worked with police to implement strategies to keep her safe.

There was a flag put on her address, making any calls to the police top priority.

But, despite wanting to create distance between her and Simon, Leanne didn't

want to see their young son without a father.

She knew better than most how hard that void was to live with.

So she allowed Simon to see their son in her presence.

On the morning of 13 February 2014, Leanne was home, wrapped up in a dressing gown.

The door went and she opened it. Simon forced his way inside.

In his hand was a knife he'd taken from his sister's kitchen.

Leanne was powerless as Simon stabbed her twice in the windpipe.

He then turned on his heel and fled.

With the last shreds of life she had in her, Leanne clawed at her walls.

She grasped at the door frame.

If only she could get up, call for help...

But her energy deserted her.

**She changed the
locks on her doors**

By the time a neighbour found Leanne on the floor of her flat at around 9.30am, she was barely alive.

Help was called and a critically ill Leanne was airlifted to the Royal London Hospital.

Her injuries were so severe that she suffered a cardiac arrest and was placed in a medically-induced coma as doctors battled to save her.

An hour after the stabbing, police found Simon in his black Land Rover Discovery on the seafront at Thorpe Bay, four miles away.

He'd suffered three stab wounds, including one to his liver.

The wounds had been inflicted with the same knife that'd injured Leanne.

Simon was rushed to the Royal London – the same hospital where his victim lay clinging to life.

Leanne's family held vigil at her bedside, terrified Simon would break out of his hospital room, find Leanne and finish the job.

Armed police were stationed outside both hospital rooms.

Meanwhile, doctors battled to save both lives – the attacker and his victim.

But while Simon recovered,

Leanne was found to have suffered devastating brain damage caused by a lack of oxygen.

Her family made the harrowing decision to turn off her life support.

On 20 February, a week after the attack, Leanne Meecham died.

She was just 26.

Simon, though, survived.

He was discharged from hospital and immediately arrested on suspicion of murder.

When he

appeared at Chelmsford Crown Court months on, Simon Meecham claimed it was all an accident.

But the prosecution said the killing had been 'motivated by jealousy and anger'.

Prosecutor Jocelyn Ledward told the jury of six men and six women, 'This was a deliberate stabbing of Leanne Meecham when she posed no threat to him... It was done with a knife brought to the scene.'

But Meecham claimed he'd only brought the knife along that day as he planned to harm himself.

He admitted killing Leanne but said she'd been stabbed accidentally when they'd struggled, with Leanne trying to disarm him of the blade.

He also claimed Leanne had been the one to stab him.

But the jury weren't swallowing it.

Meecham's wounds were self-inflicted and there was no way Leanne had been stabbed in the windpipe by accident.

In August 2014, 43-year-old Simon Meecham was convicted of murder.

He was sentenced to life and told he'd serve at least 22 years in prison.

Judge Charles Gratwicke told him, 'You are a jealous and aggressive man... You could not bear to see Leanne with anyone else.'

'As a result of your wickedness an innocent and loving young woman was cut down in the prime of her life.'

In a statement Leanne's family said she 'was a special sister, daughter, mother and friend. The past six months have been especially hard for us as we struggle to come to terms with how Leanne was taken from us and that her four-year-old son has been deprived of his mother and also his father.'

'Despite the conviction of her killer, his term of imprisonment will never be sufficient punishment for taking Leanne from us.'

When she met Simon Meecham, Leanne was just a little girl looking for a father figure.

He groomed her, took advantage, then took her life.

And now her own little boy is without both his parents.

The cruel circle of life.

*Simon had
taken a knife
from his sister*

Health & happiness

LAURA'S STORY

A cry for help

Laura was a teary mess as a wedding guest but she couldn't fathom why...

Driving around the car park for the 10th time, I couldn't help but giggle. 'Tops off a great journey, doesn't it?' I smiled to my husband Gareth, 31.

'Glad you see the funny side,' he mumbled.

We'd travelled from our home in Deeside, North Wales, to a family wedding in Anglesey.

It should've taken just over an hour, but the traffic had been horrendous. And now, we couldn't find a parking space!

Finally we did and we lugged our luggage into the hotel.

'Not quite how it looked on the website,' I smiled.

It was a bit shabby and going into our room, I went to take a shower...



Gareth helps me through the dark days

'Erm, it's not working properly,' I called out.

'Great,' Gareth sighed.

'Could be worse,' I said, nudging him. 'We'll have fun at the wedding.'

Nothing was going to ruin my mood. Not even when the iron left a print on my brown polka-dot dress!

But after I put my make-up on, I felt it. The feeling crashed into me like a tank.

Bursting into tears, I slumped onto a chair. 'I can't go,' I sobbed.

'It's OK,' Gareth hushed, kneeling beside me.

Just minutes earlier, even a burned dress couldn't tip me over the edge.

Yet now, out of nowhere, the thought of being surrounded by people – people I loved – made me feel terrified, anxious.

It was like a huge storm cloud had blown in and smothered the sunshine.

This had been a regular occurrence since I was a teenager.

I'd be going through life, then boom. Out of nowhere depression

and anxiety weighed heavy on my shoulders.

For up to two weeks, days seemed endless, pointless sometimes.

'I just don't know why,' I'd sob to Gareth.

He was so supportive, would just lay me on the sofa with a blanket.

I'd been to the doctor, but they'd always just told me I needed to eat well and exercise more.

But I was a wellness coach, knew how to treat my body!

I thought I might have bi-polar. 'But I don't have extreme highs,'

I'd say to Gareth.

And now, he tried to convince me to get up.

'I can't move,' I trembled.

My mind was so scrambled, I felt glued to the chair.

'I just wish I knew what was wrong with me,' I sobbed.

Eventually, I managed to get dressed, but was still crying as the taxi arrived.

You're supposed to blub at weddings, but not like this.

All day, I clutched my glass, feeling on edge, like everyone was

Even as a teenager, dark clouds could wipe the smile off my face

staring.

Desperate, I started keeping a journal of my symptoms.

'I might see if there's a trigger,'

I said to Gareth.

But a few months later, in May 2019, I was on Instagram when I saw a post that gave me chills.

'That's me!' I gasped.

It was from someone I half-knew, trying to raise awareness of premenstrual dysphoric disorder, PMDD, an extreme form of premenstrual syndrome.

It caused feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, mood swings, even suicidal feelings. I'd never had those, but I ticked every other box.

I went to my GP.

'Looking at my journal, I do feel like this in the run-up to my period, it starts about day 14,' I said.

'This is what you have,' she agreed.

I could try different contraceptions, but I'd tried everything before and they hadn't agreed with me.

The extreme option was a hysterectomy.

'But I'm not there yet,' I thought. I might want kids in the future.

So now I take antidepressants for the last two weeks of my cycle.

It's definitely helped.

Although the feelings are still there, they numb them enough for me to live normally.

It helps to know that there's a reason behind this.

There's still a stigma around women and their 'time of the month'. But PMDD is debilitating.

If sufferers know there are others like them, it can help.

PMDD is a lonely condition but together, we can keep going.

Laura Tear-Jones, 30, Deeside, Flintshire

Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD) > the FACTS

WHAT? PMDD is a very severe form of premenstrual syndrome (PMS), which can cause many emotional and physical symptoms every month during the week or two before you start your period. PMDD can have a serious impact on your life, making it difficult to work or socialise. The exact causes are not fully understood, but possible factors include being very sensitive to hormone changes, or a traumatic past event.

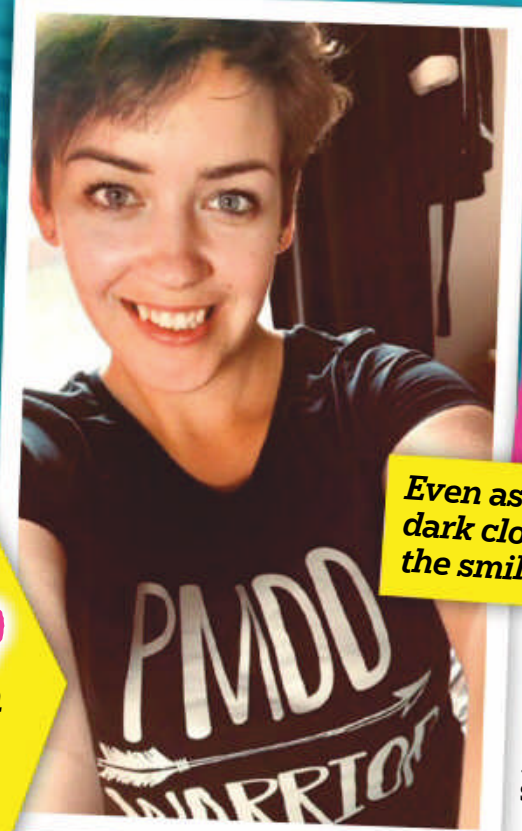
SYMPTOMS: Different people experience different symptoms, some of which can

be mood swings, feeling tearful, angry or irritable, having difficulty concentrating and a lack of energy, feeling on edge, overwhelmed or hopeless. **TREATMENT:** While there isn't a cure for PMDD, some women find that different contraceptions can help, along with antidepressants. Get to know your cycle, and during the worst few days, make sure your life is as stress-free as possible, get more sleep and exercise and eat well, cutting back on alcohol. In extreme cases, a hysterectomy is also offered. **INFO:** mind.org.uk

Two other hormone conditions –

● **CUSHING'S SYNDROME:** This is a condition caused by having too much of a hormone called cortisol in your body. Symptoms include more body fat on your chest, tummy, neck or shoulders. Your face may also be red and puffy. It's usually caused by taking steroid medicine, but can be because of a hidden tumour. Stopping your meds or removing the growth will help, but recovery is long.

● **THYROIDITIS:** This is the swelling of the thyroid gland, and causes unusually high or low levels of thyroid hormones in the blood. These hormones control the pace of your body's functions – metabolism – like how fast it burns food to make energy. There are various types of thyroiditis, with treatments ranging from steroids to hormone replacement therapy and surgery.





THIRSTY WORK

It's a myth that a good cup of tea dehydrates you, so says a study reported in the *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. Researchers point out that tea also contains extra benefits in the form of flavonoids that can protect your heart. Another study found that four to six mugs could keep you as well hydrated as a litre of water.

HOW DO YOU TAKE IT?

Black, if you want to strain the most out of it for your health. A study from the University of California found that English breakfast tea, minus the milk, could increase levels of metabolism-boosting bacteria, potentially helping with weight loss. Milk seems to get in the way of the process. Have it strong too. This means you get a bigger dose of antioxidants that can help battle cancer and heart disease, according to researchers at the University of Auckland.

HOT TOPIC

Love a steaming cuppa? You might want to let it cool down first. Several studies, including a 2019 one published in the *International Journal of Cancer*, have found that drinking tea when it's piping hot can significantly increase the chance of developing oesophageal cancer. Over time hot beverages damage the tube which food and liquids travel through to reach your stomach. Anything above 65°C is a danger, says the World Health Organization, but unless you're a masochist, that's plenty hot.

BRAIN JUICE

A brew's good for the ol' Earl Grey matter. We may spend 24 minutes a day making and slurping hot drinks, but a survey by Tetley found that 44 per cent of workers feel more re-energised after a tea break, and 33 per cent feel more productive. In fact, scientists behind a study in the journal *Food Quality and Preference* found that the mood boost from having a cuppa could also boost creativity and, in turn, the ability to solve problems.



CUPPA a load of THIS

Who knew that tea keeps us so tickety-boo?! Brewing up is more than just skiving off work, it's a stress-relieving, brain-boosting, cancer-fighting, cure-all in a cup. Stick the kettle on and read all about it...

TIME YOUR TEATIME

We're most likely to have a morning slump at 11.37am. Research from Tel Aviv University in Israel suggests that if you are going to indulge in a sweet treat, mornings are best as you have the rest of the day to burn off the calories. But make sure you eat it sitting down. Studies show that we take longer to eat when we're not standing, increasing feelings of fullness and stopping you reaching for more unhealthy snacks later on. Time your breaks for between 10am-12noon and 2-5pm when levels of the hormone cortisol naturally dip and caffeine will give you an energy boost.

HAVE A TET-A-TETLEYS

When the PG chips are down, stick the kettle on! Tea's good for your mental health, according to a survey of 1,000 people by BRITA Professional, which identified that 64 per cent believe that it helps them feel more relaxed, while 41 per cent reckon a good brew calms them down. And it seems a cuppa in a crisis really can help. A study by psychologists at City, University of London found a reduction in anxiety for subjects who received tea after a stressful event, compared to those who didn't. The amino acid theanine in tea has been linked to relaxation.

ONE LUMP OR TWO?

If you take sugar, the NHS advises gradually reducing how much you add to your drinks. Researchers have shown that once you stop sweetening them you won't even miss the taste. You can also slash the levels of sugar and calories in your tea break snacks by making some savvy swaps. Instead of chocolate cookies, dunk a rich tea, or a ginger nut packed with minerals, a fibre-heavy fig roll or a Garibaldi where the sugar comes from fruit. Choose lower calorie chocolate bars like a Flake, and malt loaf and crumpets over cake.





WHAT'S UP DOC?

**MON 14 – SUN 20
SEPTEMBER**

Buy a Jeans for Genes Day limited-edition Bugs Bunny™ t-shirt at jeansforgenes.org/shop

All profits from the sale of this t-shirt by Jeans for Genes will help transform the lives of children with life-altering genetic disorders

Modelled by Alex Bowen & Olivia Buckland

Jeans for Genes ® and ™, © 2020 Genetic Disorders UK.
Registered Charity Number 1141583
LOONEY TUNES and all related characters and elements
© & ™ Warner Bros. Entertainment inc. (s20)



TRAYmendous

Have a love-in with your oven
baking these classics...



15P
per serving

ULTIMATE BROWNIES

Makes 16 • Takes 55 mins

- ✓ 175g unsalted butter • 150g dark chocolate • 3 medium eggs • 300g caster sugar • 75g plain flour • 40g cocoa powder • Icing sugar

1 Melt the butter and chocolate together in a bowl set over a pan of simmering water. When the mixture is melted and smooth, lift the bowl off the pan and set aside to cool for 20 mins.

2 Preheat oven to 180°C and grease a square tin. Beat the eggs and sugar together. Add the melted and cooled chocolate mixture to the egg mixture and fold together. Sift over the flour and cocoa powder and fold together.

3 Scrape the mixture into the prepared tin, level and bake for 30 mins. Cool completely in the tin before dusting with icing sugar and cutting into squares.

CHECK
THESE
OUT!

★ Sipful Drinks has launched a brand-new range of premium canned cocktails including Real Orange Mimosa, Real Peach Bellini and Organic Bubbles. £35.85 for 12-pack, Amazon.



★ As summer draws to a close, Weight Watchers have released two cold weather grub faves – Hearty Cottage Pie and Lincolnshire Sausage & Root Veg Mash, both under 400 kcal! £2.50, Asda.



★ Naturally light Cranes Cider have launched in two tantalising flavours: Blueberries & Apples and Raspberries & Pomegranates, with only natural ingredients used. £2.10, Sainsbury's.



TIP

Keep cookies fresh by putting a slice of bread in the airtight container with them.

Real people 25

BILLIONAIRE'S SHORTBREAD

Makes 25 • Takes 3hrs 40 mins

- ✓ 175g plain flour • 50g rice flour • 75g caster sugar • 200g salted butter • 350g dark chocolate
- Gold leaf **FOR CARAMEL:** • 175g salted butter • 175g caster sugar • 100g golden syrup • 397g condensed milk • 1 tsp vanilla extract

1 Preheat oven to 180°C. Line a square tin with parchment. Mix both flours and sugar with 175g butter. Press into the prepared tin, level then chill for 15 mins. Bake for 20 mins then leave to cool.

2 Meanwhile, put all caramel ingredients except vanilla into a pan; whisk over a low heat. Bring to boil, then simmer for 10 mins, whisking constantly. Stir in vanilla, pour the caramel over the shortbread and leave to set at room temperature for 1hr.

3 Melt chocolate and 25g butter in a bowl set over a pan of simmering water. Pour chocolate mixture over caramel; leave to set for 2hr in fridge. Press gold leaf on to surface. Cut into squares.

17P
per serving



WIN!

An excellent Epson printer!



GO AND ARROW

Solve the puzzle in the usual way. When completed correctly, the yellow boxes, reading top to bottom, left to right, will spell out your prize word. See p43 to enter.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Division of a play | | Famous race horse (3,3) | | Green citrus fruit | | Sash or bay feature of a building, eg | | Bundle of hay |
| Felon, crook | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | Donkey | | Study hard for exams, eg (4,2) | | Is biased against the elderly, eg |
| Plant stalk | Salt lake where you float (4,3) | | | | | | | |
| | | | Plant seeds | | | | Story girl with very long hair | |
| Pub counter | Onwards and ____, expression | | Used profane language | | | | | |
| | | | | Parcel | __ chi, martial art | | | |
| Leap | | Anger, rage | | Tarot deck suit | | | | |
| Part of a candle that you light | | | | | Stay ____, remain in that place | | | |
| Noah's vessel | | | | Shut a door with a loud bang | | Consumed food | | Up to now |
| | | | | Idle | | | | |
| Zone, region | | Small beard | | | | | | |
| Take legal action against | | | | Turn to water (of ice) | | | | |

It's all very well having a two million megapixel camera built into your phone or owning a marvellous multi-lensed, super-duper, sonic boom digital snapper – both meaning you can capture amazing memories or gob-smackingly beautiful scenery whenever, wherever. But if you want to look at that special face, or revisit that magical moment, you have to swipe through ten thousand other pics and drag out lord knows how many cables first. What a palaver!

Even to print you have to upload, download, plug into a machine, send off to a place, etc.

Ah, imagine if you had your very own printer. You could paper the walls with your photos! Well, how about bagging the Epson Expression Premium XP-6000 Wi-Fi All-in-One Inkjet Printer?

With individual inks, mobile printing – meaning you can print and scan from anywhere – and a range of easy-to-use features, producing high-quality documents and photos has never been easier or more economical. Whoa! Want one?

Simply solve my *Go And Arrow* puzzle for your chance to win...



MUM *to* MUM

No one can give better advice to a mum facing a hard time than another mum who's been there herself...

THIS WEEK: DRAWN-OUT BEDTIMES

THE LONG GOODNIGHT

If only Lindsey's F1-mad boy would sleep in his own pit lane...

Standing in Ethan's doorway, the moonlight shone on his recently redecorated bedroom.

You'd think my six-year-old was Lewis Hamilton – F1 car prints, Lego cars on the shelf, a Disney's *Cars* duvet cover.

But the little petrolhead was nowhere to be seen.

When it came to where he lay his head at night, his brand-spanking new room was the pits!

Across the landing, I peeped into the spare room.

There, Ethan was finally snoozing, next to my husband.

Bedtime had taken so long that Steve, 37, had fallen asleep too.

I didn't blame him.

Getting our eldest down every night was exhausting.

It'd been this way ever since he went into a bed, three years ago.

Before our second son, Aaron, now three, was born, I spent hours sitting on Ethan's bedroom floor with my big baby bump, waiting for him to finally drop off.

We hoped it was just a phase but, if anything, he grew worse.

Decorating the bedroom into

his F1 fantasy felt like the last roll of the dice, but even that hadn't worked.

Why? Because his bed was only big

enough for him. In the spare room, he could slumber next to Daddy on the double bed.

The following night was much the same.

'Goodnight, Ethie,' I heard Steve say, after finishing reading to him.

I pictured him lying beside our firstborn, knew he'd have left the bedside lamp on.

'STEVE WAS HELD HOSTAGE'

But Ethan tossed and turned.

'I'm thirsty,' he moaned.

A few minutes passed.

'I'm hungry.' He'd had warm milk and cornflakes for supper.

'It's time for sleep now, Ethie,' Steve repeated patiently.

Luckily for me, Aaron fell asleep quickly after breastfeeding, so I went downstairs to tidy up.



My boy racer Ethan is in no rush to sleep

But an hour later, Steve was still being held hostage upstairs.

I slumped on the sofa, alone, to watch an episode of *Ozark* on Netflix.

Steve would end up spending the night in the spare room, while Ethan would climb in with me around two in the morning.

I missed my evenings with my husband. We rarely got a moment together.

Sometimes I gave Steve a break.

Lying next to Ethan, he'd gently play with my hair, just like he did as a baby.

'Why don't you try sleeping in your bed?' I asked him.

'No, Mummy, I'm scared of the dark,' he whispered, wide-eyed.

'That's why I got you that dinosaur lamp,' I said.

'I don't like being on my own, Mummy,' Ethan replied.

It's sad, really.

He needs more confidence, and frankly, me and Steve need more time together. But how?

Lindsey Stokoe, 38, Harrogate



Rachel Mole, 25, mum to Amelia, 11 months old, says, 'You could try some apps, like Moshi

Mindfulness or Sleep Pillow, or one for white noise. Or try giving Ethan "big boy" responsibilities, such as getting a soft toy ready for bed to keep him company. You could also set a timer to signal "no more drinks" after a point.'

Are you a mum in need of advice?

If you're in need of some friendly advice from another mum, email us at stories@realpeoplemag.co.uk with a picture of you and your troublesome sprog.

Win!

★ Reveal and rescue an enchanted friend with new Scruff-a-Luvs Fantasy! These abandoned, fantastical Scruff-a-Luvs are lost, scruffy and huddled in a ball. Soothe them with a warm bath, dry them and groom their fur with the included comb to discover what magical pet they really are! Will you find a Pegacorn, Griffin or Dragon? Two to win, each worth £19.99. scruff-a-luvs.co.uk



Win!

★ No time to monkey around – these Bananas are ready for picking! Peel open the scented skin to reveal a cute collectible Crushie character with accessories. With 24 to collect, who will you get? Five lucky winners will each receive four Single Bananas, a Bunch of 3 Bananas and a Bananas Playset complete with slide, merry-go-round and flower tree for your Crushie friends, worth over £45. bandai.co.uk



Win!

★ Easy to carry at just 2.8kg, the fuss-free Astral Car Seat from Ickle Bubba can be installed using a standard seat belt, making it easy for Mum and Dad to switch between vehicles, or put in Grandma's car. With removable fabric covers, leakages are easy to clean too. One winner will receive the Astral Car Seat, worth £59. icklebubba.com



HOW TO ENTER

For your chance to win, email: mum2mum@realpeoplemag.co.uk Bananas Toy Bundle, Car Seat or Scruff-a-Luvs in the subject line and include your name, address and phone number. Entries close on 24 September 2020.

Personal info will only be used to process your entry. See p43 for T&Cs.

Real people 27

AS TOLD TO SU KARNEY

Mum KNOWS BEST

OUR PANEL OF MUMS IS HAPPY TO HELP



Natalie Ahmed, 35, mum to Lucas, four, says, 'We've had success with

reward charts, fully explaining what good behaviour it is that we are looking for and what he can look forward to. Ethan might respond well to this with him being old enough to understand how to earn the rewards. If Aaron had a chart too, it might spark a bit of healthy competition!'



Andriana Plester, 31, mum to Louiza, seven, and twins, Theo

and Sydnie, three, says, 'First off, I'd like to give you and Steve a big hug! Have you considered letting Ethan and Aaron share a room? There's almost five years between my girls and they adore bunk beds! It would give Ethan the company he craves and give you two your evenings back.'

WIN!

Michael Kors perfume



If you like to smell nice but ain't got a Scooby, you cannot go wrong with Michael Kors Sexy Ruby! (Somebody tell me why this isn't on the perfume's promotional posters. I know, right?!) Just close your eyes and imagine your nose hairs being stroked at first by davana and pepper, before Indian jasmine sambac comes in followed by base notes of moss crystal and cashmere woods... Ha! Me neither!

But seriously, Sexy Ruby is an intoxicating combination of juicy raspberry and apricot, rose petals, orange blossom and vanilla that will leave you sparkling with sensuality – a perfect match for its fiery and multi-faceted bottle. Lush.

We have a 50ml bottle to give away, here. Simply solve my *Boxing Match* puzzle for your chance to win...

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| S | T | U | | N | E | E | | Y | O | R | | G | U | E | | K | C | B |
| E | L | | | A | R | K | | S | H | | | P | | | | H | O | L |
| S | P | B | | V | | | | A | T | | | C | R | I | | T | N | R |

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| N | E | L | | | | | | | | | | | | | | N | P | |

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| T | S | E | | S | T | A | | P | W | | | T | E | L | | C | H | O |
| U | W | A | | | | | | R | I | C | | A | N | A | | | | |
| R | O | M | | M | I | N | | L | S | | | I | R | C | | | | |

BOXING MATCH

Here's a crossword solution that's been broken up and turned into a jigsaw puzzle. Can you put it back together? Three pieces have been left in their original positions to help you start. When you're done, the letters in the yellow boxes, read in order, will spell out your prize answer. See p43 to enter.



FOLLOW FLO TO PAGE 30

ANIMAL cracke

Baked Alaskan

Mandy was recovering from coronavirus – but why was her malamute coughing?



My hand flew forward, but too late – the mug dropped to the floor, tea spilling everywhere.

'When will I learn?' I muttered to myself. Couldn't put mugs on the coffee table.

Why? One swish of our Alaskan malamute Mushka's tail and they were a goner.

December 2019 and today's tail-wagging excitement was my husband Vernon, 55, walking into the room.

Like he did 100 times a day, but Mushka was soppy and daft.

Meeting him as a pup at his breeder's house in 2010, he fixed his big brown eyes on me.

'How are you, Glacier Boy?' I asked. His Kennel Club name – not the easiest to shout in the park.

So Vernon came up with Mushka...

His breed was more used to pulling sledges in the Arctic than lazing in our front room in Gravesend, Kent.

But he'd tap into his ancestral roots by shredding a tissue to snow!

Late March this year, I fell ill.

The big C – coronavirus.

'I must have caught it doing errands in town last week,' I croaked to Vernon.

My throat burnt, as if a chilli seed was lodged there, my lungs felt compressed and I lost my sense of taste and smell.

And the fatigue – just going to the loo from the bed wiped me out.

One day, I ventured to the living

PET of the WEEK

NAME: Roland
AGE: Three
BREED: Dumbo rat
LIKES: Naps, tummy scratches and Cheerios
DISLIKES: Baths
BAD HABITS: Chewing curtains
OWNER: Reid Edwards, Manchester



Let me tell you a tail!

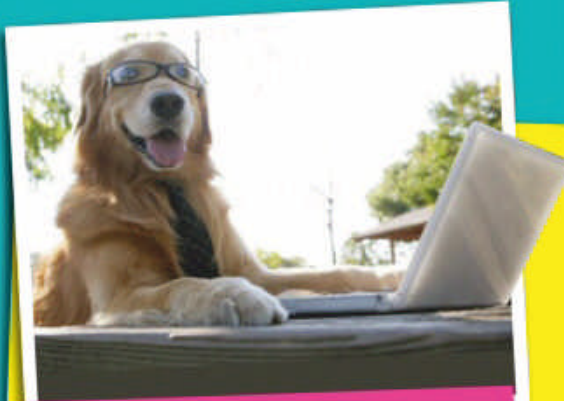
RS!

with Jane Common



Send us your animal stories, funny pics & pets of the week – there's £25 for each one we print!

Write to Real People or email letters@realpeoplemagazine.co.uk



ASK NIGEL

Real People's resident 'doggie doctor', Nigel, answers your pet's problems

Dear Nigel,

Cough! What's all this I hear about coronavirus in pets?

Benny, Lowestoft

Dear Benny,

Don't panic, only a very small number of pets (around 15) across the world have tested positive for coronavirus, including a cat in the UK who'd had close contact with Covid-positive owners. It's thought that some pets can show mild symptoms so, if you are concerned, visit the vet. There's no evidence pets transmit the virus to humans. For more, log on to pdsa.org.uk.

Love, Nigel xxx

Nigel was helped by PDSA vet Rebecca Ashman. The PDSA is the UK's leading veterinary charity. To donate to the PDSA, visit pdsa.org.uk/get-involved

Furry & funny



'My cat Zafi loves to snuggle up with her boyfriend – Bagpuss!'

Esther Chilton, Newbury, Berks.

Get me one!

Let's face it, our pets' behaviour can be puzzling – like Mushka's obsession with snotty old tissues! So why not go the whole hog and make an actual puzzle of their faces? Sales of jigsaws, which soared during lockdown, show no sign of abating and the Personalised Wooden Photo Puzzle is made from maple veneer and comes in a tin that fits through the letterbox. Buy yours for £24 from propergoose.com – just don't let the cat sit on it when you're nearly finished, you'll go to pieces!



Real people 29

Little 'Glacier Boy' melted my heart

room to find Mushka with a tissue in his mouth.

No! I chucked my used ones in a bag on the coffee table but Mushka had obviously delved inside...

Delighted with his prize, he bounded through to the kitchen.

Vernon plucked it from him, but I was beside myself.

'What if he catches Covid?' I wailed.

But, as days turned into a week, I relaxed. I was recovering and Mushka seemed fine.

Then, two weeks to the day Mushka nabbed the tissue, he started coughing up white foam. My stomach lurched with fear...

'Vet's,' Vernon and I agreed.

Because of Covid, the vet collected Mushka from the surgery car park.

'Could it be coronavirus?' I asked. 'He chewed one of my tissues when I had it.'

'No, dogs can't get that,' the vet replied, leading Mushka inside for an examination.

He diagnosed lungworm, prescribing anti-parasitic tablets.

I wasn't convinced – less so as, back home, Mushka's coughing continued.

'Fancy some cheese?' I asked. But he had no appetite, flopped on the floor.

Two days later, we returned to the vet's.

'He has the exact same symptoms I had,' I said.

'I'll do an X-ray and ultrasound,' the vet said.

Back home, we waited for news.

'Mushka's lungs are full of fluid,' the vet rang six hours later. 'A tumour, possibly, or heart problems – he's 10 and perhaps the kindest thing...'

'No,' I yelled, angry. 'We aren't giving up on him. Can't he have steroids?'

That's what I'd read they gave Covid patients in hospital.

His prognosis was poor

'His prognosis is poor, Mrs Hayes,' the vet said.

'I want him to have steroids,' I demanded.

When we collected poor Mushka he didn't recognise us.

He flopped around on wobbly legs so Vernon lifted him into the car – all 64 kilos of him.

Back home, we gave him his prescribed six steroid pills a day, wrapped up in ham.

Within a day he was brighter – lifting his head, interested in what was going on.

'He's coughing less,' I said to Vernon.

Next day he nabbed a Chocolate Weeto from the floor.

'Touch wood he's on the mend,' I said cautiously.

It was a gradual

thing but, every day, Mushka coughed less and ate more.

So when his fortnight-long course of medication finished I rang the vet.

'Can Mushka have a repeat prescription?' I asked.

'They're working?' the vet gasped. 'I'm amazed.'

He prescribed more steroids and, within a month, we had Mushka back.

Our big, soppy, clumsy boy...

His tail could swish over as many coffee mugs as he liked for all I cared!

'Mushka, we've survived,' I cheered.

A few weeks later I was watching *Good Morning Britain* when they mentioned a cat catching Covid-19!

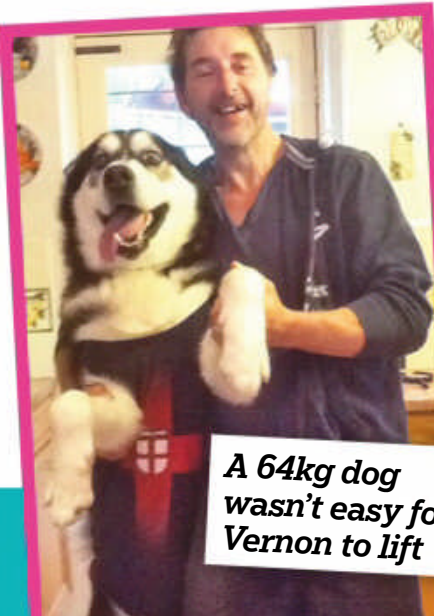
'Vernon,' I yelled. 'Come and watch this. I was right – if cats get it, why can't dogs?'

So I emailed a journalist and soon Mushka's story was in all the papers. Hopefully, a cat or dog owner reading it might recognise the symptoms and ask for steroids too.

If their outlook is that bleak, what harm could it do?

Coronavirus is stealing so much of our lives – don't let it take our beloved pets too.

Mandy Hayes, 60, Gravesend, Kent



A 64kg dog wasn't easy for Vernon to lift

YOUR STARS



HOROSCOPES
for the week of
10-16 September

with *Jenny Blume*

ARIES 21 March-20 April
Keep an eye out for new friends, especially through work or a local organisation – the emotional rapport will be immediate.

TIME TO TRY: Dusting off some old exercise gear.

TAURUS 21 April-21 May
Creative types are in for a treat, with inspiration flowing effortlessly. On all fronts, activity around your home is increasing.

TIME TO TRY: Keeping your kitchen pantry well-stocked.

GEMINI 22 May-21 June
Slow down! With the sun illuminating your home and family sector, it's time you started to indulge in a spot of cocooning.

TIME TO TRY: Using your creative flair to make money.

CANCER 22 June-23 July
You may be buzzing with ideas, but don't take on too much, for complex family matters may need your full attention.

TIME TO TRY: Saying yes to a friend's not-so-silly idea.

LEO 24 July-23 August
Hello Venus! It's all about indulgence this month, so start spoiling yourself. Buy some new clothes or plan a long lunch.

TIME TO TRY: Thinking before you speak, not after.

VIRGO 24 Aug-23 Sep
Jupiter's forward trajectory should attract more love and joy into your life – and more opportunities for romance.

TIME TO TRY: Sampling a new pastime or fitness craze.

LIBRA 24 Sep-23 Oct
Feel the winds changing? Before next Thursday's new moon, embrace some positive habits – or ditch a bad one.

TIME TO TRY: Adding more vibrant colour to your home.

★ GUESS the STAR SIGN

Strictly's Bruno Tonioli will appear on this year's show, albeit from his LA home. PHEW! His sign doesn't mind breaking the rules – especially when it's for a cause. Lofty ideals? Maybe, but these passionate souls keep us accountable. What sign is he?

See foot of page to find out if you're right.



SCORPIO 24 Oct-22 Nov
Need to let off steam? Revisit a pastime that works up a sweat or set yourself a fitness challenge. You'll power along!

TIME TO TRY: Investing in some good walking shoes.

SAGITTARIUS 23 Nov-21 Dec
All for one and one for all! Shared projects should bring out the best in you – just don't juggle too much.

TIME TO TRY: Popping the bubbly thanks to Jupiter's shift.

CAPRICORN 22 Dec-20 Jan
With Mars revving up your chart's home sector, physical projects should keep you feeling cool, calm and collected.

TIME TO TRY: Switching rooms around over the weekend.

AQUARIUS 21 Jan-19 Feb
You're entering a period of transformation, not just externally but mentally, too. Why not learn more about mindfulness?

TIME TO TRY: Downloading a relaxation app on your phone.

PISCES 20 February-20 March
It looks like fun for you! Jupiter's directional shift should liven things up on the social scene; it might spark romance, too!

TIME TO TRY: Drawing up a budget that you can stick to.

PICTURES: GETTY

WIN
£25!

Lost In Moo-sic

'Don't think I can't feel that there's something wrong. You've been the sweetest part of my life for so long, I look in your eyes, there's a distant light, And you and I know there'll be a storm tonight, This is getting serious...'



For your chance to get your hands on the cash, simply answer the prize question below. See page 43 for full entry details.

What song am I singing?

- A My Heart Will Go On B Think Twice
C The Power Of Love

WIN
£25!

MOO
AM I?

For your chance to win, look at the clues below and then answer the prize question. See page 43 to enter.

- ★ I was born 22 August 1978 in London
- ★ I am a writer, actor, chat show host and quizmaster
- ★ I do like to sing a bit of karaoke – in my car!

Moo am I?

- A Keith Lemon B James Corden
C Peter Kay

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*This promotion is only available to new customers paying by credit/debit card. Your first 10 minutes will be billed at 29p per minute. Thereafter you will pay the standard rate of £1.50 per minute. The 10 minutes for £2.90 is subject to change. Please call the 0800 number for further information. Callers must be 18+ and have bill payer's permission. For entertainment purposes only. All calls are recorded. PhonePayPlus regulated SP: Stream Live Ltd, SE1 1JA, 0800 0673 330

★
ANSWER:
THE
STAR
SIGN
IS
SAGITTARIUS



FOLLOW FLO TO PAGE 31

FLORENCE'S TAKE YOUR PICK!

I've rustled up a great competition here, where one of you lucky lot will get to choose whether to bag the best prize I could get my hooves on – or accept my cash offer.

So, have a good look at what's up for grabs and see if it's something you absolutely must have – or if my Big Deal Money Pot is more like something you're after! And don't worry – you've plenty of time to think about it. If you're a winner, I'll give you a call and you can make your mind up then...

For your chance to win, simply answer my prize question below. See p43 to enter.

Who is the host of the newly revived Supermarket Sweep?

A) Rylan Clark-Neal B) Alan Carr

What will you choose – trolley dash or take the cash?

GRAB THE GEAR...

Just imagine doing your supermarket big shop for free! It'd be like a trolley dash without the destruction, injuries and panic buying!

Well, guess what? We're giving away a £300 gift card to use in the store of your choice. So, whether you're true to Tesco, addicted to Asda, or serious about Sainsbury's, everyone's a winner.

And, of course, you're not obliged to be sensible – no way! If you want to go mental in Morrisons or loony in Lidl, please be our guests. Dine on fillet steak for a fortnight, drink champagne instead of tea all day, or buy a new telly, microwave, kettle, etc – it's up to you.

Simply solve my prize question to win...



PICTURES: GETTY

...OR GO FOR THE CASH!

BIG DEAL MONEY POT

This week:
£250



FOLLOW FLO TO PAGE 34

REAL CRIME

A 'happy' Aaron had
a driving lesson
after the break-in

MURDER, SIGNAL, MANOEUVRE

While pregnant **Kelly** lay bleeding to death in her own bed, her killer had fled... to take a driving lesson

Holding a blue and silver *It's a boy* balloon, Kelly Fauvrelle couldn't hide her excitement.

She was six months pregnant and counting down until August 2019 when her firstborn would arrive. He was a boy, she knew that, and she had a name ready.

As well as the balloons, she was holding a cake, iced with the message, *See you soon Riley!*

But, as Kelly, 25, would have been the first to admit, the situation was complicated.

Kelly, a postal worker, lived with her family in Thornton Heath, South London, and was no longer with the baby's dad.

At first she and Aaron McKenzie, 25, had been great – they'd bonded over their shared love of motorbikes.

On her Facebook profile page, under her name, Kelly had written, *4 wheels move the body... but... 2 wheels move the soul...*

She had bought herself a black and green Kawasaki for her birthday in May 2018, proudly posting on Facebook, *It's finally here !!!! Happy bday meeee xxxx.*

Kelly was a beautiful girl, could have had her pick when it came to men, but Aaron, a crane operator, got the nod of approval from her brothers who took to him right away, nicknaming him 'Ty'.

The pair were together for a year, but by the start of 2019, Kelly was no longer happy with Aaron.

She felt the relationship had become toxic and wanted out.

Besides, she'd become close to a post office

colleague, Rolander Chigwada, who she was falling for.

Then came the complicated bit – after dumping Aaron she discovered that she was pregnant with his baby. Kelly was delighted about becoming a mum, but knew parenting with Aaron would be tricky.

He still couldn't accept that the relationship was over.

On 11 February, when Kelly had her 12-week scan, Aaron messaged, *I'm starting to feel not needed not wanted unimportant and lost I don't know what to do anymore I really am breaking and my anxiety only makes it worse and I know I gotta be strong for u and our baby but I don't know where to turn or what to do no going forward I just feel so lost I cant express it I really need your help through this please.*

His desperate WhatsApp messages continued, *Please don't give up on me tho as you and our baby is all I got to really live for I really want us to be a happy family together that's all my main focus and I be trying to prove that to you also but please don't give up.*

In stark contrast, Kelly's reply was blunt and to the point, *Until u get the fact I do not want to be with you anymore I will no longer*

**Wolf in
sheep's
clothing:
Aaron**

KILLER

...speak or see u unless it's about the baby.. I will not be forced to be with you.

She hammered the point home: *I do not want to be with u period.*

Aaron would be part of the baby's life, she assured him.

I want u to be part of our kids life as much as u can and I want us to be able to communicate with each other in regards to the baby and I promise I will never deny you of your child but anything else is over.

Although she was secretive about her relationship with Rolander, not even telling most of her family – and certainly not Aaron – she and her new man were getting serious.

From spring through early summer she was spending more time with Rolander, who she called 'King'.



**Kelly with
her birthday
motorbike**

PUT TO SLEEP



Kelly was so excited about meeting Riley

VICTIMS

She sprang out of bed and rushed downstairs behind Kelly's brother Stephan, who'd also woken. But she heard Kelly's sister Melissa calling to Stephan, 'Don't let Mum down the stairs.'

What was going on...? Despite Stephan's efforts to block her path, Jennifer went into Kelly's room. Melissa was bent over Kelly, on the phone to emergency services.

In May, he gave her trainers for her 26th birthday.

She told her sister Melissa about him and in June she was wearing a bracelet he had given her that said *Queen*.

By the end of June 2019, Kelly was getting prepared for the baby.

She was still living with her mum Jennifer, sister and two brothers, and they had converted the dining room into a bedroom and nursery for her.

The cot was already up in her bedroom and she'd been gathering all the cute baby bits, ready for the August arrival.

On Friday 28 June, Kelly went to bed happy.

She had love in her life, a new baby on the way. Just seven weeks to go until Riley arrived.

At 3.30am on the Sunday morning her mum Jennifer woke with a start.

She heard panicked cries coming from downstairs. Was that Kelly? Had she gone into premature labour?

There was blood coming from Kelly's mouth. Had she bitten her tongue, Jennifer thought?

But there was more blood, a lot more... Kelly had been stabbed, 21 times in all.

Arriving at the scene, paramedics couldn't save her.

It was a gut-wrenching tragedy. Kelly had so much to live for.

And that one glimmer of hope, baby Riley, was all the family could cling to.

The medics performed an emergency Caesarean there and then, in a desperate bid to save him.

Then they whisked the tiny, 33-week newborn to hospital.

Police established that an intruder had come through the patio doors and into the dining room that Kelly was using as a bedroom.

Now they had to scour CCTV footage to track down this monster.

Who could have done this to a woman who was so clearly

heavily pregnant? Kelly's family were left reeling by the savage death and sudden loss – and there was Riley, that poor motherless baby, fighting for his life on a ventilator.

Aaron, who'd been having a driving lesson at 8.30am that morning, came to the hospital to see his son.

But four days later, Riley died. The brutal attack had taken two lives.

But while Aaron appeared bereft, the evidence took an interesting turn.

CCTV cameras captured him at the scene when Kelly was

There was more blood, a lot more

killed. It showed him walking along the dark streets before he vanished inside Kelly's house.

Eleven minutes and 20 seconds later he was running from the scene. He then appeared on his Yamaha R1 that was parked in a nearby street.

He, of course, knew the house, knew exactly how easy it was to sneak in through Kelly's patio door that was left open in the evening.

Why had he killed her? A digital trail had the answer to that. Jealousy.

Before the killing, Aaron had spent over an hour scouring Kelly's email account.

Finding an online receipt for men's clothing she'd bought for her new man, he flew into a jealous rage.

He'd gone to her house, killed her, and his own baby.

Then just hours later, at 8.30am, he was taking a driving lesson.

Murder, signal, manoeuvre... His instructor said he seemed fine, happy even.

At his trial at the Old Bailey in July this year, he pleaded not guilty to the murder of Kelly, the manslaughter of his baby son and possession of an offensive weapon. Instead he invented a killer called 'Mike'.

He said Kelly was in debt to this 'Mike' over a tobacco deal and that he'd killed her in revenge. Aaron even claimed to have extracted a confession from the mystery man.

The jury didn't believe his lies and after just two hours of deliberation they convicted him on all charges.

Kelly's family wept as the jury foreman returned the guilty verdicts.

In a victim impact statement Kelly's dad Jean Fauvrelle said, 'Aaron McKenzie's evil act has devastated our lives.'

'My heart physically aches but those words do not feel sufficient.'

He said his daughter and grandson had been 'stolen', adding, 'A baby comes into this world defenceless and it's up to his mother and father to love and protect him and give him the world. Instead his father took away his world.'

Judge Mark Lucraft gave Aaron a life sentence with a minimum term of 35 years,

saying, 'As is clear from the course of the trial you made no genuine expression or statement of remorse.'

'The killing of Kelly was particularly violent and extreme.'

'Your post-death conduct involved you masquerading as an innocent person.'

Aaron gave the judge a thumbs-up as he was sent down while Kelly's family wept in court.

One of them shouted out at him, 'Yes. I hope you have a good time in jail. Baby killer.'

The man who had insisted he wanted 'to be a happy family together' had slain the mother of his child, killed his own son, yet had the gall to play the grieving dad.

A wolf in sheep's clothing.

Kelly had promised never to deny him his child.

But that wasn't enough.

If he couldn't have her, no one would.



CCTV captured Aaron near Kelly's home, then later fleeing



The excited mum-to-be with her nephew

PUZZLE TRAIL

JUST FOR FUN!

Give your brain a boost and pit your wits against these testing teasers. See p35 for the answers.

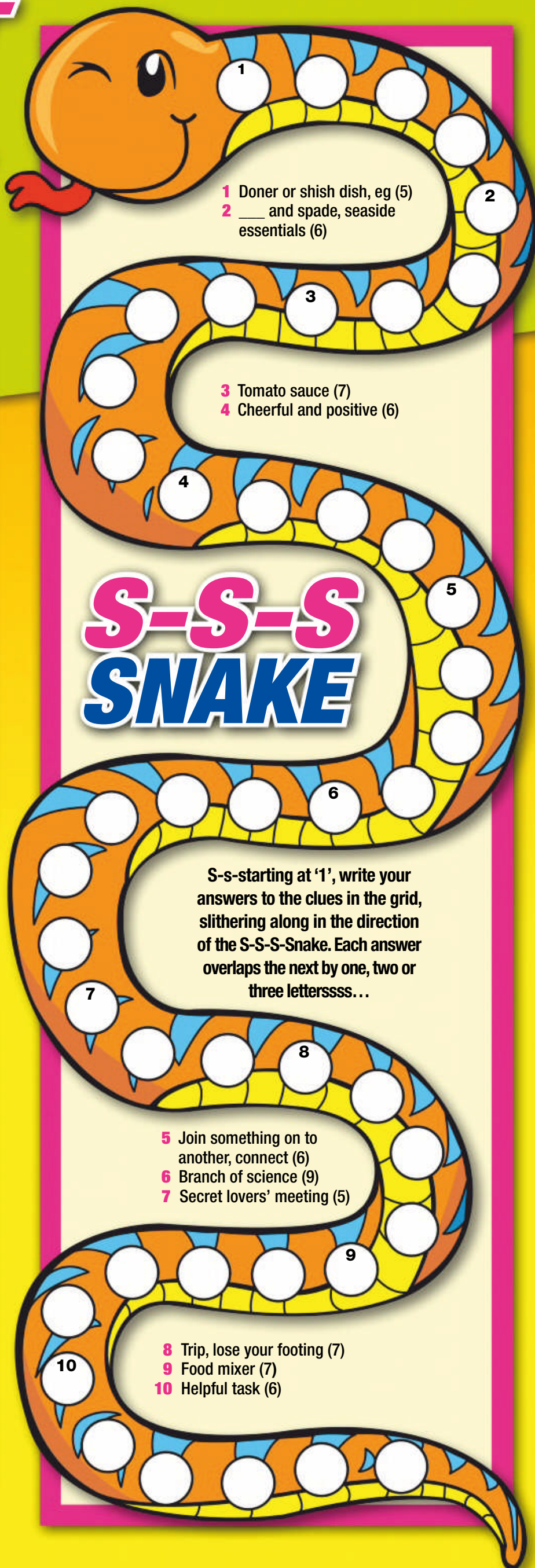


I-SPY

Can you spot six differences between these two photos from ITV's new Saturday night gameshow *Rolling In It*? As this one's just for fun, see if you're right on p35.



PICTURE: ITV



- 1 Doner or shish dish, eg (5)
- 2 ___ and spade, seaside essentials (6)

- 3 Tomato sauce (7)
- 4 Cheerful and positive (6)

S-S-S SNAKE

S-s-starting at '1', write your answers to the clues in the grid, slithering along in the direction of the S-S-S-Snake. Each answer overlaps the next by one, two or three letterssss...

- 5 Join something on to another, connect (6)
- 6 Branch of science (9)
- 7 Secret lovers' meeting (5)

- 8 Trip, lose your footing (7)
- 9 Food mixer (7)
- 10 Helpful task (6)

ITSY BITSY

Everybody loves a mini break, right? Well here's two of 'em! In this top grid look for *Grease* characters. All are hidden, except one – which one?

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| E | F | G | Z | B | G | C | S | H | M | P | C |
| C | I | J | S | U | H | A | Q | A | E | V | H |
| L | J | K | L | A | I | M | R | H | I | F | U |
| O | M | Z | C | C | N | T | M | S | Z | D | Y |
| M | U | H | K | I | Y | D | O | X | T | O | N |
| S | A | V | Q | P | N | N | Y | M | U | O | N |
| R | I | Z | Z | O | N | E | A | W | P | D | A |
| V | I | D | K | Y | J | W | K | Q | O | Y | D |

| | |
|----------|--------|
| CHA CHA | MARTY |
| DANNY | PUTZIE |
| DOODY | RIZZO |
| FRENCHY | SANDY |
| KENICKIE | SONNY |

TEENY WEENY

In this grid look for the yummy chocolate bars. All are hidden, except one – which one? Answers to both tiny teasers are below.

| | |
|------------|--------|
| BOUNTY | MARS |
| CRUNCHIE | TWIRL |
| DAIRY MILK | TWIX |
| FLAKE | WISPA |
| KIT KAT | YORKIE |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B | T | N | Y | E | U | T | M | A | R | S | P |
| V | O | W | G | R | I | H | A | A | L | K | I |
| B | M | U | I | A | Z | H | P | K | Z | K | C |
| D | U | E | N | X | Q | S | C | R | T | R | E |
| Z | V | K | J | T | I | Y | W | N | B | I | J |
| J | Z | A | T | W | Y | K | B | Q | U | T | K |
| B | A | L | J | F | W | U | T | W | I | R | L |
| G | Q | F | C | F | E | I | K | R | O | Y | C |

NAME GAME

Can you fill in the missing letters in each grid to make eight different nine-letter words, whilst at the same time revealing the name of a British prime minister, reading down both pink columns? The blue column is also left blank – just to make things a little trickier! Check your answer below.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| A | N | I | | O | | I | | Y |
| L | O | G | | R | | T | | M |
| L | I | B | | A | | I | | N |
| S | P | A | | H | | T | | I |
| C | O | W | | R | | I | | E |
| O | V | E | | N | | G | | T |
| S | W | E | | T | | N | | R |
| C | U | S | | O | | A | | Y |

Piece of cake!

Fill the grid using the numbers from 1 to 9 only. Each number must appear once in every column, row and 3x3 square.



Can you beat the clock?

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | | 3 | | 9 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 2 |
| | 2 | 9 | | 5 | 3 | | 1 | |
| 5 | 1 | 8 | | 2 | 7 | | 6 | |
| | | | 7 | | | | | 1 |
| 7 | 4 | 6 | | | | 3 | 8 | 5 |
| 3 | | | 5 | 6 | 4 | | | 9 |
| 8 | 6 | 2 | 1 | | | 5 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | 2 | 8 | | 7 | 9 | |
| 9 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | | |

Not so easy!

Fill the grid using the numbers from 1 to 9 only. Each number must appear once in every column, row and 3x3 square.



Can you beat the clock?

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | | 6 | 1 | | | | | 8 |
| 4 | | 5 | 7 | | | | | 3 |
| 7 | | | 9 | | 8 | | | 6 |
| 3 | 7 | 9 | | 4 | | 8 | | |
| | | 2 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 7 | | |
| | | 1 | | 7 | | 2 | 5 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 | | 5 | 7 | | | | 1 |
| | 9 | | | 2 | | | | 5 |
| | 6 | | 4 | 3 | 9 | | | 8 |

PRIZE ANSWERS FOR ISSUE 30

P9 – The Whopper!
Prize answer: Richard Ayoade

P10 – Roulette
Prize answer: Conkers

P24 – Go And Arrow
Prize answer: Treats

P50 – Boxing Match
Prize answer: Letter

P52 – Playing The Field
Prize answer: Miss

P60 – Prize Question 1
Prize answer: A) Rowan Atkinson

P62 – Lost In Moo-Sic
Prize answer: B) Livin' On A Prayer

P62 – Cow-A-Bingo!
Prize answer: 26

P63 – Take Your Pick!
Prize answer: A) Oxford

P65 – X Factor
Prize answer: 16

P66 – Small Wonder
Prize answer: Stream

P66 – Nothing For A Pair
Prize answer: Dinner Date

P66 – Nice Little Earner
Prize answer: Revisited

P66 – I'm Too Hex-y!
Prize answer: Name

P70 – Diabolical
Prize answer: The Angel, Islington



Just for FUN SOLUTIONS!

P5 – Reader Puzzle 1
Black hole, Yellow belly, Blue moon, Pink Lady, Green room, Red herring, Grey matter, Brown sugar, Orange juice, Gold dust, Silver fox, White noise.
Extra answer: Purple

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| U | H | E | N | R | I | B | G | D |
| B | I | N | G | D | H | E | R | U |
| D | R | G | E | U | B | I | H | N |
| I | E | U | D | H | G | R | N | B |
| H | G | B | U | N | R | D | E | I |
| R | N | D | B | I | E | G | U | H |
| G | D | H | I | E | N | U | B | R |
| N | B | I | R | G | U | H | D | E |
| E | U | R | H | B | D | N | I | G |

P5 – Reader Puzzle 2

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 2 |
| 4 | 2 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 7 |
| 5 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 3 |
| 2 | 9 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 1 |
| 7 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 5 |
| 3 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 9 |
| 8 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 4 |
| 1 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 6 |
| 9 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 8 |

P35 – Easy

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 7 |
| 4 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 9 |
| 7 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 2 |
| 3 | 7 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 6 |
| 6 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 4 |
| 8 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 2 | 5 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 1 |
| 1 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 5 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 8 |

P35 – Tough



Well done to Georgia & Rebecca – £30 on its way!

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 5 |
| 5 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 3 |
| 1 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 2 |
| 2 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| 6 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 4 |

P46 – Just For The Hell Of It!
Adele songs: Chasing Pavements, Hometown Glory, Set Fire To The Rain, Skyfall, Someone Like You.

PLAYING the FIELD

IT'S TOUGH!

WIN £50!

In the field below is a herd of 10 cows. But the grass is so long it's tricky to see them. Can you help Flo work out where all her friends are so that she can get them back in time for milking? We've placed some cow parts to help you get started.

HINT: Think Battleships!

HELPFUL TIPS!

- Cows are stood in horizontal and vertical positions only.
- No cow is next to another in any direction, including diagonally.
- Misses are marked right the way around one of the hits we've given you, so there's some grassy boxes you can write in straight away.
- Numbers at the heads of rows and columns tell you how many parts of a cow are hidden in them. So, if you see a '0' at the top of any column or to the left of any row, you can grass out the whole of that one, as there are no 'hits'.
- Don't forget to cross off the cows below as you 'hit' them.

Oh, where for art COW?

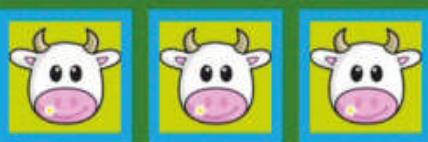
For your chance to win, simply tell us:
Is the pink square a 'hit' (cow part) or a 'miss' (grass)?
See p43 to enter.



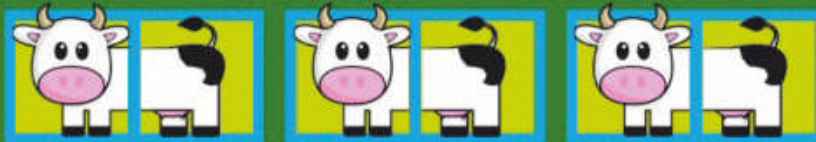
| | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 7 | 0 |
|---|----------|---|-------|-------|---|----------|----------|-------|----------|-------|
| 0 | | | | | | | | Grass | Grass | Grass |
| 7 | Cow Head | | | | | Cow Eye | | Grass | Cow Head | Grass |
| 0 | | | | | | | | Grass | Grass | Grass |
| 3 | | | Grass | Grass | | | Cow Body | | | |
| 2 | | | Grass | Grass | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 0 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | Cow Head | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | |

WHO YOU NEED TO LOOK FOR:

4x



3x



2x



1x



TIME TO KILL

Crime for your coffee break

A theatre play after-party ended in a real-life horror...

As she threw her bag down on the kitchen table, Jessie said to her parents, 'They ruined it.'

The 19-year-old had been to the wrap party for an amateur production of *Fiddler on the Roof* – what everyone thought would be the biggest thing in town that summer.

Jessie wanted to go to the party with her mates, but there she was hit on by Randy and Jerry, two 40-something guys in the production who crept her out, so she went home again.

'Why do they have to do that?' she asked her mum, Joy Blodgett.

'I know, honey,' said Joy. 'But it's late. Go to bed.'

At 8am on 14 July 2013 Joy and Jessie's dad Buck went to work, leaving their daughter sleeping.

At 12.30pm Joy came home for lunch and found the house silent.

She peeked round Jessie's bedroom door...

Joy sobbed to the 911 operator, 'My daughter is blue. I went to wake her up. She's cold. She's got strangulation marks.'

Honey. What happened to you? Oh, honey.'

Police called Buck at his office and he rushed home.

Police grilled Dan over an attack on a jogger

Jessie Blodgett had briefly dated Daniel Bartelt

Bloodstained rope was found in the bins

Jessie lay in bed with the ligature burn

SHOWSTOPPER

'Is she responding?' he asked Joy and she burst into tears. 'She's gone.'

Jessie's friend Jacqueline saw the squad cars and texted her.

Getting no reply, she texted their close circle of friends, including Jessie's ex-boyfriend Dan Bartelt, and they came over to comfort Buck and Joy.

But Dan got a phone call and had to rush away...

Jessie's diary contained a final entry that night about how the older guys had upset her.

But, though they were creepy, they hadn't killed her.

Later, detectives got a call from a neighbouring police department.

Two days before Jessie's murder a jogger was violently attacked by a knifeman.

'I somehow managed to grab the knife from him,' she'd said. 'I thought I was gonna die.'

Her hand was dripping with blood but she got his registration plate as he screeched off.

It came up linked to a boy called Daniel Bartelt.

It was at Jessie's parents' house that he took the call from police.

He admitted trying to scare the

jogger by leaping out at her, but said that was all.

The neighbouring police department charged him with assault but in the interview he'd mentioned where he'd answered their call, so they contacted police in Hartford, Wisconsin, investigating Jessie's murder.

A trawl through her diary showed she and Dan had dated briefly. But Dan blurted that she'd never let him have sex with her.

He said he was shocked that Jessie had been raped. But police had never released that detail...

CCTV caught Dan at a local park throwing stuff into rubbish dumpsters the day of Jessie's murder.

Luckily the police got there before the binmen and found bloodstained ropes and a ball gag brushed with both Jessie's and Dan's DNA.

A search of Dan's room in his parents' house found internet searches on serial killers.

One showed how to rape and strangle a woman then wash away the evidence in the bath.

Joy had said that when she found Jessie, her hair was wet...

Joy and Buck couldn't believe it. Dan and Jessie had such an innocent love affair.

They liked him so much. He'd even hugged them, the day of Jessie's murder when he came over.

But it had to be Dan.

In 2014 he was charged with first degree murder.

The prosecution case was that Dan had crept in the house after Jessie's parents had left, leaving the door unlocked.

He raped and strangled Jessie, washed her dead body to eliminate evidence and put her back to bed as if she was sleeping.

Then he went to the park to dispose of the murder kit, not realising he'd be seen on CCTV.

In October he was sentenced to life without parole.

He told the judge, 'This orange jumpsuit and these shackles don't make me guilty,' to which the judge said, 'You're right, Dan. They don't. The evidence makes you guilty.'

Dan never admitted what he'd done or why.

Jessie's traumatised dad Buck said, 'I couldn't tell her that I was sorry for not being there in her time of need, which is the number one job of a dad.'

He speaks now in schools, prisons, universities about violence against women, as part of the Love>Hate Project the family have set up.

It's the legacy of an aspiring actor robbed of her final bow.

Watch The Acting on Evil episode of Murdered By Morning on 22 September at 9pm

CRIME+ INVESTIGATION

Real people 37



WIN! A tastebud- tingling...



Chocolate fountain!

It's no secret that I'm mad about anything made from cocoa beans, so when a chocolate-themed prize comes my way, I'm all over it! Here it is: a chocolate fountain, if you don't mind!

Now, just to be clear, folks, this isn't something for your garden – unless you're Willy Wonka! The Andrew James Premium Stainless Steel Chocolate Fountain is something that should have pride of place at the centre of your home. It will sweeten your life no end.

Dip fruit, sweets, biscuits, pastries – whatever you like – into the cascading melted chocolate and... mmmm... well... mmmm... bliss!

Where was I? Oh yes, as if it matters, this particular machine is easy to clean, benefits from having separate controls for the motor and the heat, features an extra deep tray, enabling it to be used for a longer period of time, and the new, super-smooth design has improved choc flow, creating a constant delicious curtain of the good stuff.

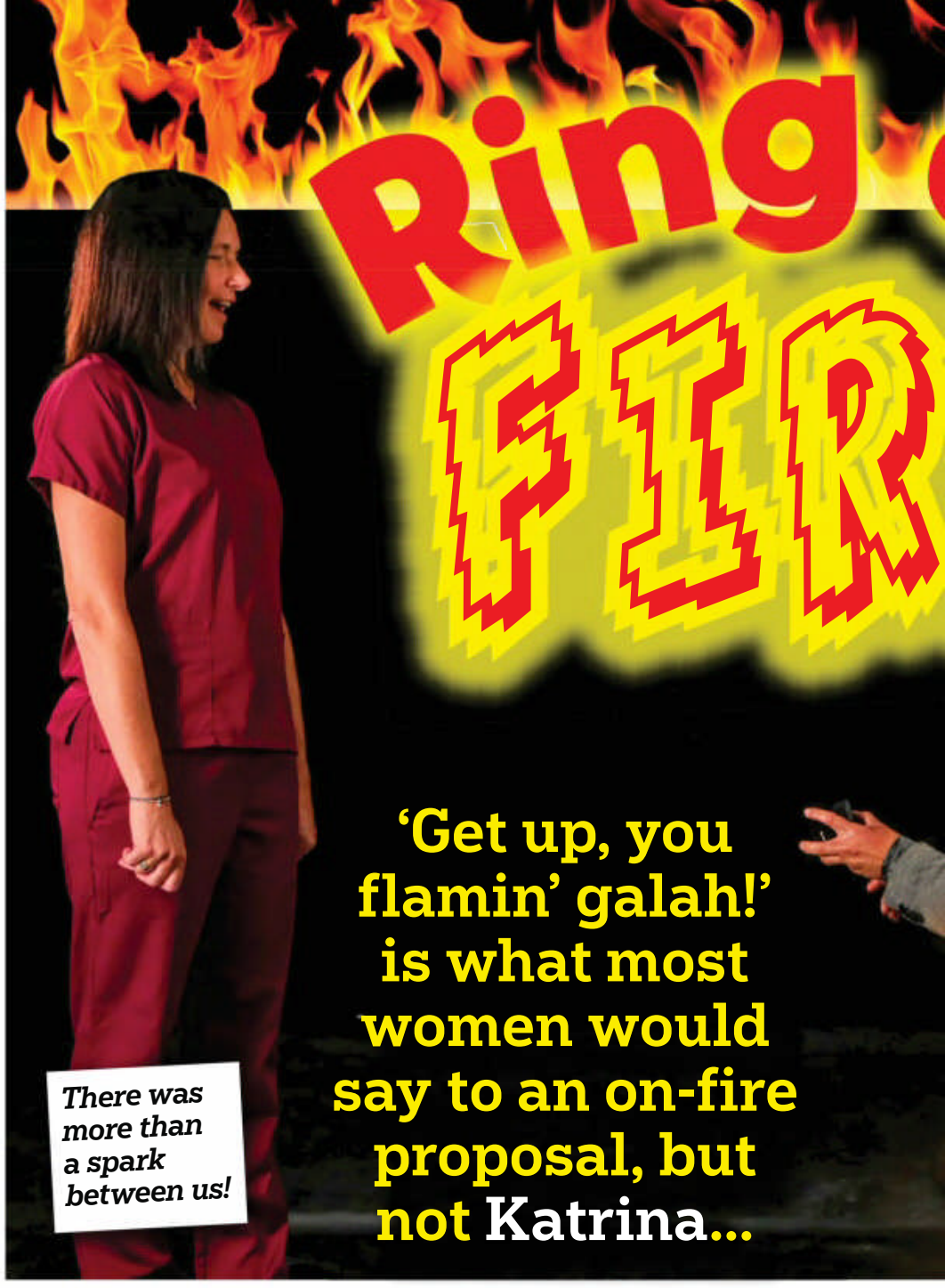
We have one to give away here. Simply solve my prize question, below, for your chance to win...

PICTURES: BIGSTOCK



For a chance to win, answer my prize question below. Enter on p43.
PQ1: In the book, who did Charlie take with him to tour Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory?
A) Grandpa Joe B) Grandpa Sid

FOLLOW FLO TO PAGE 41



There was more than a spark between us!

'Get up, you flamin' galah!' is what most women would say to an on-fire proposal, but not Katrina...

Flicking through dating profiles, I felt like I was choosing my dinner from a wheelie bin.

There only seemed to be desperate-looking divorcees and slimy lotharios on the menu.

'I reckon I'll be single forever now,' I sighed to my brother Julian, putting down my phone.

It was late last year and I'd been living with Julian and his two kids for a few years since returning from a whirlwind couple of decades in America.

I'd moved over there from Kent and got married to a yank at just 18.

My American adventure had been full of drama and excitement.

I'd worked as a firefighter then trained as a nurse and worked on a trauma team too.

Fire, blood, guts – I lived for life at the sharp end.

But, back in Blighty now, divorced and working as a nurse at Ashford's William Harvey Hospital, I just couldn't find a man to get my heart going.

I was over boring small talk and endless messages that went nowhere.

Bored, I stopped checking the apps as often.

But one day earlier this year, I found I had a message.

Riky, 52, the profile said above a pic of a bald man with a kind face.

Hi Katrina, I hope you don't mind me messaging you, Riky had written two days before.

Handsome and polite. Good start.

I messaged back and we quickly got chatting about our mutual love of history and fitness.

I do kung fu, Riky explained. Helps me keep fit for my job.

What job would that be? I typed back.

PE teacher, maybe? Or a later-life lifeguard?

Only, when Riky came back, my jaw dropped.

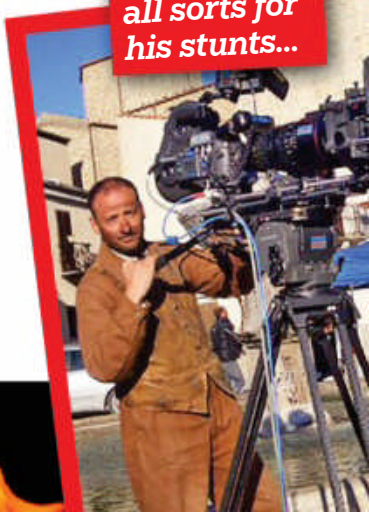
I'm a stuntman of 27 years, he said.

I asked a million questions and Riky answered every one, telling me how he'd been on practically every show in the country from

EastEnders to Peaky Blinders and had worked as a stunt double for the likes of Richard Gere in First Knight.

And what was a greater

Riky's done all sorts for his stunts...



BURNING LOINS



Riky feared his height would put me off him

The shiny ring looked incredible

achievement than meeting Johnny Depp on the set of *Sleepy Hollow*?

Being the famous Tango Man in the old '90s adverts! Blimey.

And there I was thinking I was making the most of my time on this rock.

The more we chatted, the more I warmed to Riky.

...You do know my height? he asked suddenly.

Yeah...

Do you want to go back to my profile and just check again?

I had to laugh at that.

I knew he was 5ft 3in – poor bloke must have had a few knock-backs because of it.

But I was no size-ist, how could I be, when I was a towering 6ft 3in?!

My partners could be tall, short or anywhere in between, as long as they had a kind heart, I didn't mind

stooping a little for a snog.

Sure, we'd look odd, but I'd waited 48 years for the love of my life.

A mini man with a big heart would do nicely.

When I'd reassured Riky several times I was fine with the clear foot between us, he was delighted.

I love a tall woman and set my selection to woman 5ft 9in and above, he told me cheekily.

I admired his lofty ambitions!

He lived in Nottingham, but invited me for a wander round Saffron Walden, Essex, last March.

I jumped at the chance.

'Hi,' he smiled brightly when we met, his bald bonce barely coming up to my shoulder.

But in the flesh, Riky was just as wonderful as he'd been online.

We got chatting about his stunts.

'I've driven through walls, jumped from buildings and set myself on fire,' Riky recalled, telling me all about his work.

'Well, as a nurse and former firefighter you've found the right person to patch you up again,' I laughed.

We got on so well that a couple of days later we went out again.

Things were going great.

Then lockdown descended on the UK, bringing our budding

romance to a sudden halt.

Unable to see each other in person, I half-expected things to fizzle out.

But they never did.

Riky and me talked on the phone morning, noon and night.

'Why don't you just move in with me?' he blurted in the June.

It was crazy.

We'd only known each other three months.

But then again leaps of faith were Riky's nine-to-five.

I was more cautious.

'What about my job?' I asked.

'We'll cope,' Riky promised, cool as a cucumber.

So, with his steady support, I ditched my full-time job and upped sticks from my brother's basement in Ashford to Riky's sprawling home on half an acre of land in Nottingham.

And Riky was right.

Life together settled nicely.

I began working as an agency nurse, and Riky spent his days doing daily workouts in the garage in preparation for TV and film shoots starting again.

Still, being with a stuntman was rather less dramatic than I'd thought!

That is, until Riky explained a journalist had contacted him for a piece on lockdown romances.

'They want to take a picture of you in your scrubs and me on fire,' he said.

Ha, that's more like it!

Maybe brushes with the media came from having a semi-famous fella?

'I'll do it,' I agreed, keen to see Riky do one of his stunts in real life.

So this August we headed to a studio in Leicester, with me in my purple scrubs.

Riky had a safety crew who doused him with a special flammable accelerant, and then set him alight.

Safely stood a couple of steps back, my heart was in my mouth.

Suddenly, instant heat engulfed the room as Riky turned into a human candle.

'Now turn to each other and smile,' the photographer instructed.

Eh? Like nothing's unusual about this?! Just turn to your beloved... while he's head-to-toe on fire?!

I did as I was told.

And, suddenly, he was falling to the floor.

Just my luck!

After 27 flawless years as a stuntman, Riky was only now having an accident.

Just before I could leap in to save him, my panic turned to

shock when I realised Riky was down on one knee, not two.

'Will you marry me?' he asked, flames licking around his head.

Oh. My. God.

Open-mouthed, I was lost for words.

It took me a moment to process it all – the proposal, the flames!

I had to hand it to him, not many girls would have been proposed to like this!

He held out a ring but I couldn't get a good look at it.

His eyes searched mine, as if to say, 'Hurry up, luv, I'm melting!'

'Yes, of course I will,' I gasped eventually.

With that he fell face down, splat to the ground.

But this was how the pros did it.

A man with an extinguisher smothered his flames, and Riky climbed back up.

Once his protective suit was off, we hugged.

'You planned this all along?!' I said.

There was no journalist, no newspaper piece – the whole thing was a beautiful ruse.

Getting a better look at the ring, it was a treat – rose gold with a solitaire diamond in the middle and nine diamonds down each side.

We've set a date for August 2022.

Our whirlwind romance might be fast but when you've met your match, true love really does burn bright.

Katrina Dobson, 48, Nottingham

● **Riky says,** 'I've never been engaged before and I always thought that if I proposed it'd be on a gondola in Venice. But I thought as a stuntman, what's the most spectacular way I could possibly do it? On fire! I checked it out and it's a world first. No one else has ever proposed in this way. I wanted it to be truly special and it was.'



We get each other fired up all right

Real people 39

■ **As told to Rikki Loftus and Miyo Padi**
(stories@realpeoplemag.co.uk)



...and he was even Tangoed in the '90s!



Bob's **BIG** treasure hunt!



with auctioneer Bob Hayton

Got a boot sale bargain or an old ornament you reckon is worth a fortune?

Why not let me – top auctioneer Bob Hayton – find out? Just send me a pic of your treasure. If it's printed, you'll get **£25** – even if it's trash!

Giddy up!

When I moved house, I found this rocking horse which my grandmother had given me more than 20 years ago. Has its value jumped up or has it fallen at the first, Bob?

Paul Fletcher,
via e-mail



■ You don't see so many of these smaller Victorian rocking horses. It has 'issues' (a lost tail and mane, flaking paint), but entered into an auction in the run-up to Christmas (assuming there will be one this year!), I would expect a hammer price of around **£100**.

£100

Mr Piggy

This fine porker is part of my Moorcroft pottery collection. I love the big, gorgeous flower decoration on his flank. Is my eye-catching pig bringing home the bacon, Bob?

Shirley Alfonso,
Lincoln



£500

■ 'Peter pig' from the Moorcroft pottery collection was modelled by Roger Mitchell. Your favourite fella is a chunky chap at 30cm nose to tail... and we all hope that's just mud on his foot! I have seen similar selling for around £500 at auction.

ASK ME ANYTHING!

Need advice on a collectable?
Just write in!
There's £25 for you, if we print it

Q What can you tell me about this vibrant dish, Bob? It was a ruby anniversary gift to my great-grandparents. I think it's an ashtray, but they didn't smoke.

Alice Barter,
North London

A It looks to me to be a classic

piece of hand-blown Italian glass from the Murano factory. As an ashtray, it is not that commercial, but 'rebranded' as a pin dish or tea-light holder it'd sell at auction for around **£20**.

Real people **40**



£20

UNDER THE HAMMER

What's hot at the auctions this week – check your loft... if you find one of these, you'll be quids in!

● Pablo Picasso ceramic plate, 1955.

£13,000



● '30s German Bauhaus cane and rattan sun lounger.

£400



● '40s Rolex Precision wristwatch with gold-plated case.

£850

● 19th Century cast-iron boot scraper by Crooks of Norwich.

£240



Strange brew

An auntie gifted this to me among some things she no longer wanted when she moved. What's its history, Bob? Worth much?

Karen Cowley, Caernarfon

Charlotte di Vita MBE has produced over 150 of these numbered collectable miniature teapots. Money from the sales goes to the charity Trade Plus Aid, which fights poverty in Asia and Africa. Yours is in the Art Deco style of Clarice Cliff and has an auction value of around £50.



Om... worth much?

SEND ME AN EMAIL!

My lovely little buddha came from my uncle 25 years ago. I don't know how long he'd had it or where it originated. It's 33cm high and has B.A. engraved underneath. Any value, Bob?

Sonia Strand, Wiltshire

Your buddha figure is made of a composite resin material simulating ivory. He's an impressive size and sports a belly much like our own lockdown ones we've acquired! It would fetch around £50 at auction.



If you'd like my opinion on the value of your item, send me a clear photo, with as much description as you can, including size. Give details of markings or labels, and don't forget to include your full name, address and phone number. I can't receive letters during the coronavirus lockdown, but instead please send an email to Bob@realpeoplemag.co.uk. I cannot value every item sent in or respond personally to emails.

★ Test your KNOWLEDGE

Guess the value of this week's item and

WIN £100!

By how much were bidders floored by this silk and woollen corridor carpet at a recent auction?

A £700 B £900 C £1,100

HOW TO ENTER For your chance to win, simply answer the Test Your Knowledge question above, then turn to page 43, where you'll find full entry details.

Issue 33's item was a mirrored disco ball. Answer A) £140.

PUZZLE TRAIL

X Factor

Have you got what it takes to be successful? See if you can learn what that special something is from *Line Of Duty* star Adrian Dunbar. For £100, use Ade to work out the number code for each letter of the alphabet. We've placed the Ds, now you do the same with the As and Es. The number that represents the letter 'X' is your prize answer. See page 43 for full entry details.

WIN £100!

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 4 | 18 | 1 | 21 | | 18 | | 11 | 16 | 22 | 3 | 21 |
| 13 | | 21 | | 3 | 18 | 7 | 10 | 26 | | 21 | | 15 |
| 1 | 2 | 1 | 24 | 18 | | 3 | | 15 | 11 | 10 | 6 | 14 |
| 11 | | 24 | | 21 | 15 | 21 | 1 | 4 | | 12 | | 22 |
| 7 | 23 | 3 | 6 | 1 | | 12 | | 24 | 15 | 19 | 19 | 23 |
| | | 9 | | 26 | 21 | 1 | 19 | 18 | | 15 | | |
| 17 | 15 | 3 | 11 | 18 | | 4 | | 10 | 11 | 4 | 3 | 18 |
| | 21 | | 24 | 3 | 13 | | 10 | 6 | 5 | | 3 | |
| 5 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 2 | | | | 14 | 10 | 21 | 4 | 11 |
| 10 | | 25 | | | | | | | | 16 | | 10 |
| 11 | | 3 | | | | | | | | 1 | | 9 |
| 11 | 3 | 21 | 15 | 12 | | | | 11 | 3 | 21 | 25 | 3 |
| | 12 | | 19 | 1 | 21 | | 20 | 15 | 14 | | 10 | |
| 20 | 15 | 21 | 16 | 21 | | 3 | | 22 | 16 | 14 | 15 | 11 |
| | | 16 | | 12 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 12 | | 3 | | |
| 3 | 21 | 1 | 12 | 1 | | 10 | | 1 | 21 | 21 | 16 | 13 |
| 21 | | 11 | | 4 | 1 | 18 | 3 | 21 | | 22 | | 1 |
| 3 | 8 | 18 | 21 | 1 | | 10 | | 10 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| 1 | | 3 | | 2 | 21 | 16 | 13 | 6 | | 21 | | 5 |
| 3 | 16 | 2 | 14 | 3 | | 6 | | 3 | 8 | 1 | 12 | 11 |

~~A~~ ~~B~~ ~~C~~ ~~D~~ ~~E~~ ~~F~~ ~~G~~ ~~H~~ ~~I~~ ~~J~~ ~~K~~ ~~L~~ ~~M~~
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| A | D | E | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |



FOLLOW FLO TO PAGE 42

PLEASE NOTE, ALL VALUATIONS ARE ESTIMATES AND WE CANNOT RETURN PHOTOS

PICTURE: GETTY

PUZZLE TRAIL

Here's your last chance to win this week's fab cash prizes! See p43 to enter.

WIN £50!

Nothing For A Pair

...not in this game! Match 'First' or 'Last' with the other words and phrases in the grid, below. Keep making pairs until just one answer remains. This is your prize answer. See page 43 for full entry details.

| | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|---------------|--------|---------------|
| First | Humah | And foremost | Last | First |
| Last | Aid | First | Straw | Last |
| Last | Past the post | Chance saloon | First | Ditch attempt |
| First | Resort | Class | Last | Name terms |
| Lady | Last | First | Supper | Last |

Small Wonder

Here's a small but wonderful example of the nation's favourite puzzle. Solve it in the usual way. When completed correctly, the letters in the yellow squares, reading top to bottom, left to right, will spell out your prize answer. See p43 for entry details.

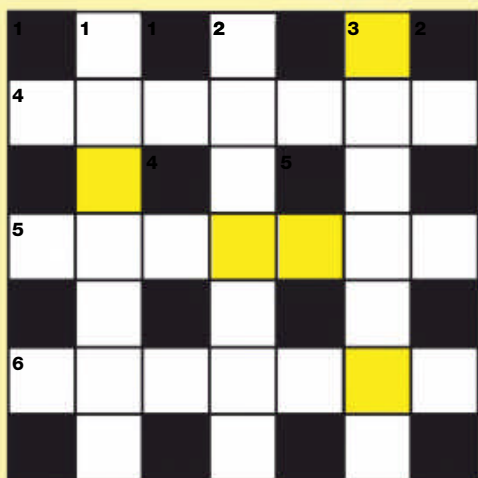
WIN £25!

ACROSS

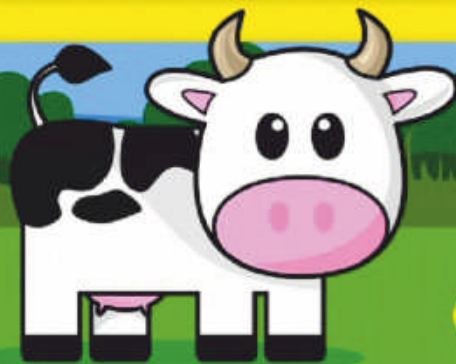
- 4 Hot yellow condiment that accompanies roast beef (7)
5 Widen – your horizons, perhaps? (7)
6 Laugh in a sneery way (7)

DOWN

- 1 Topical (7)
2 Weird, peculiar (7)
3 How the grass is on the other side! (7)



DON'T FORGET THE DEVILISH DIABOLICAL ON PAGE 46



NICE LITTLE EARNER

Cash in here by rearranging the characters below into a regular nine-letter word. Each letter must only be used once. See page 43 for full entry details.

A L I E N P L O T

WIN £25!

I'm Too HEX-Y!

Write the six-letter answers to the clues in this grid around the hexagons, starting at the point indicated by the arrows and always in a clockwise direction. When done, the letters in the yellow boxes, reading left to right, will spell your answer. See page 43.

| | | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Largest US state | Run naked in public | Individual human | Charlie Brown's dog | whites, teeth (slang) |
| Pirate's bird | Strip of bacon | Oration | Cheddar, eg | Basement for wine? |



Issue 37, 17 September 2020 Closing date: Midnight 30 September 2020

ENTER BY TEXT



Type a message starting with RPL37 followed by a space, using no punctuation, with your answer(s), name and address details to:

84988 *Texts cost 50p each per text, plus your standard network charge

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Select 'Puzzles' and click the cover of the week you want to enter and fill in the online coupon – it's that easy!

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Simply list all your answers when prompted
UK: 09010 270074
IRL: 1550 787021

*UK calls cost 30p per min plus your telephone company's network access charge and 97 cents in ROI. Over 18s only. Calls last no longer than 1½ mins. UK SP: Spoke (0333 202 3390) ROI SP: Spoke (0818 205 403)

OR ENTER BY POST: Send your answers to: **Real People, ISSUE 37, Hearst Magazines UK, The Data Solutions Centre, Worksop S80 2RT**

01 The Whopper! P09 GVRLPL20656

£150

ANSWER:

02 Roulette P12 GVRLPL20657

£250

ANSWER:

03 Go And Arrow P26 GVRLPL20658

Epson all-in-one inkjet printer

ANSWER:

04 Boxing Match P28 GVRLPL20659

Michael Kors perfume

ANSWER:

05 Lost In Moo-sic P30 GVRLPL20660

£25

ANSWER:

06 Moo Am I? P30 GVRLPL20661

£25

ANSWER:

07 Take Your Pick! P31 GVRLPL20662

£300 supermarket gift card or £250

ANSWER:

08 Playing The Field P36 GVRLPL20663

£50

ANSWER:

09 Question 1 P38 GVRLPL20664

Andrew James chocolate fountain

ANSWER:

10 X-Factor P41 GVRLPL20665

£100

ANSWER:

11 Small Wonder P42 GVRLPL20666

£25

ANSWER:

12 Nothing For... P42 GVRLPL20667

£50

ANSWER:

13 Nice Little... P42 GVRLPL20668

£25

ANSWER:

14 I'm Too Hex-y P42 GVRLPL20669

£50

ANSWER:

15 Diabolical P46 GVRLPL20670

£150

ANSWER:

Test your KNOWLEDGE P41 GVRLPL20671

£100

ANSWER:



***Terms & conditions** Only one entry per household. Phone, online and text entries must reach us by midnight on 30 September 2020, and three working days later for postal entries. Entry to competitions is open to readers aged 18 or over who are residents of the UK (inc N Ireland and ROI), except employees and their families of The National Magazine Company trading as Hearst Magazines UK, their printers and agents, the suppliers of the prizes and any other companies associated with the competitions. No responsibility can be accepted for entries lost, damaged or delayed in the post. The prizes must be taken as stated and are not transferable, although Hearst Magazines UK reserves the right to change the prizes in the event of unforeseen circumstances. Winners are responsible for expenses and arrangements not specifically included in the prizes, such as any necessary travel documents, insurance, passports and visas. No cash alternatives, unless stated otherwise. Prizes are subject to availability and suppliers' terms and conditions. No purchase necessary. Winners will be drawn at random from all correct entries received by the closing date. Names and addresses of winners may be published in a future issue of **Real People**. A list of winners is available by sending an SAE to: Competitions Editor, **Real People**, Hearst Magazines UK, House Of Hearst, 30 Pantons Street, London, SW1Y 4AJ. No correspondence can be entered into. Editor's decision is final. Hearst Magazines UK reserves the right not to award prizes to multiple entrants, consortiums or entrants who have not, in the opinion of Hearst Magazines UK, entered into the spirit of the competition. By entering the prize draw, the entrant agrees to be bound by the rules and by any other requirements set out in the promotional material accompanying the promotion, and any failure to comply with those terms may result in disqualification of the winner and selection of a new winner, at the sole discretion of the Editor. Winners may be featured in the magazine and must be prepared to send in a photo. **Data protection:** We will use the information you supply to process your competition entry. For Hearst UK privacy notice, visit hearst.co.uk/privacy-notice.

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Full name

Address

Postcode

DOB (DD/MM/YYYY)

Email*

Phone no*

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Iris McDowell, 52, from Ballymena, County Antrim, can only watch in awe as her son sticks his chin out to the bullies and the world...

Dear Robbie

You were a surprise. But what a happy surprise you were! I already had your older siblings, Nicola, 14, and Richard, 13, so I wasn't anticipating having any more babies.

You see, I'd had cervical cancer 12 years earlier.

Part of the neck of my womb had been cut out because the cancer cells were at stage three.

But then I met your daddy, Sammy, and there I was, looking at a positive pregnancy stick.

But as I cradled my swelling belly, I felt uneasy.

Your sister and brother had walloped me long and hard with their footballing feet when they were growing inside me.

But it wasn't the same with you.

You gave only the vaguest of flutters inside me... and certainly no big kicks.

'Something's not right,' I said, worriedly, to your daddy.

And a scan showed my instinct was correct. You weren't growing in the way you should have been.

So I washed down the steroid tablets the doctors prescribed, to help your little lungs get bigger, so you'd be able to breathe more strongly once you arrived.

They were worried you'd be born too early.

But you stayed safely inside me until 38 weeks.

And you liked it so much you didn't want to leave!

Thirty-eight hours of labour you put me through!

Even then, it took an emergency C-section to bring you out.

I couldn't see you because the

surgeon had put up a sheet.

But soon I'd be nuzzling your brow, I thought.

Soon...

I listened out intently for a tiny cry. But, instead, an insistent voice sounded.

'One, two, three,' in a deep rhythm. 'Five, six, seven.'

You weren't breathing, my precious boy. The doctors were resuscitating you.

I heard screams in the room. 'Save him, save him.'

Those screams were mine.

Six minutes... a tortuous six minutes before your little chest rose up on its own on 24 November 2000.

No skin-to-skin contact with me, baby boy.

No kiss on your brow...

All I got was a glimpse of navy blue – your skin.

Starved of oxygen, you needed urgent treatment. For five long days I wasn't allowed near you.

I had an infection after the C-section, you see, and I couldn't risk passing it on to you.

When I was eventually taken to your neo-natal unit, you were still blue.

You were face-down on your belly to help ease the pressure on your airways.

But I could just about see what the doctor had been talking about.

You had a rare condition called Pierre Robin syndrome.

Your lower jaw was smaller than normal – in effect, you had no chin.

And your tongue fell back towards your throat.

This meant breathing would be difficult for you, Robbie.

And that wasn't all.

My darling

Jaw inspiring

boy, you had a small skull, which meant you would have severe learning difficulties, and you had a cleft palate and a clubfoot.

But there was something else you had too... a powerful, beating heart.

You were with me... and that's all that mattered.

Tenderly, I caressed your tiny blue hand as I touched you for the first time in the incubator.

'Hello, I'm your mummy,' I said.

On your belly, you couldn't look up. But I sensed you knew I was there.

And two days later, we had our first cuddle, kind of.

I was so nervous about holding you, as fragile as bone china.

You needed to remain on your belly, so I couldn't cradle you or cup you into my shoulder.

So the nurse placed a blanket over my knee and carried you towards me.

You lay face-down on my lap.

But feeling your warm little limbs against mine filled me with hope. Tentatively, I stroked your back and head, did you feel it?

My tears fell.

I knew you'd have

to fight for your life.

And, you did fight, my boy.

When you were six weeks old, I left your side for a moment while I quickly slipped home to get some fresh clothes.

But a call from the hospital brought me rushing back.

Your breathing had taken a turn for the worse because your airways were so small.

The only solution was a tracheostomy – a hole in your neck – to get the air into your lungs.

That was the start of many hospital treatments for you.

Gradually, after months on, the tube was removed from your neck, for minutes at a time, so you could get used to being without it.

It gave you a chance to speak.

'Baba,' you said, and beamed at us with your unique smile.

Then, 'Mama' and 'Dada' followed.

My heart swelled with



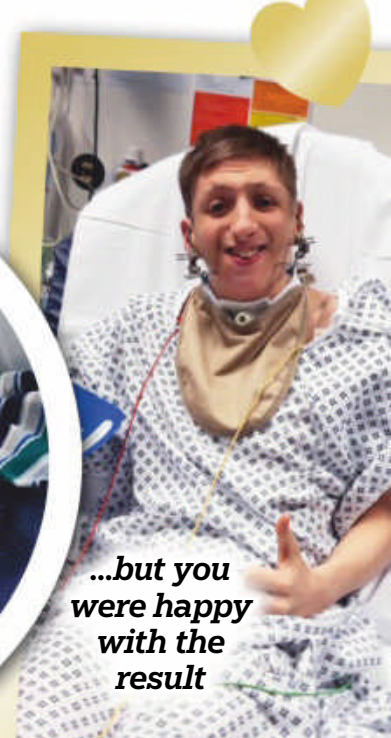
You spent so much of childhood in hospital



You needed to be under for the ops...



...which attached a metal frame...



...but you were happy with the result

We tried to give you a normal life



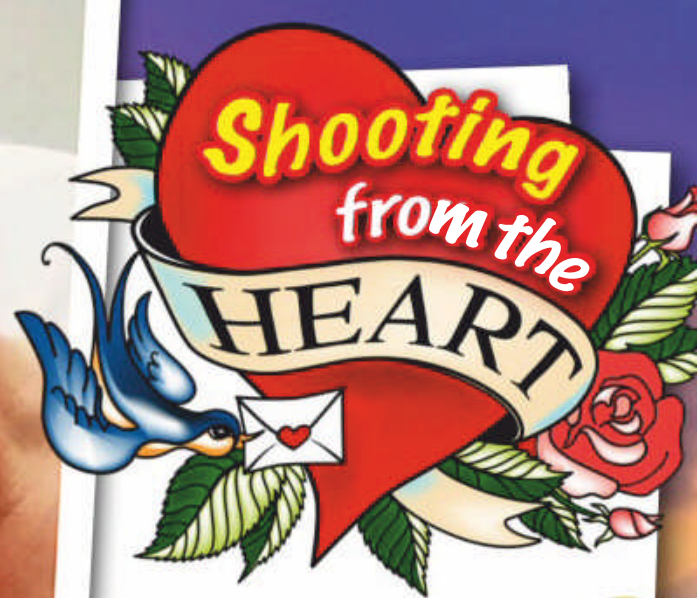
You needed a big op or three to get a new jaw



I tried to protect you from cruel taunts



You'd given us such a scare when you were born



You'd posted a video, the joy shining from your eyes.

'Hi, I'm Robbie from Ballymena, and look how well I can eat,' you grinned, opening your mouth wide enough for a fork for the first time in years.

Every day the screws on the frame were tightened, but you never faltered.

'Robbie's pain threshold is the highest I've ever come across,' said one consultant.

In January, we returned to have the metal frame removed.

More bone from your jaw was cut away because it had fused.

Meanwhile, a cast of your skull was sent to America for specialists to custom-make a jaw for you.

That model was due to be fitted in March this year in the third and final op in Birmingham, but the coronavirus has postponed it until, fingers crossed, later this month.

Though the final bit hasn't been carried out, the difference to you has been amazing.

You went missing one day and I became frantic.

'I know where he'll be,' said your dad. We drove into town and spied you... sitting in Burger King, with the friends you'd made, chowing down on a quarter pounder. Just like everybody else... just as you'd always wanted!

I'm so proud of you, Robbie.

You took whatever life threw at you, and you took it on the chin!

Love, Mum xx

I'm so proud of you, Robbie



Real 45 people

pride.

And you came home on your first birthday because I insisted on it.

It was just for the one day, and with a nurse from the hospital... but for once we were a gloriously complete family, all five of us.

You pressed your birthday gift's tummy and giggled when Tigger spoke back to you.

That's the wonderful thing about Tiggers...

And that's the wonderful thing about you, Robbie.

Despite all the difficulties, you were there with us.

And when you were 18 months old, you came home permanently.

Me and Daddy had learnt how to change your feeding tube in hospital and how to work the special machine that made sure you kept breathing through the night.

But we were scared, Robbie, because you were depending on us.

We became your full-time carers, and watched in wonder how you bravely battled every obstacle that came your way.

The first surgery was to try to ease the discomfort of clubfoot when you were four.

And as you grew, you needed new splints to keep your leg straight. I've kept every single one of those splints, a symbol of your courage.

The biggest obstacle, though, was the repeated surgery needed for your jaw.

As you grew, your airways narrowed.

Six times you had surgery and were put into an induced coma while you recovered.

But your ongoing hospital visits didn't stop you getting hooked on boxing.

The thump-thump of your gloves beating rhythmically

against the punchbag became a regular sound in our house.

But you weren't just fighting the punchbag.

You were fighting cruel taunts.

By the time you were 15, your jaw had tightened and you survived on protein shakes and tomato soup, or tiny pieces of food moistened and pushed into the corner of your mouth.

You'd go out with your younger brother, Sam, and would come home upset.

'They called me Fish-Face,' you said, as the tears coursed down your cheeks.

Some called you 'Nappy Boy' because you had to wear adult nappies. Others 'Pineapple Head'.

You didn't want people looking at you

In bed, hot tears of anger would fall down my cheeks too.

You began to pull your hoodie top close around your head.

The teachers at your school said you refused to go outside with others and stayed in the classroom.

You had a special table away from other diners in our local café because you didn't want them looking at you.

'I just want to be normal like everybody else, Mum,' you'd say.

It broke my heart.

You couldn't see the boy we saw. To us, you were the son whose strong character had overcome all the risks you'd faced.

But, as you grew, the surgeries on your jaw weren't enough.

Eating and speaking became too difficult, and we knew your

airways would become narrower and narrower...

You could barely open your mouth.

You needed a big op... in fact, you needed three.

Last October, a month before your 19th birthday, we flew to Birmingham, for the first part of the procedure for a whole new chin and jaw.

Robbie, it was going to be such a change, I was so excited.

At the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, surgeons broke bones at the side of your face, took out a small amount of bone and fitted a metal frame.

The idea was to give you a chin by pulling forward your lower jaw.

And after the anaesthetic had worn off, there you were on Facebook, sitting in front of a plateful of mashed potatoes, mashed carrots and baked beans.



All you ever wanted was to eat like everyone else

■ As told to Moira Holden, Jade Beecroft (stories@realpeoplemag.co.uk)



DIABOLICAL!



British solo artists... All are hidden, except one – which one? This is your prize answer. Enter on p43.

N M W O X U E C L E H E Q L I I C Z P A U L W E L L E R
R G H F L V R S I N M K B M L V U V G E O R G E E Z R A
H O I H N R V G T H G I N K Y E L R E V E B K Z H O S U
O R D G P J E I S S E J P H I L C O L L I N S R P E G I
Y O F S P S W O X H N O S I R R O M N A V S K D T K U D
X B R H T O N U S U T E U E L T O N J O H N K F O J O L
J B T A Y E M B E O L I O X S R J Y D K X L I H P D F A
E I D V G D W J E E R L A M S W W M G Z S R Y N V P M P
X E M C I N T A D B I Y O F J Z P E L K E B R R V U I A
H W E C G W B A R Z E R K F A E M I U T L T O B M S C C
E I H T C M Z O N T R D X Q L M A V O B Y C L X A C H S
R L A J I E A F N I M T S V S M O T P X T W G E N H A I
I L P M A M R I S E Z E I H G J H L O W S D N L N A E W
C I M Z A H G S X X M S Q A E E X I A I Y H W L I S L E
H A E H D B E A Q U C A L T R E S C S P R B O I E I K L
A M T B S Y E X R O Z L N A C O R R S K R F T E L N I Q
R S E E Y U V L S O A Q I F M I V A E J A O E G E G W B
D L I F M F B T Y G A N M E D N D I N A H B M O N P A E
H U N G T E E E H Z A T O L P I K G O M O O O U N A N J
A L I G C L L E T R M N I H Q T W D J E S L H L O V U E
W T T M L H R I J A E R T R V U B A M S K L B D X E K S
L B Y O L N A H S L K I O U G N I V O B Y Y G I P M A S
E M R P H X L R I A M W Z T K O M I T L F M U N W E D G
Y D P V J K O K L S N F F U S L K D H U A U V G I N W L
R Z A W A I E M M I L D B X P O J M S N L R R W S T J Y
R B W I U Y Q A K C X G E P C A A B F T L S O D C S V N
J Q J J O Z S Q R S M C T V K P X T L N A P I L A U D N
K E I U S G U M V N K L X O D M V L I L Y A L L E N T E

ADELE
ANNIE LENNOX
BEVERLEY KNIGHT
CHARLI XCX
CRAIG DAVID
DUA LIPA
ED SHEERAN
ELLIE GOULDING
ELTON JOHN
ELVIS COSTELLO
EMELI SANDÉ
GEORGE EZRA
HARRY STYLES
JAMES BLUNT
JAMES MORRISON
JESS GLYNNE
JESSIE J
KATE BUSH
LEWIS CAPALDI
LIAM GALLAGHER
LILY ALLEN
MABEL
MICHAEL KIWANUKA
MORRISSEY
OLLY MURS
PALOMA FAITH
PAOLO NUTINI
PAUL WELLER
PHIL COLLINS
RAG'N'BONE MAN
RICHARD HAWLEY
RITA ORA
ROBBIE WILLIAMS
ROD STEWART
SAM SMITH
STORMZY
TINIE TEMPAH
TOM JONES
VAN MORRISON



**AND...
JUST
FOR THE**

HELL OF IT!

PS We're not complete devils! If you want to know what the mystery words are, see Solutions on p35.

We've hidden **extra words** in the grid above. But to make it fiendishly tricky, we're only going to give you a theme. This week: **ADELE SONGS**. To find out how many of them you have to look for, you have to **solve the mini sudoku** on the right. The number in the yellow square is your target... mwah, ha, ha, ha, ha!

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 3 | 6 | | 2 | |
| 5 | | 2 | | | 3 |
| 1 | | 4 | | 6 | |
| 2 | | 3 | 4 | | |
| | | | 2 | | 6 |
| | 2 | | 5 | 3 | |

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