The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week: Desert Island Discs host Kirsty Young

The prized possession you value above all others... My family photos. They trigger so many memories.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... Not savouring my youth. I wish I'd appreciated being full of energy and not having responsibilities.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Sourdough bread and salted Irish butter. If I didn't like it so much I wouldn't have to go to the gym so much!

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... Nothing To Be Frightened Of by Julian Barnes. It's an incredible memoir about how you deal with it when people close to you die.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Elizabeth I. She was a pioneer in a man's world. And I'd like Elvis Presley to be with us too. He could paint my toenails, which he supposedly did for Barbra Streisand.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Woman for a day... I'd love to be in the Today programme studio when a big story kicks off. I'm a radio nut and to present that programme is the absolute pinnacle.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... Making my own jam. My daughter Iona [now eight] in 2006. A thief stole them from my bag five years ago.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Seeing rubbish in hedgerows. I wish I'd appreciated being full of energy and not having responsibilities.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That I'm a clever and the acting is superb. She also taught me how to be a mother.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Everything passes. The unending quest that drives you on to a child...

The song that means most to you... Can't Take My Eyes Off You by Andy Williams. It was played in the bar later that day when I met Nick. Everybody was having a big night and we were up on the tables and chairs singing, and he was sort of singing it to me.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd steal one of Samuel Peploe's paintings from the Scottish National Gallery.

The way you want to be remembered... All I ask is that someone reads the poem When I Am Dead. My Darling by Christina Rossetti and that they serve Ruinart Blanc de Blancs champagne. I'd like my ashes scattered in our garden.

The order of service at your funeral... I will have a humanist funeral. All I ask is that someone reads the poem When I Am Dead. My Darling by Christina Rossetti and that they serve Ruinart Blanc de Blancs champagne. I'd like my ashes scattered in our garden.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions... The day would begin at home. Both my daughters would sleep late, then Nick would make us scrambled eggs. We'd take our dogs, a Labrador called Olive and a Maltese crossbreed called Pierre, for a walk then Nick and I would go for lunch with my Scottish family at The Shore seafood restaurant in Leith. Then we'd walk on the beautiful Gallute beach. We'd be collected at the seafront by a speedboat which would reappear on the northwest coast of Majorca, where we'd go swimming. We'd drop anchor at Cala Foradada and walk up the hill to a restaurant we know for some rosé wine. The day would end back at home. We'd have all the family there – including my two stepchildren – as well as the neighbours for a barbecue. I'd do salads, but Nick is head of operations on the wood oven. We'd laugh into the night with the kids running around us.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... When I was six and I made Laura properly laugh for the first time by doing a funny voice. We'd found our secret language of humour.

The saddest time that shook your world... When the 11-year-old daugther of someone dear to me had E. coli seven years ago. We knew she could die and I felt totally impotent. Luckily she made a full recovery.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To do the perfect interview on Desert Island Discs.

The Plug... Meningitis Awareness Week runs from 15-21 September. Kirsty is a patron of the Meningitis Research Foundation. For more information visit www.meningitis.org.

As told to Rob McGibbon

Crime thriller A Walk Among The Tombstones, with Dan Stevens, is in cinemas from Friday. Pamela Stephenson’s Brazilian dance show, Brazouka, hits London on Tuesday. And The Script’s new album, No Sound Without Silence, is out on Monday