

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept **THE** definitive answer. This week it's the turn of singer Joss Stone

The prized possession you value above all others... My three dogs – a poodle called Dusty, a Caucasian Ovcharka called Igor and Maggie, a mongrel I rescued from Battersea Dogs Home. My dogs are my babies, my little buddies.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... I regret listening to others in the past who pushed me in a certain direction with my work. I didn't listen to my gut instinct.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Smoking. I've smoked since I was 13. I give up every now and then, but only for a few months. I smoke about six Golden Virginia roll-ups a day.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... Me Before You by Jojo Moyes, about a lady who cares for a man who's paralysed and they fall in love. It's heartbreaking.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Woman for a day... I'd go about my day, not being bothered by anyone!

Right: Otis Redding. Above right: garden gnomes. Far right: Morpho butterflies



The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... I don't like it when quiet people get talked over in a group. Everyone has a right to be heard.

The film you can watch time and time again... The Notebook from 2004 with Ryan Gosling because it makes me cry, then feel, 'Wow, what a wonderful love story.'

The person who has influenced you most... My mum Wendy. She's kind and I've inherited from her the desire to look after people.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Otis Redding. He was a country boy with a gorgeous voice who just cared about doing his thing. I'm a country girl too, so I think I could relate to him.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Base decisions on your happiness scale. If anything comes in under five, don't do it.

The poem that touches your soul... Sonny's Lettah by Linton Kwesi Johnson, the dub poet, brings me to tears.



The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... I love garden gnomes – they make me smile. They're so cute and cheesy. I have them scattered around my garden.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... My grandmother Janet's gold ring she gave me when I was 15. I lost it at a waterpark.

The unending quest that drives you on... To complete my Total World Tour, during which I aim to play a gig and make a musical collaboration in every country. I've covered 126 in three years and I have 18 months to go.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That I'm stupid! Boys often think this because I like flowers and talk about love a lot and then they're shocked that I actually have a brain.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... My mum selling our horse Freddie Mercury Firefly when I was 12 because we couldn't afford him. That made me think I needed to earn money. By the time I was 16 I had an album out.



'Boys think I'm stupid because I like flowers and talk about love a lot. Then they're shocked that I actually have a brain'

the beach in Mauritius with my friends and family. I'd have a bottle of Sancerre and a chat. Dinner would be veggie dishes at a Moroccan restaurant in Exeter called Al-Farid. They do a great gin cocktail called Kissed By Rose which tastes like Turkish Delight. Then I'd go home for a bath and bed.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... Seeing my sister Lucy marry her husband Ed under a tree in 2015 was beautiful.

The saddest time that shook your world... When my Rottweiler Missy died last February after an operation. She was 11 and I totally adored her.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To have kids one day. I always wanted seven, but I'm 30 now so maybe four is more realistic.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Being kind is important.

The order of service at your funeral... I want it in a field with a biodegradable box and flowers everywhere and for them to play I'm Kissing You by Des'ree, which is a real tearjerker.

The way you want to be remembered... For making people feel good – whether I made them a cup of tea or they enjoyed my music.

The Plug... Joss Stone, backed by a full orchestra, tours the UK in October as part of her Total World Tour. Tickets at ticketmaster.co.uk. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon



PS...

Colin Firth returns as a suave spy in *Kingsman: The Golden Circle*

– in cinemas Wednesday. Matthew Kelly opens in *Desire Under*

The Elms at Sheffield's Crucible Theatre on Thursday. And

Van Morrison's new album *Roll With The Punches* is out Friday



NEXT WEEK

- Delicious Italian dishes The Big Family Cooking Showdown's Giorgio Locatelli serves to his own brood
- Monty Don on the South African gardens that inspire him
- Britain's best TV guide