The prized possession you value above all others… A fan letter I received from a cowboy in Arizona for five years and I got pretty good at lassoing cattle.

The poem that touches your soul… I love an untitled poem by the 17th-century English writer Thomas Traherne. It feels as if he’s writing about my life, which is why it’s the epigram to my autobiography, Redeeming Features. The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase… That I keep changing my image.

The event that altered the course of your life and character… Getting a job on Vogue magazine in New York in 1962. It was an amazing time and I met everyone – even Martin Luther King.

The crime you would commit knowing everyone – even Martin Luther King.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you… To create a scent, but it costs at least £7 million.

The saddest time that shook your love I mentioned earlier.

The unending quest that drives you to go there frequently and it’s a seamless panorama of beauty.

The unlikely interest that engages people: women的兴趣 people say I instilled in me to long as you want to make it. And you do that by making it interesting. The unbending quest that drives you on… Curiosity. I’m forever interested in new things, so I never get bored.

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it’s interior designer Nicky Haslam.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could get back… The original celluloid of the Wicked Fairy from Sleeping Beauty of 1959. I lent it to The Observer Film Exhibition later and it was never returned. I hear it is worth up to £4 million now, so if anyone knows where it is, do let me know.

The time-honoured art of storytelling – two cooks on a mission to get men into the kitchen.

From top: Eton College choir, Wallis Simpson, an Old Fashioned cocktail, the Wicked Fairy from Sleeping Beauty, Istanbul, Ziegfield Follies and Mary Portas.

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