



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 presenter Melanie Sykes

The prized possession you value above all others...

My sons' christening clothes. I put Roman, now 15, and Valentino, 13, in beautiful classic outfits made of silk by designer Rachel Riley. They wore big puffy pants and round collars. These are the only things of theirs I've kept.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend...

That I never pursued tennis. I was obsessed from the age of 13 and it was my fantasy profession for years. But I'm working class and my parents could only afford a few lessons, so I never found out if I was any good.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint...

Gandhi. I'd like to be in the presence of someone with his inner peace.

The temptation you wish you could resist...

Beeping my car horn, especially at slow pedestrians who are crossing the road.

Right: The Tourist, starring Johnny Depp and Angelina Jolie. Above right: a Tiffany ring. Far right: the Taj Mahal

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it...

I'd do a smash and grab at Tiffany in Old Bond Street. I'm not materialistic, but I do love a diamond.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance...

The self-help book F**k It by John C Parkin. I read it six years ago and it really spoke to me. It puts important ideas about life in layman's terms and teaches you perspective.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Woman for a day...

I'd watch Valentino – or Tino as we call him – at school. He's autistic and settled in a state school, but it would be great to see how he interacts with people when I'm not around.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise...

People with no social graces. It almost hurts me when I fail to hear please and thank you. It's beyond comprehension how some people behave towards others.

The film you can watch time and time again...

Annie Hall makes me roar. I pick up on a new funny line every time I watch it. Woody Allen's a genius.



The person who has influenced you most...

Psychotherapist Dr Stella Acquarone helped me reconnect with Tino after his diagnosis. She's incredible.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child...

Don't be afraid of being you. Be brave and don't live a lie.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity...

The Third Reich. I've read loads of books about it and visited Sachsenhausen concentration camp near Berlin. It's unbelievable that such atrocities happened and I'm deeply interested in the human stories.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again...

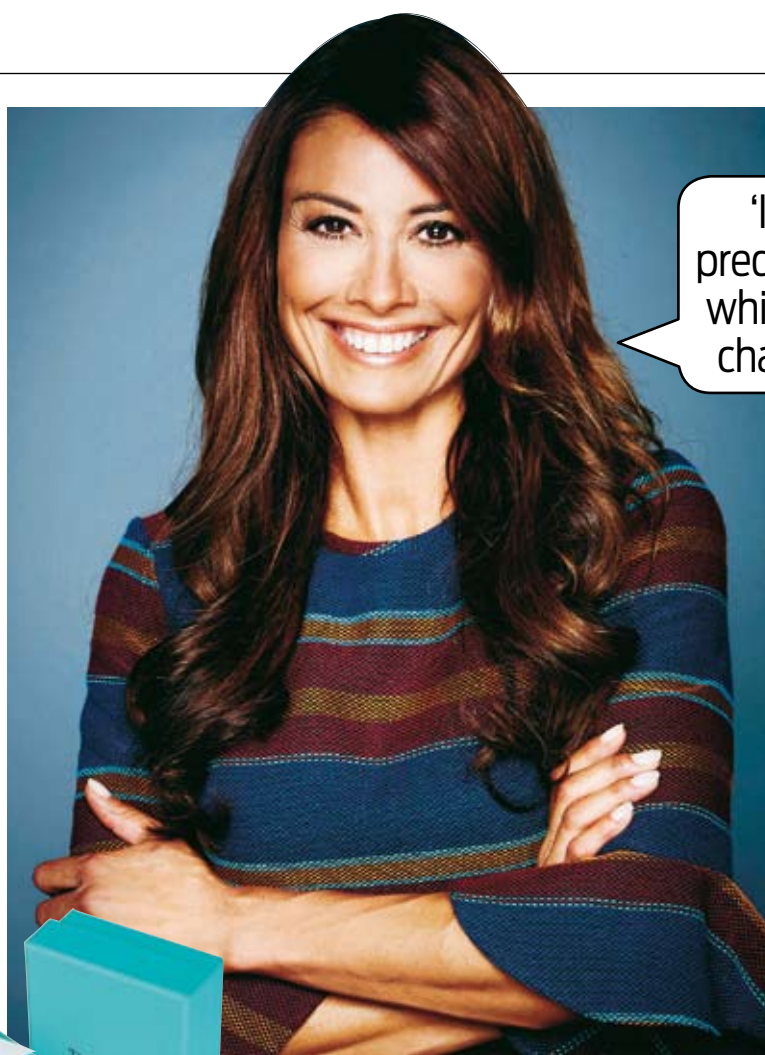
Perfect ankles! I sprained them both when I was younger and they're still vulnerable.

The unending quest that drives you on...

Life is for living. I'm a really open person, so I'm always ready for new ideas and challenges.

The poem that touches your soul...

Still I Rise by Maya Angelou. It's about holding your head up and striving forward, which is me all over.



'I've been branded a predator and a man-eater, which is insane. I've never chased a man in my life'

where Johnny Depp and Angelina Jolie stayed in The Tourist. I'd end the night at a reggae club in Jamaica.

The song that means most to you... A piece of music they call Orange Juice in the film Brassed Off. It's Rodrigo's Concierto de Aranjuez. It's so emotive and reminds me of my dad Robert, who plays in a brass band.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... I'm a hippy at heart so I'm truly happy barefoot on a beach.

The saddest time that shook your world... When Tino had kidney disease when he was four. A doctor told me he could die within three days. It was the most traumatic time ever, and such a relief when he recovered.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To write a novel. I've got all my characters sorted and written a chapter breakdown, so I will do it! I'm only 47 so I still have time.

The philosophy that underpins your life... I always say, 'Nothing ventured, nothing gained.'

The order of service at your funeral... I want Live Forever by Oasis and for Alan Carr to do the eulogy because he'll make people smile.

The way you want to be remembered... Someone who loved to laugh and have fun.

The Plug... Mel and Alan Carr will be live on BBC Radio 2 at 1pm on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon



A very **HAPPY CHRISTMAS** to you all!

Eat, drink, be merry and enjoy all the festive viewing with Weekend magazine. We're back next Saturday with James Norton on his new Bond-style thriller



NEXT WEEK

- The quirky story of one house built in 1840 is told in a fascinating new history show
- James Martin serves up a New Year's Day feast
- Monty Don on the scourge of plastic in the garden
- PLUS Britain's best TV guide