The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions — and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it’s actress Caroline Quentin’s turn

The prized possession you value above all others… A Father’s Day card I drew for my dad Freddy aged six. I was estranged from him after my parents divorced when I was 14. He died in 2011 after a car accident at 88 and his wife gave me the card and said that he’d kept it framed by his bedside. It was intensely moving.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend… Not travelling to Australia to see my actor friend Gary Olsen after he phoned in 2000 to tell me he had cancer. He died two months later at just 42.

The temptation you wish you could resist…Getting into clean sheets fully clothed when I’ve changed the bed.

The film you can watch time and time again… Elf with Will Ferrell. My kids and I watch it every Christmas and still find it hilarious.

The book that holds an ever-lasting resonance… The Go-Between by LP Hartley. I read it at 15 and it reminds me of long hot summers and the end of innocence.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise… When men refer to any woman over the age of 60 as ‘young lady’. It’s so patronising. I’m 53 now and I dare say it’s about to happen to me soon. Aagh!

The song that means most to you… Michael Jackson’s Billie Jean because it gets the whole family dancing.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again… A Victorian diamond ring I bought for £4,500 in the 90s. It was stolen two years later.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever… When Sam got his new teenage cosmetics taken on by the Space NK chain earlier this year. People are snifty about our relationship because he’s 12 years younger than me and has stayed home looking after the kids. I’m so proud he’s done all this on his own.

The saddest time that shook your world… My mum Kathleen’s death from a heart attack in July 2012. She was 89 and I miss her more than I can say.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you… To sing at the Royal Opera House. Three lines in a great opera would be enough.

The order of service at your funeral… As a good mother, a loving wife and a bit of a laugh.


As told to Rob McGibbon

PS…

Bridesmaids star Chris O’Dowd returns to the big screen in Calvary — in cinemas Friday. Alan Ayckbourn’s middle-class comedy A Small Family Business opens at the National Theatre. And Sophie Ellis-Bextor kicks off a UK tour in Birmingham on Monday.

The stars of Mad Men on their final series ● The dysfunctional family who changed the course of British history, by TV historian Lucy Worsley ● Easter treats – with a Jamie Oliver twist ● PLUS Britain’s best TV listings

NEXT WEEK