

DIGITAL PRICE

79p

Bargain!

WIFE DROP!
But is it
DIVORCE?



Ooof!

Real people

BURSTING WITH REAL LIFE!

No.19

17/5/18

BLIND FEAR

How could I
MISS her
CANCER?

WIN!
A SONY 40" SMART TV



TILL
DEATH
DO US
PART

My son was SAVAGED
in the SUPERMARKET



TOTALLY
FRIAR
TUCKED!



Oh heck!
Sent to
school
with a



BROKEN NECK!

GUILTY MUM!

Just 19 days in
jail for

RAPE



...but she got
her REVENGE

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This week in YOUR FAB VALUE

Real people



15 Thom's school of tiny cooking has a big following



Your favourite mag is called Real People because we bring you the best real-life stories every week. But I'm struggling to accept the reality of something in this week's issue... It's the revelation in The Real Story (p8), that men are just as good at multitasking as women, or that both sexes are equally bad at it. Come on! This can't

be true! As I write this, I am slurping a brew, eating a giant oatmeal cookie and earwiggling the gossip about what a features writer, who shall remain nameless, got up to on a date the other night. *That's* multitasking, right?!

Meanwhile, my other half struggles to butter his toast while listening to the radio. There, proof! It may not be scientific, and who am I to argue with the brainy bods who conduct these studies, but sorry – Men Are From Mars and Only Women Can Multitask. Isn't it some kind of universal law? Whatever you make of it, it isn't the only jaw-dropping, gender-bending shock in the article. Battle of the sexes? Just whose side are you of? I'd love you to let me know...

Karen
x

Karen Bryans, Editor
(stories@realpeoplemag.co.uk)

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Wilfred's woeful face is wowing the world

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CASH COW WEEK 3

Real People's Puzzle Trail starts here!

Use the arrows to take you directly to the next puzzling page. Our beautiful bovine puzzle mascot, Florence, will kick things off with her Cash Cow comp...

Venture into the land of milk and money here and get your hands on a grand prize indeed! For your chance to win £1,000, collect the letter that appears with Flo, right, every week for eight weeks. When you've collected them all, rearrange them into an eight-letter word and write this on the entry coupon in issue 24.



It's udderly FAB!

Enter online at realpeoplemag.co.uk

FOLLOW FLORENCE TO PAGE 12

Our MAD WORLD!

Guaranteed to make you smile!

OH, CRUMBS!

Researchers can now answer that age-old question: which biccie is best to dunk in tea?



- 1 Bourbon
- 2 Shortbread
- 3 Jammie Dodger
- 4 Custard Cream
- 5 Rich Tea
- 6 Chocolate Hobnob
- 7 Digestive
- 8 Chocolate digestive
- 9 Fig Roll
- 10 Ginger Nut
- 11 Malted Milk
- 12 Hobnob

SOURCE: WREN KITCHENS



Comedy TOT

PAWFECT PALS!

My son, Joe, desperately wanted a puppy and we kept saying no. On his sixth birthday, we surprised him with Billi, a Tibetan terrier. They've been best pals ever since.

Wayne Rolfe, Upminster, Essex



My human's nearly as cute as me!



USA

Customers will find out the hard way what happens if they don't pay Louisiana roofer Andrew Jackson Higdon IV. One came home to find her entire roof gone and her house drenched from the rain. Having said that, Higdon is currently on bail for criminal damage.



UK

A motorist who drew attention to a dangerous pothole has been criticised by Essex County Council for spray-painting a giant penis around it. 'Reporting them on our website is a far more effective and safer way of sorting out potholes,' a spokesperson said.

JUST KIDDING AROUND!

Summer is right around the corner, so that's a reason to be cheerful. Another thing to make you giggle – and that's guaranteed – is this clip of baby goats up to all kinds of mischief. We dare you not to love those boisterous babies having a ball!



Search 'Cute Baby Goats – A Cute And Funny Baby Goats Compilation' on youtube.com

CAKE'S UP

Dust down your pinny, get your pals together and hold a bake sale for London's Great Ormond Street Hospital. Bake It Better runs from 21-27 May and little Mia, a GOSH patient, is raring to get started! On your marks, get set, bake!



NORWAY

Teens celebrating their high-school graduations have been asked by officials not to have sex on traffic roundabouts. A document sent out by the Public Roads department warns, 'Drivers can get too much of a surprise and completely forget they are driving.'

WORDS: VICKY POWELL
PICTURES: ALAMY, BIGSTOCK, INSTAGRAM, MARIA JEFFERIS, STUDIO 33, YOUTUBE



GINGER SNAPS

As Royal Wedding fever mounts, get your hands on a souvenir plate commemorating the wedding of blushing bride Meghan Markle and her dashing ginger prince... Ed Sheeran. Oops!



ZIMBABWE

Zambezi river tour guide Paul TEMPLER has told of being swallowed by a hippo after it plucked him from his canoe. 'The first thing I knew, I was in a deep, dank place with incredible pressure on my back,' he says. Paul survived, but lost an arm.



YOU GO, GIRL!

My husband, Rich, looked on in disbelief waiting to see if our daughter, Georgia, would get through that dessert. She did!!!
Sali Thomas, Dinbych, Clwyd



SWEET THING!

This is my little Oompa Loompa, Jasmine, four. She's a big chocolate fan and would have loved a trip to Willy Wonka's factory!
Stacey Hill, Torquay, Devon



ARGENTINA

When a whopping 550kg of marijuana disappeared from a police warehouse near Buenos Aires, cops had an explanation - it was scooped by mice. Forensic experts aren't convinced and want the police officers to appear before a judge.

WE WANT YOUR LETTERS!

£25 for each one printed. Send letters & original pics to Real People, Unit 9, Apollo Business Centre, Trundleys Road, Deptford, London SE8 5JE (letters@realpeoplemag.co.uk via email). Please include your name, address & phone number. If your picture is not original, we will not be able to pay you.

Twitter feed at twitter.com/RealPeopleMag

TU'S



TRUE STORIES

We know how much you love true-life stories, so Real People's Fraser Massey has found you the top shows we know you won't want to miss this week

Britain's Cocaine Addiction

Monday 14 May, 10pm, Channel 5

In the final episode of what's been a fascinating series on how police are battling with the UK's cocaine problem, undercover cop Darren investigates the trade in manufacturing and selling fake versions of the drug, and shows how dealers adulterate their product with other substances to increase profits. Also featured is the story of hapless Julian Underhill, 34, who couldn't believe his luck when he found £50m of cocaine washed up on a beach. 'I've got Willy Wonka's golden ticket,' he bragged, in a text that police later found on his phone!



My 600lb Life: One Ton Family

Tuesday 15 May, 9pm, TLC

Meet the Perrios family. Clarence, 33, weighs 38st, his sisters are Roshanda, 31, a whopping 57st 4lb and Brandie, 30 and 44st 4lb. Watch as they try to shed 1,000lb between them.



GPs: Behind Closed Doors

Wednesday 16 May, 8pm, Channel 5

A special edition marking Mental Health Awareness Week focuses on the work of medics at Horfield Health Centre, Bristol. Dr Alex McLaren (right) looks for solutions for a patient who hears voices.



Unreported World

Friday 11 May, 7.30pm, Channel 4

The Dominican Republic in the Caribbean is a paradise holiday destination attracting visitors from Britain and beyond. But it's also a dangerous place for local teenagers. Krishnan Guru-Murthy reports from the frontline of sex tourism.



DETAILS WERE ACCURATE WHEN WE WENT TO PRESS



As he headed to the checkout, Sue's son had his whole life – and a killer – in front of him...

I cradled my boy as he slipped away

T D E A T H

Pulling a steaming pan from the hob, I stepped backwards. 'Nicholas!'

I shrieked, nearly toppling over my toddler, who'd tucked himself behind my knees.

My three-year-old spent more time under my feet than our lino did!

Tubby as he was tall, Nick had always been clingy.

I'd split from his dad when he was just 15 months old.

Even after meeting my new partner, Andy Steadman, 24, it was still me and my boy against the world.

So I looked the other way when he sneaked biccies, and gave in to requests for seconds of tea.

By the time Nick reached school, though, the other kids were merciless.

'They call me fat and short,' Nick sniffed, mortified.

To make matters worse, he was a complete softie. He'd never fight back when he was picked on.

Instead, he just turned all their hate inside.

'I'm rubbish at everything,' he'd mumble, soon avoiding mirrors or family photos.

When me and Andy had two more kids – Cameron in 2000 and Hope the year after – Nick became a doting big brother.

'I hope you two are better people than me,' he'd tell them.

'Stop that!' I'd cry out. Somehow, he believed that because he was fat, he was useless, stupid and worthless.

As he grew, he'd make excuses not to go out.

One day, though, when he was 15, he popped his head round my bedroom door.

'Just going to see my mates,' he said.

When he was gone, I looked to Andy in shock, mouthing, 'Mates?'

Nick would hardly ever go out, preferring to stay home with his Xbox.

But soon it was clear these new pals were the wrong sort.

Nick would stay out until all hours.

More than once, I got a call from the police.

'Come and get him,' the local copper would say.

I'd drive over to the village marketplace, where a gaggle of half-drunk teenage boys would be waiting sheepishly.

I'd drag Nick home, but what else could I do?

At a whopping 6ft 4in, it wasn't like I could lock him in his room.

Soon, he

grew up, left school and drifted between jobs.

He'd always been tubby, but now he was flat-out obese.

His confidence was in the toilet.

As for our mother-son dream team?

We were as strained as the waistbands on the trousers I had to buy him online.

I was forever nagging Nick about sorting his life out.

In December 2014, when he was 23 and a groaning 24st 13lb, I finally snapped.

I'd indulged him his whole life. It was time for some tough love.

'You and me are joining the gym,' I barked.

He nodded knowingly, assuming I was all mouth and no star jump!

But I dragged him to the gym days later.

'Get on,' I instructed, pointing



When Nick was little, we were inseparable

towards an exercise bike.

After just 10 minutes, Nick was so puffed out he vomited.

Amazingly, though, he drank some water and got back in the saddle.

Walking home, he puffed, 'I can't do that every week!'

But soon after, he fell out with his old crowd of mates and threw himself into the gym.

He had turned his life around after a few difficult years



Me and Andy (centre) with Cameron, Nick and Hope

L T H



Supermarket SLAUGHTER

*Monk killed my
lad as he was
getting a bottle
of water*



There was no stopping him. Within months, Nick was working out up to twice a day! I was paying for the membership – a lot on my beautician's wages – but it was worth it.

Every time he came downstairs in the morning, he seemed to have shrunk.

By last July, Nick was just 5lb off his 155st goal.

He'd lost nearly 10st in all, and was just weeks away from starting his dream job as a bouncer.

He was soft as butter, and I couldn't imagine what he'd do in a fight. I think he just liked the thought of using the job to pick up all the girls! 'I look alright,' he grinned one afternoon, admiring himself in the mirror.

'You look great!' I laughed.

His life was finally falling into place, and he seemed happy in himself.

I was so proud, and I hoped that he wouldn't slip back into his old ways.

Last July, I was in the garden sharing some wine with a friend.

'You want some?' I smiled to Nick, as he and his mate, Leo Wardrop, 27, sauntered in.

'Nah, we're off for a run, then to the gym,' he replied, settling into a plastic chair next to me.

We sat around for a bit, laughing and joking.

Finally, around 5.30pm, the boys announced they were off.

Nick wandered out of the garden before sticking his head over the fence.

'Can you wash my T-shirt while I'm out?' he grinned.

'Cheeky sod!

'Wash your own bloomin' shirt,' I laughed, before adding, 'Of course, I'll do it.'

Just as Nick walked off, I shouted after him, 'Be careful.'

A couple of hours later, I was still in the garden when my mobile went.

'Leo?' I asked, hearing Nick's friend scream down the line.

The sheer panic in his voice made my blood run cold.

'It's bad,' he kept wailing.

'Where are you?' I asked.

'Morrisons,' he replied.

Dropping the phone, I grabbed Andy and ran for my car.

The supermarket was just a minute-and-a-half drive from us.

We'd barely left home when we spotted a sea of blue flashing lights.

Ambulances, police cars, an air ambulance...

Without waiting for Andy to park, I hurled myself

out of the car and through the shop's automatic doors.

Then, I spotted him.

Lying flat on his back by the self-service checkouts, blood poured from Nick's head and his beautiful eyes were unblinking.

Running through a cordon and past a wall of police, who tried to hold me back, I flung myself towards my son.

I clutched Nick's feet – it was the closest I was allowed to get.

'It'll be OK,' I repeated, as they gave CPR. 'Don't worry, baby.'

After half an hour, Nick was taken to intensive care at Norfolk and Norwich Hospital.

Refusing to leave his bedside, I held my baby boy.

'I'm so proud of you,' I whispered. 'I should have told you before.'

I wanted it to be me lying there, not Nick.

His life had only just begun.

The next day, doctors called me and Andy into a side room and explained that Nick was brain-dead.

The words shattered my soul into pieces.

I think I'd known since I'd spotted him in the supermarket.

But to hear it made it official. At 26, my son was no more.

Before we switched his life support off, we let his friends say their goodbyes.

I swelled with pride as 30 lads and lasses filed in one by one.

He was so loved – the boy who was once so insecure that he didn't have friends, now had clearly touched so many lives.

Later that day, the police sat us down, saying that Lee Monk, 20, had been charged with murder.

'Lee Monk?' I gasped.

The name rang a bell as one of

when he'd spotted Monk.

They'd had a verbal row over some jewellery that Nick was supposed to have taken months before.

I didn't believe it.

He'd punched Nick to the floor. As shoppers and young children screamed, Nick was booted in the back of the head.

Witnesses said Nick made 'no attempt to defend himself'.

My sweet, soft lad had just taken it. Same as always.

He'd struggled to his feet, staggered a short distance, then suffered a cardiac arrest and collapsed.

After a two-week trial, Monk was cleared of murder, but found guilty

My son died for nothing

the lads Nick used to hang out with from the bad crowd.

I knew they'd fallen out, but I didn't know the specifics.

Before I could find out, it took 10 agonising weeks until we could hold Nick's funeral at Earlam Cemetery in Norwich, where 120 of us poured into the crematorium to Charlie Puth's *See You Again*.

His white casket was scrawled with messages of love.

'I wish you'd known how perfect you were,' I thought.

I'd battled my whole life to build Nick up.

Just when he was finally starting out on a proper life, it'd all been snatched away.

It made no sense.

In December 2017, Lee Monk's trial started at Norwich Crown Court.

I sat through every single day, shutting my eyes when CCTV of the attack was played.

The court heard that Nick had only gone in for a bottle of water.

He'd been walking to the till

of manslaughter and sentenced to 11 years in prison.

'That's for my baby,' I smiled, looking up to the heavens outside the court and kissing the sky.

Now, it's been nearly a year since we lost Nick.

It gets harder by the day. My son died for nothing.

All he was doing was a quick shop, and he lost his life.

I keep waiting for things to get back to normal,

forgetting there is no normal

any more.

Instead, I have an urn on the mantelpiece.

I'll never scatter Nick's ashes.

I couldn't. His place is next to me.

It always was, and it always will be.



*I'll never be
able to get back
to normal*

**Sue Rogers, 45,
Wymondham, Norfolk**

As told to Miyo Padi & Rosa McMahon
(stories@realpeoplemag.co.uk)

Real 7
people



Women are in the driving seat!

THE REAL STORY

The next builder's bum you see bending out of the back of a white van might just be a woman's!

According to Auto Trader UK, women make up 32 per cent of all van drivers these days, with many buying vans for their own businesses.

And what about a short back and sides? That's what fellas get down the barbers, right?

Well, a survey by men's grooming brand The Bluebeards Revenge found that 56 per cent of women have visited barbers in the past two years, for shorter, sharper cuts at a lower price.

The world is changing. Gender roles are being consigned to a big pink dustbin, especially on TV.

You may have noticed that there are fewer and fewer ads depicting men as useless lumps married to a cross between Nigella Lawson and Wonder Woman.

The Committee of Advertising Practice tightened the rules on gender stereotypes after a 2012 Asda Christmas ad showed an exhausted mug of a mum doing everything for the family.

But is there not a ring of truth to that?

Multitasking is what distinguishes the women from the wimps, right?

Gillian Crawley separates the facts from the fiction...

Martyr mums get the bird



Real people 8



He's saving his energy for more important stuff!

It's SEX th RIGHT

YES: Man flu is real

It's a standing joke that men crawl under the duvet, weakly calling for Lemsip, at the first sign of a sniffle, but scientists have discovered that 'man flu' is not to be sneezed at.

A team of researchers from the Memorial University of Newfoundland, in Canada, discovered that men have a higher risk of hospital admissions, as well as higher rates of influenza-associated deaths, compared with women in the same age groups, regardless of underlying disease.

Lead researcher Dr Kyle Sue thinks that men are being unfairly accused of being wimps.

'Men have weaker immune systems and may not be exaggerating symptoms,' he insists.

He adds that there may be an evolutionary benefit to having a weaker immune system – apparently, it allows men to invest their energy in other biological functions, like growth and reproduction. You hear that, girls? He might be a pathetic lump on the sofa, but he's dynamite in the sack!



Being a love rat improves men's spatial awareness!

YES: Men read maps better

Thanks to randy cavemen putting the 'lust' into wanderlust, it turns out that men really are better at navigating.

US researchers from the University of Utah theorise that ancient man felt the need to wander about and cast his seed far and wide, to reduce inbreeding – or simply because he felt like it.

As a result, he developed better spatial skills, such as navigation and direction, that still show up today as a difference between male and female brains.

The study looked at two tribes in a region of Namibia, south west Africa,

who have maintained the same traditions for centuries. The men regularly roam and forage across 120 miles of terrain a year, and have sex with different women in the regions they cover.

By comparison, the women of the tribes do not travel as far.

In spatial awareness tasks, the men did significantly better.

Researcher Layne Vashro says, 'Navigational ability facilitates travelling longer distances and exploring new environments.'

'The men who travel more also have children by more women – what you'd expect if mating was the payoff for travel.'

YES: ...but they're reckless

How many times have you wanted to smash something and eat chocolate when told that women are irrational?

Well, it's payback time. A study of financial traders found that, when it comes to high finance, it's men who are driven by instinct and tempted to make risky deals that break the bank.

A study of US traders by researchers for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's *Journal Of Economics* found

that men were consistently over confident and reckless compared with women.

No surprises there, but the 'wisdom' given for employing men on testosterone-fuelled trading floors is that, though they may have some crashes, they also bring in bigger profits than their cautious sisters.

Not true, found the researchers.

They said that if, you want a guarantee of comfortable retirement, you're better off banking on a woman.

NO: Boys DO cry

In a sobering study, medical school students at America's Harvard University found that, far from being rough-and-tumble little hooligans, small boys are far more likely to feel emotional than girls of the same age.

Little lads in the test group consistently smiled, laughed and cried more than the girls.

But by the time they got to school, the boys had nearly all learned to cover up any feelings of sadness.

'The idea is that a boy needs to be disciplined, toughened up, made to act like a "real man", be independent, keep the emotions in check,' lead researcher William Pollack says.

'A boy is told that "big boys don't cry" and that he shouldn't be "a mama's boy".'

'We need to develop a new code where both boys and girls can be themselves.'

'If we want boys to become more empathic, we must be more empathic towards them.'



a ing ?

It's best to do one thing at a time



Gender stereotypes – do they ring true? You may be surprised...

NO: They CAN multitask

Everyone knows that women are much better at multitasking than men, right?

Yet, despite all the theories, a group of psychologists based at four British universities couldn't find any real proof.

So, in a study published in *BMC Psychology* journal in 2013, they set a group of women and men three everyday tasks to be done in eight minutes – which included finding

a restaurant on a map of an

unfamiliar city, doing some simple maths, and working out the best way to find a set of keys lost somewhere in a room.

It was up to them to decide how much time to spend on each task and, just to make it interesting, they were interrupted with a phone call.

Both sexes performed equally, with just one difference – the women were much better at finding the keys!

They concluded that everyone is better if left to get on with one thing at a time but, because women see themselves as multitasking ninjas, we let men off.

NO: But women play rough, too

It's true that men are generally much more aggressive than women – but what happens when you take away society's constraints?

In an experiment done by researchers at America's Princeton University in 1994, men and women were told to win a video game by dropping bombs on others.

Playing together in the same room, women dropped fewer bombs than men.

But, playing anonymously, the ladies were not only more trigger-happy, they also hunted out other players far more ruthlessly than the men.

Little boys learn to hide their sadness

WOMEN ARE FROM MARS?

'Women are more emotionally wired'



Janice Hiller

Men are floundering to cope with the huge changes in gender roles, according to clinical psychologist Janice Hiller.

In her practice, which specialises in relationships and psychosexual therapy, Dr Hiller sees couples who are bickering and resentful in their struggle to manage their roles – particularly when children come along.

'Many men are willing to share the workload, but the women say it's still up to them to organise and run everything, and then the men come in and do bits when they can and when they feel like it,' Dr Hiller says.

'Socially and culturally, men feel they should be doing more domestic tasks and childcare, but, on another level, it seems they don't feel it is their role.

'It's controversial, but there are significant hormonal and brain differences between men and women.

'Though some people are non-

typical and you find husbands who do everything and wives who are very career-minded, lots of people tend to follow their gendered roles.'

Dr Hiller continues, 'I think men are evolutionarily wired to want to provide for the family.

'I think it is a primitive need. Whereas women are more emotionally wired and more likely to want to protect and care for the family.'



We just don't think the same way...

'Men's brains are bigger'

A fascinating study into the differences between the male and female

brain has found that, though men's brains are significantly bigger, which should give them a higher IQ, women's brains have a thicker cortex – the area that deals with intelligence. This could account for why they perform just as well in cognitive tests.

Dr Stuart Ritchie and his team at the University of Edinburgh's psychology department based their research on data from UK Biobank, a government-funded study of the medical statistics of 500,000 people in the UK.

'There are definite differences between men's and women's brains,' he says. 'It is true that men perform better in tests to do with spatial awareness and women do better in using what's

called the "social brain", to do with empathy.

'But it's not enough to say that it's just genetics.

There could also be environmental factors – like men being drawn to mechanical things, and spending a lot of time in cars, so that they become good at driving and parking.

'Women do much better on tasks that involve understanding people's intentions and motives, and that's interesting when you realise that men are much more likely to have autism and Asperger's syndrome – the extreme end of not understanding what people are thinking.

'We've thrown up more questions than answers, but I hope other researchers can use what we've found to look into why some psychiatric disorders are skewed more to one sex than the other, and find treatments.'



Stuart Ritchie



Men... bigger, but not better!

Wash'n' D'OH!

Becca wanted to look scorched for her 21st. But why was actual steam rising from her head?

Would it be breakfast in bed washed down with Prosecco? Or waking up in a posh hotel with crisp sheets, listening to waves lap at the shore of a beach far from home?

Well, it isn't every morning you turn 21...

And I knew exactly what I wanted for that special morning.

'This!' I said, turning my phone to show my boyfriend, Brad O'Brien, 20, the image on its screen.

It was of a model with long, shiny, perfectly highlighted blonde hair. A gorgeous, glistening waterfall of a mane...

For my 21st, all I wanted was a big do – a hairdo!

Brad nodded approvingly. 'It's styled by Toni & Guy,' I said. 'They're one of the best salon chains in Britain.'

So, I got on the phone and booked myself into our Alton, Hampshire, branch of Toni & Guy for the morning of my 21st.

It was going to cost me a bomb – £200 for a cut, colour and blow-dry! But I wanted to feel special.

I'd have to use all my birthday

money, as well as my savings, but I was so excited to think I'd be having movie-star treatment on my special day.

Not like when I was little... My mum, Christine, 55, had thought it was cute to give me and my sister Rachael matching haircuts. She'd plunk a glass bowl on our heads and cut around it!

'We look like Harry Potter!' I'd complain.

No wonder I'd grown up wanting to study hairdressing at college and learn how to do it properly!

Now, though, I lived with my half-sister Anna, 45, and had a job waitressing in a hotel.

And as I cleared plates and wiped down tables, I was spurred on knowing that every spare penny was going towards my deluxe birthday hair.

As the day approached, my anticipation grew. 'I want you to feel like a Hollywood princess all day long,' Brad said.

So, after my appointment, he was going to take me shopping, then out for Prosecco and dinner:

'You're going to look a million dollars,' he grinned.

Finally, the day arrived. Brad drove me to Toni & Guy in good

time for my 9.30am appointment.

'Enjoy every minute,' he said, kissing me goodbye.

I couldn't help feeling nervous as I walked into the swish salon, but my butterflies subsided as I was settled into a comfy chair.

After a consultation with my stylist, who was lovely and friendly, I chose my exact style and shade of blonde. While the colour was mixed, I flicked through a magazine.

'This is the life,' I thought.

My scalp was getting hotter

Then the stylist got going, brushing the dye onto my long, dark locks and neatly folding the tin foils. When she'd got through two bowls, she asked an apprentice to mix some more.

And, as my stylist was dabbing on the third batch, I began to feel a burning sensation, as if a boiling pan or kettle was touching my scalp.

I bit my lip, hoping it would wear off, but my scalp got hotter and hotter.

'I'm sorry, but I think something's wrong,' I piped up.

'No, you're fine,' the stylist said breezily. 'We're nearly finished.'

But, in the mirror, I could see the foils actually *steaming*.

'It's like my whole head's on fire!' I thought, writhing in pain.

I was finally led to the sink for the foils to be removed.

'They're steaming,' I heard the stylist saying, alarm in her voice.

She carried on, and every tug of my hair brought fresh agony.

I longed for cool water to soothe the pain, but the liquid felt piping-hot as it ran over my head to rinse out the shampoo.

'Have you had a perm?' the stylist asked. 'Did you have something else on your head?'

'I've never had a perm,' I replied through gritted teeth.

My scalp was feeling stiff and numb, and all I wanted to do was cry. I couldn't bear my head or hair to be touched.

'I don't want it cut,' I said, close to tears. 'My head is burning.'

'We'll give you a blow-dry free of charge,' the stylist said – but the hot air from the hairdryer was unbearable, too.

'Please stop,' I said. 'I want to leave now.'

There was no manager to be seen, just staff and trainees crowding around reception.

My scalp was so badly burned that I ended up with a permanent bald patch on my head...

... but Friar Tuck is not a good look for a girl!

The salon said there would be no fee but, somehow, in my confusion, I gave the stylist £10! Outside, I burst into tears. 'Please can you come and get me?' I sobbed down the phone to Brad. He was there in minutes. 'They've messed up really badly,' I cried. 'My head's hurting so much.'

We went back to Anna's house. She took one look at my head and said, 'It's all blistered. You must call the doctor.'

I spoke to the GP, who said I had chemical burns and needed to go to A&E.

After a long wait, I was seen, but told there was little I could do except wait for the blisters to heal.

All my birthday plans were ruined. Back home, hurting, shocked and miserable, I rang my parents.

'I'm calling the salon manager,' my dad, Graham, 66, declared.

Soon after, the manager rang me to apologise and offer 'free services'.

'Er, no thanks,' I replied.

I never wanted to see the inside of a Toni & Guy salon again as long as I lived.

All my plans were cancelled. I stayed in, curtains closed, head throbbing.

Happy 21st? Happy head-banging hell!

Next day, the salon sent me a vast bouquet. Flowers were the last thing I needed as I wiled away the time before I could take my next batch of painkillers.

Over the following weeks, the blisters kept bursting, then scabbing over, but they became

weepy and full of pus, which stuck to my scalp.

The doctor prescribed antibiotics, but the infection wouldn't clear up. Horrible headaches kept me awake at night and, when I put my hair up for work, embarrassingly, there was a horrible, rotting smell.

Brad applied Savlon and antibiotic creams. He'd help me wash my hair with baby shampoo and gently untangle the bloodied, scabby knots, which took up to an hour each time.

There was a rotting smell

In the shower one day, I looked down to find clumps of hair in my hands and started screaming, 'My hair's falling out!'

Brad ran in and hugged me as I collapsed in tears. There was a bald patch the size of a tennis ball at the back of my head.

It looked like a monk's tonsure haircut. Toni & Guy had turned me into Friar Tuck!

'What if it never grows back?' I said in despair.

I felt gutted, anxious and nervy, my old self-confidence torn to shreds.

After five courses of antibiotics, I was referred to a dermatologist, who gave me yet more antibiotics and steroids. But the infection continued to recur.

Nearly two years after my disastrous 21st, I had a consultation with a surgeon.

'The only way to get rid of this infection is to cut it out,' he told me. 'But I'm afraid that

the hair follicles are irreparably damaged. No hair will grow there again.'

So, it was final... I was going to have a Friar Tuck head until the day I died.

I couldn't believe a birthday hairdo had led to this.

The surgery was done under local anaesthetic. I could hear the scalpel cutting through my skin, and feel the blood dripping down the back of my head.

I left hospital the same day with a head full of stitches, a 9cm scar and a permanent bald patch.

I decided to seek legal advice – it didn't feel right to let Toni & Guy get away with this.

'I don't want anyone else to go through the same thing,' I told a solicitor.

More than money, I wanted the salon to feel my pain – even for a second – admit their mistake and say sorry.

Yet, as letters flew back and forth, they tried to suggest my injuries had happened elsewhere!

They even asked for bank and credit card statements to prove I hadn't had treatment at another salon after leaving theirs.

'The only place I went after leaving Toni & Guy was hospital,' I fumed.

It took three-and-a-half years before they agreed to pay me a five-figure sum 'on no admission of liability'.

Now, my bald patch is about 7.5cm long and 3cm wide. I use my styling skills to cover it –

thankfully, my remaining hair is thick – but I live in fear that a sudden gust of wind will expose it to the world.

My experience at the hands of Toni & Guy has put me off hairdressers for good.

I work in a nursery now, and love being with babies – they don't care if you have a bald patch.

So much for wanting glamorous, Hollywood hair for my 21st birthday. With my bleach-burnt scalp, I could be cast in a horror film!

Becca Peet, 25, Alton, Hampshire

● A spokesperson for Toni & Guy says, 'This was a distressing situation, so we wish to reassure potential and existing clients that all of our stylists, including our colour technicians, go through a rigorous, education-based training programme to ensure the highest of standards are met and maintained.'

Brad, my boyfriend, has been amazing

Solve the crossword and, when complete, the yellow boxes will answer the question below. Enter on page 43.



ACROSS

- 1 Desert hallucination (6)
- 5 ___ McAvoy, actor reprising his role as Gnomeo in *Sherlock Gnomes*, out this week (pictured top) (5)
- 8 Break into many pieces (of glass, eg) (7)
- 13 Shock, astound (5)
- 14 Not real, made up (9)
- 15 Fast (5)
- 16 No score (3)
- 17 Single circuit of a racetrack (3)
- 18 Avarice (5)

- 19 24 hours ago (9)
- 20 ___ Osbourne, rocker back as Fawn in new film *Sherlock Gnomes* (4)
- 21 Move around restlessly, wriggle (6)
- 23 ___ Lucas, returning as Benny in the new film (4)
- 25 Holy cow! (3)
- 27 Very blowy (of weather) (8)
- 29 Area in a 9D where imported goods are checked etc (7)
- 31 ___ Merchant, comic back on vocal duty as Paris in *Sherlock Gnomes* (7)

- 33 Fruit preserve (3)
- 35 Run-of-the-mill (7)
- 36 Australian bird (3)
- 37 Chardonnay or Pinot Grigio, eg (5,4)
- 39 Male law enforcer (9)
- 40 Frozen water (3)
- 41 Argentinian dance (5)
- 42 Witness (3)
- 43 Evolve (7)
- 45 Occurs (7)
- 47 Older lady who's never married (8)
- 49 Sprint (3)
- 50 ___ J Blige, singer voicing Irene in *SG* (4)

- 51 Tree limb (6)
- 54 Throw – salad? (4)
- 56 Talk down to (9)
- 61 Flashlight (5)
- 63 Snooker stick (3)
- 64 Illuminated (3)
- 65 Natural red dye (5)
- 66 Building designer (9)
- 67 Japanese currency (3)
- 68 Sir ___ Caine, acting legend reprising his role as Juliet's father, Lord Redbrick, in the new film (7)
- 69 Exams (5)
- 70 Snuggle (6)

DOWN

- 2 Furious, livid (5)
- 3 Made minor corrections to (7)
- 4 ___ Blunt, actress back as Juliet in *Sherlock Gnomes*, out this week (pictured bottom) (5)
- 5 Denim trousers (5)
- 6 Corn (5)
- 7 Get to your feet (5)
- 8 Craftily, deviously (5)
- 9 Heathrow or Gatwick, eg (7)
- 10 Precious stone that can be blue or dark yellow (5)
- 11 Crimson (3)
- 12 Dame ___ Smith, Lady Bluebury in *Sherlock Gnomes* (6)
- 21 On all ___, on your hands and knees (5)
- 22 This planet (5)
- 24 Booze (7)
- 25 Court, romance (3)
- 26 ___ Abbey, famous London landmark (11)
- 27 Twitcher, person who likes to look out for our feathery friends (11)
- 28 Ergo, and for that reason (9)
- 30 This punctuation mark ;' (9)
- 32 Requires (5)
- 33 Dame ___ Walters, actress back voicing Ms Montague in *SG* (5)
- 34 Low-power motorbike (5)
- 38 Cutting tooth (7)
- 44 Football field (5)
- 46 Writing implement (3)
- 48 Normal golf score (3)
- 50 Make-up for your eyelashes (7)
- 52 Stinging plants (7)
- 53 ___ Depp, actor voicing the title character in *Sherlock Gnomes* (6)
- 55 Possess (3)
- 56 Oyster's gem (5)
- 57 Implicit, unspoken (5)
- 58 Leaves out (5)
- 59 Creative mental concepts (5)
- 60 Sir ___ John, superstar whose music is used heavily in both *Gnome* films (5)
- 62 The Queen, eg (5)
- 65 Garment edge (3)

PRIZE QUESTION: Who does Chiwetel Ejiofor voice in the new *Sherlock Gnomes* film? (5,6)

TAKE THE Real People TIME CHALLENGE:

- 40 mins or less: *Gnome-ero uno!*
- 41-50 mins: *Gnome mean feat*
- 51-60 mins: *Gnome man's land*
- Over an hour: *Gno, Gno, Gno!*



PICTURES: GETTY

Enter online at realpeplemag.co.uk



FOLLOW FLO TO PAGE 17

TIME TO KILL

Crime for your coffee break

Walk out on black widow Patricia Byers at your own peril...

Like many men his age, at 51, Carel Gottgens had decided life was too short. After his relationship broke down, he wanted to follow his heart.

Almost 10 years earlier, he'd left his wife and two daughters for a life with Patricia Byers.

But now, in 1990, that was also on the rocks.

After meeting a woman in Thailand, he decided to leave his and Trish's home in Yatala in Queensland, Australia, for a new life abroad.

He'd bought a plane ticket for 6 July, one-way.

He was never seen again.

Trish told neighbours he'd left her for a Thai girl, while friends and colleagues thought that Carel had a new job in the marine industry in Asia.

There was no news of him, only a typed letter to his boss about moving abroad.

Oddly, he'd added that Trish was so smart and good-looking that *I can't see her being left on the shelf*.

Sure enough, by 1993, she was in a relationship with a new man, insurance agent John Asquith.



She shot her ex John Asquith on their boat



The murder shocked Moreton Bay

OVER YOUR DEAD BODY

One weekend, she suggested they went to their boat in Moreton Bay.

They had dinner on deck, made love, had a shower together and then went to bed.

Then John woke up... to find he'd been shot in the head!

By some miracle, the bullet had shattered when it hit his head and hadn't killed him.

Trish was slumped on deck, saying she thought she'd been hit on the head when pirates had boarded their boat.

John was well enough to call for help, but cops were suspicious. Moreton Bay didn't tend to be teeming with pirates...

When John told police he was convinced he'd seen a gun below deck, Trish asked him to retract his statement.

With a little digging, police found that five life insurance policies for a total of £150,000 had been taken out in John's name without his knowledge.

All bore a forged signature. And Trish, who worked in insurance, would know just what to do.

Their suspicions were confirmed when a fisherman discovered a sawn-off rifle in



a nearby river. The gun matched shavings found on a workbench at Trish's house, and police were able to prove it was the same gun used to shoot John.

But Trish made a big mistake. Shooting a sawn-off gun at close range reduces the speed of the bullet.

'Luckily for John, he seemed to have a thick skull and the bullet did not penetrate,' said prosecutor Paul Rutledge.

Trish claimed that John had actually shot himself in a conspiracy to defraud insurers.

The jury didn't buy it and, in September 1994, she was found guilty of attempted murder and sentenced to 12 years in jail.

But that wasn't the end of the story...

Seeing news reports of the trial, Carel Gottgens' family started wondering if there was a more sinister reason for his disappearance.

Was Trish a serial black widow? Had she bumped off Carel for his money like she'd tried to do with John?

When investigators looked at Carel's financial history, it all led back to Trish.

She'd milked his accounts by forging his signature and had used his credit card.

And there was more. Police found tiny droplets of dried blood on her bedroom wall.

DNA, the silent witness, had been lying in wait, ready to be

discovered after all these years.

When a sample was compared with Carel's daughters' DNA, there was a match.

Then there was the bed she'd bought the day after Carel had 'gone abroad'.

As Paul Rutledge said, 'Why do you order a new bed? Because the old one is covered in blood.'

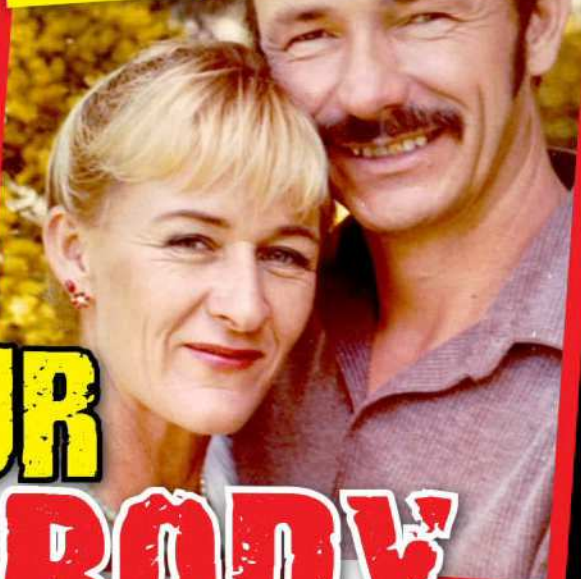
And, of course, Carel's letter was penned by his killer herself, boasting that she was such a catch!

Despite protesting her innocence, she was convicted again of murder in 1999, and this time jailed for life. The jury was only told about her attempted murder of John after the verdict.

In 2016, following a change in the law in South Australia that introduced a 'no body, no parole' rule, Trish changed her tune and confessed to killing Carel, saying he'd 'fallen into a river'.

Carel's body has never been found. And so long as it remains hidden, Trish remains in jail - a form of justice Carel is exacting from beyond his watery grave.

Patricia fessed up to killing Carel Gottgens



Watch Patricia Byers on Crime + Investigation on Sunday 20 May at 9pm.

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BY LINDSAY CALDER

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OUCH!

Head over HEELS

Kate's fitness plan was a right carry on...

With a cheeky smile, my hubby Chris, 35, announced he had a surprise. I was all ears.

A mini-break, a fancy pressie? 'I've entered us in a wife-carrying competition,' he beamed.

Eh?

'No way,' I said.

But he'd already paid the £50 entrance fee.

'But you can't lift me,' I blushed.

'I'll start doing weights in the gym and you can lose a few pounds,' he said.

Charming!

I was mum to Jessica, five, and Hannah, two, and although I'd lost my baby weight, the pounds had crept back on.

Walking up and down the carriage aisles as a train manager didn't seem to burn as many calories as I'd hoped!

At just 5ft 4in, I weighed 10st.

'Well, I suppose this wife-carrying thing would help me get fit,' I reasoned.

With the race in just five months, we practised in the living room.

We opted for the Estonian Hold – me hanging upside down on Chris's back, his bum in my face.

The girls squealed with laughter. When the race came round in April, I'd lost half a stone.

My mum Janice, 61, looked after the girls as their parents gingerly



Me and my hubby Chris

approached the start line of the obstacle course in Dorking, Surrey.

I had to wear a cycle helmet to take part, but I wasn't worried about safety.

The only thing I cared about was NOT winning the special prize for the heaviest wife! The winner got a packet of sausages. The shame!

Bang! We were off.

Loads of couples shot away, leaving me and Chris panting behind. All I could see was the mud below as we thudded up a hill.

On the way down, we entered the 'soak zone',

'ALL I COULD SEE WAS THE MUD'

Before I knew it, I was on a stretcher



Chris's feet just slipped from under him

where spectators aimed water guns at us.

It was even muddier there.

Then, Chris's feet slipped from under him and... *Splat!*

Down I came, head first.

'My back!' I yelled in agony, spitting mud.

As Chris knelt beside me, someone covered me in a coat and the next thing I knew I was being fastened onto a stretcher.

When I arrived at East Surrey Hospital in Redhill, the doctor had to google the Estonian Hold to see how I'd fallen.

'What's the worst outcome?' I asked.

'A broken neck or back,' came the reply.

What about my girls, my job? How would I cope in

a wheelchair?

Then a scan showed there were no broken bones – I just had torn ligaments.

The relief!

After five hours in hospital, I went home with painkillers and a list of neck exercises.

Working on the trains, the rocking of the carriage could jar, so I was signed off sick for five weeks. 'I'm so sorry,' Chris said – and he's been saying it ever since.

The competition organiser sent me a new race T-shirt as mine had to be cut off in the hospital.

'And he's given us free entry to the race next year!' Chris said.

He can go if he wants, but the wife he'll be carrying won't be me!

Kate Burke, 36, Boldmere, West Midlands

RUFF justice

Bludgeoned by a burglar, Joyce, 86, had gran's best friend on her side...

I surveyed the garden – my pride and joy. OK, it was wintry March just gone and it didn't look much, but in a few months' time, it would be a riot of colour.

Only... 'Those grubby paving slabs are letting the side down,' I mumbled. 'They could do with a clean,' I said to Axel, my four-year-old German shepherd-Akita cross.

Trouble was, at my age, if I bent down to give them a scrub, I wouldn't get up till Christmas!

I was 86 years young, an ex-dressmaker, living with my son, Jeffrey, 60, and his daughter, Sara, 36.

They were both out, so it was just me and Axel nosing

our way around the crocus shoots. Axel was a rescue dog – a soppo, gentle giant who shadowed me everywhere.

As I wandered to the bottom of the garden, I saw the shape of a man through the slats of our 6ft-tall fence.

'Probably after directions,' I thought. So I went to greet him, opening the gate in the fence.

Suddenly, he whipped out a wooden pole. He lifted it, then brought it down.

Thwack!

He'd walloped me on my forehead.

Staggering, I fell backwards and heard a sharp crack as my head thumped against one of the cement posts.

I screamed in complete shock.

A figure loomed over me, a black

hoodie shrouding his head.

'You old women have lots of money and jewels,' he said.

My head spun with stars as I lay frozen on the ground.

His hands began to tug at my earrings. 'He's going to rip them right off!' I panicked.

What could I do? I was all alone.

Except, I wasn't...

A huge ball of fur catapulted up at the mugger.

Axel!

He sprang at the man and clamped his fangs around his arm.

Go on, Axel!

I'd never seen this side of him, he was usually such a dopey thing.

The man thrashed his arm, trying to throw him off. With a shake, he did and flew out of the gate, Axel racing behind him.

I managed to wobble back to the kitchen.

I sat in terror for a good hour before Jeffrey came home from his work as a motor engineer.

'I've been mugged,' I croaked, holding a bottle of chilled soda against my head.

Finally, Axel came striding back. 'I thought I'd lost you,' I said, hugging him, relieved.

His nose was covered in the man's blood. Well, serves him right!

After I'd finished cuddling Axel, he went to his bowl and gulped his water thirstily.

Paramedics gave me the once-over – just two bumps on the head.

The police came, but couldn't get a DNA sample from Axel's muzzle because he'd washed it off when he'd stuck his snout in the drinking water.

Never mind, he's still my hero.

I might not be here if he hadn't pounced to my rescue.

The crim may still be at large but, thanks to Axel, he'll be licking some nasty wounds.

Joyce Ackerley, 86, Little Hulton, Gtr Manchester



Burglars: Beware of the dog!



Me and Axel, my rescue dog

Shrunk FOOD!

Minuscule portions? Don't scoff, says cook Thom...

'Ow, ow, ow!' I set down the hot baking tray on the table before my fingers burned.

A couple of friends had come over for a Sunday roast, with me and my son, Sebby, two.

There was enough food to make even Henry VIII blush!

Roast beef, roasties, home-made Yorkshires and my signature

cheesy cauliflower and leeks all hit the spot.

'Eaten too much again,' I smiled to Sebby, patting my tummy.

I was what you call a foodie – it was my passion both at home and at work.

Three years earlier, I'd set up Fozzie, a website promoting eateries in Bristol, and I was always looking for the next food fad.

And flicking through videos on YouTube in August 2017, I had a eureka moment. I stared, transfixed, as a chef prepared a lasagne the size of a pound coin!

Minuscule food, made on minuscule stoves and eaten with minuscule cutlery.

THOM THUMB



Small plates take big skill

Tiny cookery – it was bonkers, but could it be the next big thing?

You get naked cafes these days, and ice bars, so why not thimble food?

I ran the idea past a mate.

'Perfect if you're on a diet,' he joked.

'I don't

get it – that's not going to fill you up,' commented another.

Perhaps a restaurant might not fly, I thought.

But it was clearly a popular craft online. Maybe people would pay to learn to make Thumbelina food?

So I set up The Tiny Cookery School, more in hope than expectation!

I bought miniature pots and pans from an outlet in Germany – £15 for a pan the size of a thimble!

Me and my mates Natalie and Gordon devised some recipes.

It had to be simple, as cordon bleu would be too ambitious on a postage stamp-sized plate.

So we went for fish finger sandwiches, burgers and chips, and hired a cafe in March to host our first event.

Twenty-five people turned up, each paying £20. I could see some women had dragged along their disbelieving husbands.

But soon their heads were bowed, concentrating on slicing tiny chunks of spuds with a scalpel. The meatballs were the most difficult.

Our willing chefs had to split one thumb nail of mince into seven balls.

Once they'd cooked on the mini-stove heated by a tealight, they swished their napkins and leaned forward to tuck in with tiny cutlery.

And no sooner had they started than they'd finished! It was the shortest dinner party ever.

'We'll stop at the chippy on the way home,' laughed one husband, and I understood completely.

Some people think it's ridiculous, but it's a skill and a fun evening – perfect for a dating couple perhaps.

We've got more events lined up, so, with any luck, big things will grow from my tiny plates.

Thom Whitchurch, 34, Bristol



Me and Sebby love our food!

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Q2 2018

RealPeople10May18

PUZZLE TRAIL

1 Which metallic chemical element, with the symbol Zn, combines with copper to make brass?

2 Lady's Slipper is a variety of what plant?

3 Find five sea birds.

4 Which animal shares its name with one of the seven deadly sins?

5 Which chemical element, with the symbol Hg, is commonly known as quicksilver and is used in thermometers?

6 *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?* returned to ITV last weekend, but who was on hosting duties?

7 Which chemical element, with the symbol O, is a gas that is important to the atmosphere on earth and sustaining human life?

8 Complete the joke: Have you heard the one about the corduroy pillow?

9 What type of coat is used as slang for a person with an unfashionable hobby or obsession, such as trainspotting?

10 Which chemical element, with the symbol Au, is a precious metal measured in carats?

11 Which song includes the lyrics, 'I belong with you, You belong with me, You're my sweetheart, I belong with you, You belong with me... '?

12 Which body parts are also the names of the hour and minute pointers on a clock?

13 What names have the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge given to their third child?

14 Which chemical element, with the symbol He, is known best for its use as a lifting gas for balloons and airships?

15 Bagpipes are especially associated with which country?

16 What kind of drink is Stella Artois?

17 Which chemical element, with the symbol Fe, is found in all living organisms and is important to the blood, particularly haemoglobin, a shortage of which can cause anaemia?

18 SGP is the international vehicle registration code for which country?

19 Which Welsh-born mezzo-soprano has announced the birth of her second child with hubby Andrew Levitas?

20 Which comic was known for wearing a fez?

21 Which chemical element, with the symbol Ne, is a noble gas best known for its use in fluorescent lighting?

22 Find five *Match Of The Day* presenters and pundits.

23 Which chemical element, with the symbol Ca, is an essential component of bones and teeth?

24 Which two giant supermarket chains are going to merge?

25 Find three citrus fruit.

WIN £250!

Real people

Roulette

Here's one to get you in a spin! All of the answers to the questions can be found on **Real People's** Roulette wheel. For your chance to bag £250, have a go at the quiz, eliminating the black or red section containing the answer, or answers, to each question as you go. When completed correctly, you'll be left with just one section, which contains your prize answer. Write this on the entry coupon on page 43.

Ballooning

Georgina was a big old bird and struggling to get off the ground...

Teetering on the metal bar, my whole body shook. Forget jelly. My legs were blanchmange left out in the sun!

In fact, my whole bulging body gave a wobble-wobble that'd put a star-jumping Mr Blobby to shame.

'I can't,' I squeaked, taking a step down back on to firm ground.

All I'd tried to do was pop up a stepladder, but the second I lifted off the ground, everything spun.

I'd had a crippling fear of heights for years.

Even coming down the stairs started me panicking!

And, the bigger my body got, the bigger my terror. There was more of me to fall, perhaps.

I'd been chubby since childhood but, when I turned 16, exam stress hit and chubby became plain chunky.

By the time I finished school, I was a size 18.

Then, starting a business course at college, my routine went haywire.

One day I'd be off, the next I'd be up at the crack of dawn, then the one after that I'd be finished by the start of *Homes Under The Hammer*.

My parents, Carol, 52, and Colin, 56, had left me to fend for myself for the first time.

And, like Macaulay Culkin in *Home Alone*, I'd gone a bit feral!

Having skipped breakfast, I'd gorge on my packed lunch of chocolate-spread sandwiches, Doritos and a Penguin bar by mid-morning.

Come lunchtime, I'd nip to Tesco for another meal deal.

I'd have bucket-sized, syrupy coffees between classes, and snack on pasties and family-sized choccie bars.

Not content with two lunches and enough fatty snacks to make a darts player blush, I'd then stop by McDonald's for dinner.

'Here you are,' I'd smile, handing over my student card for a free cheeseburger.

Well, what better way to chase down a large Big Mac meal, milkshake and a McFlurry?

Soon, my clothes began straining at the seams.

'Must be my body changing,' I told myself. 'Adolescence.'

Easier to swallow than facing my own greed, that's for sure.

Even living firmly in denial, though, I watched my clothes sizes creep up.

18, 20, 22...

Now, aged 18 and fresh out of college, the girl shaking like a leaf in a hurricane was a whopping size 24 at 5ft 7in.

Yet I didn't hesitate when soon afterwards a friend asked me



I couldn't face the fact that I was just plain greedy...



... but eventually, I realised I needed to go on a diet

to go on an adventure.

Want to come flying? he texted. He was really into hot air balloons, and had been going on about it for ages.

Let's go, I agreed, before I could change my mind.

Heading to the field where my mate was waiting with a balloon pilot, though, it wasn't my fear of heights stopping me...

'How much do you weigh?' the pilot asked.

Er...

I hadn't weighed myself in a long time.

I must still be about what I was when I'd last stepped on the scales, though, right?

'Fourteen-and-a-half stone,' I said, reeling off the last figure I knew.

He nodded and headed off to do some calculations.

Apparently he needed everyone's weights to tot up how much fuel we'd need and if we had enough lift to get off the ground.

Would I be too fat to fly?

I tried not to worry.

Mercifully, he was soon steering me towards the wicker basket.

Hoisting my tubby thighs over the basket, I hauled myself inside.

The wicker creaked.

The flame roared to life.

The vessel rocked as the wind whipped around us.

PICTURES: BARCROFT MEDIA, GETTY



I felt like a sausage at a family wedding in 2016

Real 18 people

■ By Miyo Padi
(stories@realpeoplemag.co.uk)



No more chicken in a basket! Up with Niki at last

Hot STUFF

going on my first diet kept playing on my mind.

I looked at the pics from the wedding and cringed.

Dad was right. I looked like I was ready to pop!

So, in late January, when Mum and her mate decided to start Weight Watchers, I decided to go along.

‘What on earth am I doing here?’ I thought, realising I was the youngest person in the community hall

by a good few decades. Stepping up on to the scales, I gasped.

I weighed 16st 9lb!

A full 2st more than I’d thought.

A lot more than I’d been telling everyone!

and being so much lighter, it was like the basket heaved a sigh of relief. Thanks to my shrunken gut, it was a sandbag less, after all.

And, was it just me, or did it creak less?

Aware that my skin could resemble the giant deflated canvas splayed out on the grass, I started exercising.

‘Can I borrow Mitzi?’ I asked my boss at the outdoor games company where I worked.

‘Of course,’ she shrugged, offering the office cocker spaniel.

With that, I took to walking her for 20 minutes every lunchtime.

I now weigh 13st 7lb and have just over a stone to lose to reach my goal weight.

I’m a size 14, and trusting I’ll see that figure plummet.

And, in my balloon training, I’m scaling new heights.

I’m hoping to be a fully qualified pilot by next May.

The more weight I’ve lost, the longer I can be in the skies.

This summer, my goal is to finally take Niki up with me.

Oddly enough, you still won’t find me shimmying up a ladder any time soon. Those things still terrify me!

But what does that matter, when my life has finally taken off?

I’ve never been happier or healthier.

In fact, I’ve just bought my very first bikini.

Who knows what’s next?

The sky truly is the limit!

Georgina Arnold, 21, Abingdon, Oxfordshire



The new me is happy and healthy

My problems weren’t just on the ground, either.

Most of the others flew in a basket at least three at a time.

I was so big that I could only fly with one trained instructor.

‘I’d love to take you up with me,’ I explained to my mate Niki, who often came to watch

I looked like I was ready to pop

from the ground.

‘Don’t worry about it,’ she insisted.

So I didn’t – not until summer 2016, at least, when I went to a family wedding.

Squished into a size-24 pink Bardot frock all day long, I felt like a sausage bursting out of its skin.

As we left, I grumbled about it to Dad.

‘Well, you look nine months pregnant,’ he laughed.

Horrified, I laughed along.

But it wasn’t funny.

After that, the idea of

All that night, I cried.

I knew I was big – but I was so much heavier than I thought.

‘Now’s the time to change that,’ Mum reassured me.

So, with her support, I began to plan all my meals.

Judging everything as Weight Watchers points, I started eating a filling brekkie and developed a liking for greens.

In the very first week, I lost 5lb and, a month in, I pulled on my jeans and they fell straight to the ground!

Going ballooning soon after,

BEFORE

Breakfast None
Lunch Two ham mayo or cheese sandwiches, two bags of crisps, two chocolate bars

Dinner Takeaway or oven-ready frozen food
Snacks Family-sized bars of chocolate
Drinks Sugary coffees, juice



NOW

Breakfast One crumpet with scrambled eggs, porridge
Lunch Salad or leftovers, or a sandwich with thin chicken slices added, lettuce and cucumber
Dinner Chicken stir-fry, curry with rice or fish and new potatoes
Snacks Banana, yoghurt
Drinks Water



Move over Frida Kahlo

1 5 of the BEST STRANGE EYEBROWS



2 Whatever makes you tick...



3 It's a copy-cat crime



4 When flower power goes wrong



5 Turning the humble moustache on its head

PUZZLE TRAIL

READER puzzles

We Need Your Puzzles!

Thanks to Faith, Peter and Celia for their brilliant puzzles. Hopefully, they'll have inspired you all! So, let's have your quizzes and crosswords, riddles and sudokus, anagrams and wordsearches – or perhaps you've invented a new kind of puzzle? Send yours in with a photo and a few words about yourself – there's £30 for every one we publish, or £50 if you're our Puzzler Of The Week! See the bottom of the page for our address.



Can you pair 12 duos to the songs they recorded together? Cross out all the matches you make until one remains. See page 35 for answers.

Separate Lives	It Takes Two	Lionel Richie/Diana Ross	Michael Jackson/Paul McCartney	Up Where We Belong
Barry Gibb/Barbra Streisand	Kenny Rogers/Dolly Parton	Phil Collins/Marilyn Martin	George Michael/Aretha Franklin	Guilty
Endless Love	Queen/David Bowie	Rod Stewart/Tina Turner	Islands In The Stream	Under Pressure
Elton John/Kiki Dee	Somethin' Stupid	Prince/Madonna	Don't Go Breaking My Heart	Joe Cocker/Jennifer Warnes
The Girl Is Mine	Love Song	I Knew You Were Waiting (For Me)	Robbie Williams/Nicole Kidman	I Got You Babe

Sent in by Faith Derry, Stoneygate, Leicestershire



Can you solve Peter's Riddle-Me-See? See p35 for the answer.

My first is in good but not in bad,
My second's in smile but not in sad,
My third is in after and also in before,
My fourth is in certain but never in sure,
My whole is something I certainly hope you adore!

Sent in by Peter Chevalier, Leicester

PUZZLER of the week



It's a very muchly to Celia Salter – our Puzzler Of The Week this week! Celia, from

Cowplains in Hampshire, is one of the busiest retirees we've ever come across, what with reading, going to the cinema and theatre, lunching with friends, doing keep-fit, being a member of a walking group and working freelance for a local publication! All that and she says she also creates puzzles and solves 'em to keep her mind active. Phew.

In fact, Celia's so busy, she forgot to send us a photo of herself! So we've honoured her with a pic of a bust of a romantic goddess, as befits her brilliant classical phrases puzzle.

Celia, £50 is on its way!

PICTURE: BIGSTOCK

CLUE	ANSWER	LETTER NO	HIDDEN ANSWER
BY THE VERY ACT OR FACT	Ips o facto	2nd	P
INDIVIDUAL DISHES ON A MENU		8th	
ON THE WAY		3rd	
ALL TOGETHER		5th	
BY VIRTUE OF ONE'S POSITION OR STATUS		3rd	
FOR EVERMORE		4th	
HAVING GOOD KNOWLEDGE OF		4th	
TAKE SPECIAL NOTE		7th	
WORD OR PHRASE OPEN TO TWO MEANINGS		2nd	
HAVING CONTROL OF ONE'S MIND		9th	
ALTERNATIVE PERSONALITY		7th	
SEIZE THE DAY		3rd	
SOMETHING THAT'S ALREADY HAPPENED		5th	
EXISTING STATE OF AFFAIRS		4th	
CLOTHING FROM A LEADING FASHION HOUSE		2nd	

The answers to the clues in the left-hand column of the grid are all mixed up in the list, below. Find the correct foreign or classical phrase and write it in the appropriate place. Then, as you work out each one, write the letter indicated in pink, in the final column. When completed correctly, this column, reading top to bottom, will reveal another phrase meaning, 'an unacceptable person' (7,3,5). Check the solution on p35.

- À LA CARTE
- AD INFINITUM
- ALTER EGO
- AU FAIT
- CARPE DIEM
- COMPOS MENTIS
- DOUBLE ENTENDRE
- EN MASSE
- EN ROUTE
- EX OFFICIO
- FAIT ACCOMPLI
- HAUTE COUTURE
- ~~IPSO FACTO~~
- NOTA BENE
- STATUS QUO

PLAYING the FIELD

IT'S TOUGH!

In the field below is a herd of 10 cows. But the grass is so long it's tricky to see them. Can you help Flo work out where all her friends are so that she can get them back in time for milking? We've placed some cow parts to help you get started.

HINT: Think Battleships!

WIN £50!

HELPFUL TIPS!

- Cows are stood in horizontal and vertical positions only.
- No cow is next to another in any direction, including diagonally.
- Misses are marked right the way around one of the hits we've given you, so there's some grassy boxes you can write in straight away.
- Numbers at the heads of rows and columns tell you how many parts of a cow are hidden in them. So, if you see a '0' at the top of any column or to the left of any row, you can grass out the whole of that one, as there are no 'hits'.
- Don't forget to cross off the cows below as you 'hit' them.

	2	1	3	2	3	0	5	0	2	2
0										
1										
0										
5										
2										
2										
0										
3										
1										
6										

Oh, where for art cow?

For your chance to win, simply tell us:
Is the pink square a 'hit' (cow part) or a 'miss' (grass)?
See p43 to enter.

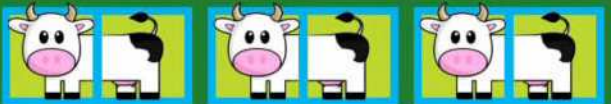


WHO YOU NEED TO LOOK FOR:

4x



3x



2x



1x





All hung up
Vintage Union Jack bunting, £3.95, amazon.co.uk

Sizzling hot
Heck Sweet Ginger And American Mustard Sausages, £2 for six, nationwide



Cheers!
Personalised bride and groom flutes, £24.99 for two, studio.co.uk



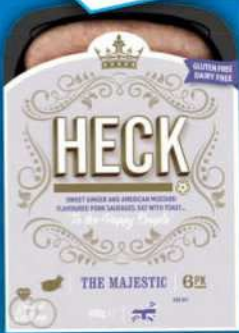
Lucky lady
Bride To Be! robe, £12.99, studio.co.uk



When Harry Met Meghan
A Royal Wedding Dress-Up Doll Book, £7.99, octopusbooks.co.uk



Class slipper
Bride To Be slippers in white and gold, £4, Primark



It's time for a right royal knees-up as the prince weds his Meghan...

Hip, Hip Harry!



Clean up
Handmade Royal Wedding apron by Victoria Eggs, £22, amazon.co.uk/handmade

Fairy-tale ending
Sylvanian Families nursery set, £12.99, sylvanianfamilies.co.uk



Bridal sweet
Limited-edition Mr Kipling 8 Bridal Fancies, £1, nationwide



Get royal
Princess Party Photo Props, £2.99, prezybox.com



Time for a toast
Cadi Pietra Prosecco DOC Magnum (1.5l), £12.99, Aldi



Guard of honour
Guardsman mini garden gnome, £6, George Home



Love light
Mr & Mrs light-up individual signs, from £8, George Home



Tickled pink
Bride and groom flamingos, £8 each, Paperchase



Glass act
Gold-foiled Union Jack fun glasses, £3.99 for eight, New Look

Air to the throne
Foil balloons, £1 each, Flying Tiger



COMPILED BY: VICKY POWELL PICTURES: GETTY

Health & happiness

ANNEY'S STORY

In too deep
Anney's implant has gone missing - and she's up in arms...



Me and Marcus have to be careful in bed

Retrieving the blister pack of pills from my bedside table, I frowned. 'Is today Tuesday?' I asked my boyfriend, Marcus, 22. 'No, it isn't, babe,' he scoffed. 'Today's Thursday.' Thursday?!

That meant I'd forgotten to take my contraceptive pills for two days!

'I need to be more careful,' I told my sister, Laura, 26, later that day.

'You should get the implant,' she said. 'Once it's in, you never have to worry about remembering to take the Pill!'

Running my finger along the inside of Laura's upper arm, I could feel a tiny bump in her flesh where her implant was.

'I think I'll give it a go,' I smiled. A few weeks later, in January

2013, I went to the sexual health clinic at the Royal Glamorgan Hospital.

Freezing my upper arm with a numbing spray, a nurse made a tiny incision on my inner bicep and slipped the matchstick-size implant in.

Within two minutes, I was done!

I was given a card with the date of

insertion to put in my purse, to remind me when the implant would stop being effective and need replacing.

But, the following day, I realised that I couldn't feel the little rod under my skin.

The thing had gone walkabout.

'It's nothing to worry about,' a nurse reassured me when I called. 'As long as you don't have any pain or swelling.'

And, right enough, for the next three years, the implant didn't give me any bother.

Every month, I got my period, just as expected.

Come January 2016, I was back in the clinic to have it replaced.

'Oh, I can't feel it,' frowned the nurse.

'I did mention this when it was first inserted,' I told her.

Not wanting to make a new incision and search for it, the nurse asked me to come back a week later to see a doctor.

'I think I can feel it,' the doctor declared as she prodded my arm. 'I'm going to give it a go.'

So, she numbed my arm with spray and used a little scalpel to make the incision.

But, after a bit of poking about, she announced she couldn't find it.

I went back a month later, but the outcome was the same.

'If you don't want to have a baby, you'll have to use another form of contraception,' I was warned.

So, I had the contraceptive injection. But it made me feel really emotional and depressed. I couldn't face going to my job in a care home, having to plaster on a cheery smile as I served meals and tidied rooms.

It was horrible.

'You should come off hormonal contraception - it's likely the implant will interfere with it,' my GP advised.

So I did, and just had to be a bit more careful in the bedroom.

In August 2016, an X-ray at the Royal Glamorgan found the implant, hiding in my bicep.

I was sprayed with numbing solution and they had another go at digging it out. This time, the pain was so bad, I fainted!

And still it remained...

A year later, it showed up on an ultrasound.

Doctors made a bigger cut this time but, after much painful rooting around inside my arm, they too came out empty-handed.

Next, a gynaecologist recommended day surgery, so the medics can sedate me and make a bigger cut. So now I'm on a waiting list.

Meanwhile, I've got a 7cm scar. I've also developed pains in my arm, and pins and needles in my pinkie and ring finger.

Doctors think the implant has been dislodged and is making my muscle press against a nerve. Unfortunately, there's nothing they can do for me except prescribe painkillers while I wait for my op.

'I'd give my right arm for it to be sorted... Well, you know what I mean!'

Anney Madden, 22, Pontypridd, Rhondda Cynon Taf



My lost implant is a pain in the arm!

CONTRACEPTIVE IMPLANT > the FACTS

WHAT? The implant is inserted into the upper arm. It releases the hormone progesterone into the bloodstream to prevent pregnancy, and lasts for three years.

HOW? The upper arm is numbed with local anaesthetic, and a small incision is made so that the implant can be inserted. The procedure takes a few minutes and feels like having an injection. For removal, a trained doctor uses a local anaesthetic to

numb the area, then makes a tiny cut in the skin and gently pulls the implant out.

RISKS A 2012 report from the Medicines And Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency found that dozens of cases had been reported where the implant moved from its original location. There were also five reported cases of infertility where the device could not be located for removal.

INFO nhs.uk/conditions/contraception

Two other hormonal contraception complications

● **DEEP-VEIN THROMBOSIS** The combined contraceptive pill contains the female hormone oestrogen, which causes the blood to clot more easily than normal. There is a 'rare but important risk' of developing a blood clot from using it.

● **BREAST CANCER** A recent study by the University of Copenhagen found that all forms of hormonal contraception carry a breast cancer risk, as prolonged exposure to oestrogen is a known risk factor for breast cancer, and that women who currently or recently used hormonal contraceptives were 20 per cent more likely to develop breast cancer than those who did not.

UP TO £150
for your health story

Got something to say about your health or a recent operation? Write to Health & Happiness, Unit 8, Apollo Business Centre, Trundleys Road, London SE8 5JE, or email health@realpeoplemag.co.uk

Real people 23

POLKA DOTS

Swimdress, £29.99, Yours Clothing



Tankini, £28, Evans



Swimsuit, £16.99, curvissa.co.uk



Rainbow-tassel Bardot swimsuit, £16, George at Asda



Swimdress, £39, kaleidoscope.co.uk



Red twist-front, £35, simplybe.co.uk

Bottoms, £16, Evans



Make a splash

Dive into this year's top swimwear trends...

EMBROIDERED

Black high-neck, £55, longtallsally.com



Bikini top, £14.99, H&M



Bottoms, £9.99, H&M



Beachcomber, £39, Accessorize



Collection swimsuit, £39.50, M&S



Crop bikini set, £32, very.co.uk



SLOGAN

Red swimsuit, £4, Primark



Black swimsuit, £34.99, bonprix.co.uk

WORDS: GENEVIEVE MULLEN PICTURES: BIGSTOCK

FRILLS

Bardot swimsuit, £8,
F&F at Tesco



Top, £8,
F&F at Tesco



Bottoms, £6,
F&F at Tesco



Hawaii floral-print Bardot swimsuit, £12.99,
studio.co.uk



Monochrome top, £14.99,
New Look



Bottoms, £12.99,
New Look



JUST ADD WATER

Underwired swimsuit, £48,
figleaves.com



Orange swimsuit, £29,
kaleidoscope.co.uk



BELTED

Curvy Kate halter, £56,
curvissa.co.uk



Tie-front top, £16, New Look



High-waist bottoms, £12.99,
New Look

Crossover, £24.99,
New Look

lash



Blue swimsuit, £22.99,
£4, Primark

Stripy swimsuit, £22.99,
bonprix.co.uk



SPORTY

One-shoulder swimsuit, £35,
simply.be.co.uk



Black swimsuit, £34.99,
bonprix.co.uk



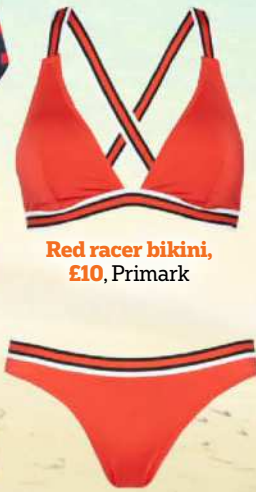
Black swimsuit, £4,
Primark



Sport two-piece, £25.99,
bonprix.co.uk



Red racer bikini, £10,
Primark



Collection racer-back, £35,
M&S



MUM *to* MUM

No one can give better advice to a mum facing a hard time than another mum who's been there herself...

THIS WEEK: NOT SPEAKING

YADA YADA NADA!

Emma's boy doesn't need to talk - his PA sis does it for him...

Throwing his toy train down in frustration, my little boy pointed wildly at the telly.

'I don't know what you want, baby,' I lied, knowing exactly what Max, two, was after.

'Paw Paw,' he babbled, gesturing to the screen.

'Do you want some juice?'

I said, pretending some more.

His bottom lip quivered, and little Max burst into tears. I felt awful.

'It's all right, baby,' I cooed, lifting him into my arms.

Only, it really wasn't.

Hard as I tried, I couldn't get Max to say more than a few jumbled words.

I knew exactly why, too.

Since day dot, my older girl, Ruby, six, has fussed over Max like a little mother hen.

With his long eyelashes and miniature toes, baby Max was like a real-life little doll to her.

And Ruby adored him.

If Max couldn't reach a toy, she'd race to get it before he'd raised himself off the floor.

If he wanted a drink, he'd signal his personal assistant, and off she'd pelt to fetch it!

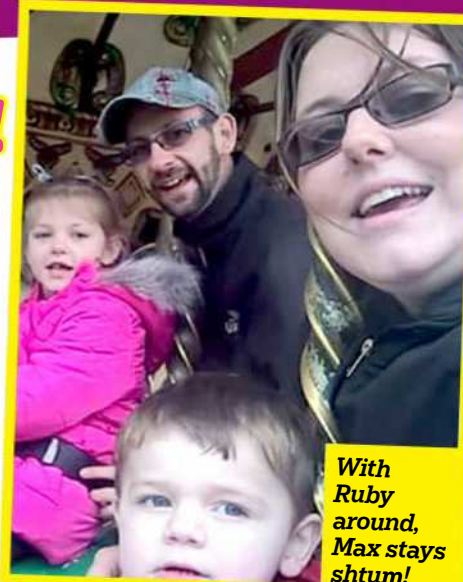
And our Max never had to utter a syllable.

It didn't dawn on me until the start of this year that this was having a negative effect on Max's development.

It was only when I watched some old toddler videos of Ruby that I noticed big differences between the two children.

By the time she was his age, Ruby had a bulging vocabulary.

'I know she was an especially chatty child, but look at the



With Ruby around, Max stays shtum!

Ruby did,' I confessed. 'I think he's just got used to having his big sister speak for him.'

The health visitor agreed.

'He's a bit behind where he should be, but it's very common in younger siblings,' she said.

So she suggested some extra prompting at home. And, for the past few weeks, I've been trying to bring Max's speech along by getting him to ask for things.

Problem is, all my hard work goes out of the window as soon as Ruby's around! I've tried explaining things to her, but she's still too young to get it.

I need help on two fronts. How do I get Ruby to butt out without hurting her feelings, and what else can I do to help Max's speech?

Emma Masters, 24, Par, Cornwall

'MAX NEVER HAD TO UTTER!'

difference,' I remarked to my husband, Jamie, 33.

'Let's see what the health visitor reckons,' he said, knowing Max was due for his two-year check-up.

When she came, she gave him a clean bill of health - physically, at least.

'He doesn't talk as much as

AS TOLD TO GENEVIEVE MULLEN

Mum KNOWS BEST

OUR PANEL OF MUMS IS HAPPY TO HELP



Laurie Khatib, 31, mum to Finnley, 10, Oscar, eight, Isla, six, Alice, five, and Matalida, three, says, 'We had this situation with my eldest, who used to do everything for his younger sister, Alice. We sorted it by "putting him in charge" of things such as getting her to move and talk.'



Carrie Drinnan, 39, mum to Ella, nine, and Logan, four, says, 'I was

told a good tip that's meant to help encourage speech... Cut out pictures of things that your son likes, such as cartoon characters, and, when you show him the image, deliberately get the name wrong so that he has to correct you.'



Portia Wright, 30, mum to Noah, eight, and Jensen, four, says, 'Nursery rhymes are a very

good way to get kids speaking. As for your daughter, little girls love responsibility, so I would suggest asking her to help you with her brother's speaking. Offer a weekly incentive to keep her interested.'

Are you a mum in need of advice?

If you're struggling with a Mum to Mum problem and need help from another mum, call **Real People** on 020 7339 4552, or contact us through realpeoplemag.co.uk

Win!

★ Mōlkkly from Tactic Games is a fun gaming sensation involving chance and skill, that's quick to learn and exciting to play. The rules are simple - take turns to throw the skittle to try to knock over various numbered pins to score exactly 50 points. Sound easy? Watch out! If you get more than 50, your score will be knocked back down to 25! We've got two games, worth £24.99 each, up for grabs for two lucky winners. Available from Tesco.



Win!

★ Imagine how huge this jumbo plush toy will look to a tiny tearaway! In The Night Garden's Igglepiggle is

a firm favourite with little ones, and this 30in mammoth of a huggable toy will tower over tots and give giant cuddles to his tiny friends. Made

with textured fabrics for even softer hugs, we've got two of these cuddly creations up for grabs, worth £19.99 each. Available from Argos.



Win!

★ There's nothing more invaluable to a parent than a pair of hands! The Easyfit Chicco Baby Carrier makes it simple to transport your tot without the need for a bulky buggy. It goes on as easily as a T-shirt and adapts perfectly to wearer and baby. Plus, you can switch to baby-forward-facing in just one movement. Worth £22.99, we have two to be won.



HOW TO ENTER

For your chance to win, email mum2mumcomps@outlook.com with Mōlkkly, Igglepiggle or Chicco Carrier in the subject line and include your name, address and phone number. Entries close 24 May 2018.

Personal info will only be used to process your entry. See p43 for T&Cs.

Real 27 people

WIN!

A fab pair of sunglasses!

You might have the tan, leg wax, the perfectly pedicured tootsies, the outfit, the hairstyle and the swagger, but you ain't pulling that look off if your lovely face is all screwed up like a prize-winning gurner because you're squinting in the sun. And if the wind changes, you're stuck like that, right?! Double whammy.

Save your summer style from being spoiled and your good looks from eternal ruin with a cool pair of sunglasses.

Whether you favour a popular brand, a sports brand or a luxury brand, for you, for him or for the kids, sunglasses-shop.co.uk has got it covered, leaving other eyewear experts in the shade!

We've got £75 for one of you lucky lot to spend online on a pair of sexy, sunny specs. For your chance to win, simply solve my *Boxing Match* puzzle, below...

V	I	R	S	D	E	S	Z	Y	H	U	M
E	N	T	I	I	O	W	E	E			
N	G	E	R	S	E	D	N	R	A	D	

C	L	D	I	Z							
O	N	E	I	O							
			T	O							

W	E	R	Y								
R	Q										

L	L	I									
A	M	T									

I	D	C	H	A	B	D	T
E	V	E	S	N	I	O	I
A	R	D	R	S	S	T	R

BOXING MATCH

Here's a crossword solution that's been broken up and turned into a jigsaw puzzle. Can you put it back together? Three pieces have been left in their original positions to help you start. When you're done, the letters in the yellow boxes, read in order, will spell out your prize answer. See p43 to enter.

FOLLOW FLO TO PAGE 30

ANIMAL crackle

Sour puss!



Jenna's chinchilla Persian, Wilfred, has a face that could stop a clock, but he's no grump, he's a real pussycat...

Checking my phone as I drank my morning cuppa, I gasped. My Persian cat, Wilfred, had got 1,000 new followers on Instagram overnight! 'Wilfred's a star!' I cried to my flatmate, Liana, 33. It was March 2017, and I'd only just put Wilfred on Instagram, but already people were going wild for him – and deservedly so. I'd always loved Persian cats but when, a few months earlier, I'd told Liana about my admiration, she'd

frowned, 'Give me a moggy any day.' So I logged online to find some cute Persian pictures to change her mind. An advert popped up for a chinchilla Persian kitten for sale in Wales. 'I take it back – he's cute,' Liana laughed as we gazed at the photograph. The kitten had pure white fur, huge green eyes and an almost human expression of disdain on his face. Over the next few days, we talked about the kitten non-stop... 'I can't get him out of my head,' Liana admitted. A couple of evenings later, I returned from my

PET of the WEEK

NAME: Luca
BREED: Jack Russell
AGE: Two
LIKES: Playing with my mum, Missy
DISLIKES: Loud noises
BAD HABIT: Stealing socks and underwear
OWNERS: Marianne and Malcolm Scott, Stockton-on-Tees, County Durham



Is it time to play yet?

RS!

Send us your animal stories, funny pics & pets of the week – there's £25 for each one we print! Write to Real People or email letters@realpeoplemagazine.co.uk



with Jane Common



Adorable!

job as a specialist nurse to find her proudly standing next to a box in the front room. 'What's that?' I asked. 'The cat from the Internet,' Liana cried, scooping the 12-week-old kitten out of the box. 'I drove to Wales and bought him.' I was gobsmacked – she was so impetuous. But, as I cradled the kitten in my arms, I melted inside. He was adorable.

The breeder, Liana said, had seemed to favour our new kitten's perfect and prettier sister.

'I think this boy isn't quite up to scratch, considering his parents and grandparents won all sorts of cat shows,' Liana laughed.

Sure enough, the kitten had papers to prove he had a posh pedigree and the show name Fearless Warrior.

We decided Wilfred suited him better. To match his unique face, Wilfred had a very individual personality, unlike any other cat



Keeping warm

I'd known. He followed us around, chatting away in a series of differently pitched meows, chirrups, whirrs and purrs.

'You're supposed to be aloof and independent,' I told him when he shadowed me to the loo.

At nights, he alternated between my bed and Liana's, and we doted on him, treating him like a Persian prince.

I even bought him a little tweed coat as he shivered in the garden – despite his fur – on cold days.

We took him to the pub in a cat carrier we'd bought specially. His little head poked out, and people took pictures as if he was a celebrity.

He was perfectly content, observing all the goings-on with his big, bulging eyes.

That's why, when he was about three months old, I opened an Instagram account for him.

He was unique, so I wanted to share him with the world.

One of the early pictures was of him looking scared of a red ball! So much for the online handle we gave him – WilfredWarrior!

But he was popular.



Wilfred is googly-eyed for some beer

Within a few weeks, big cat accounts spotted him and shared his pics with millions of followers around the world, many of whom then started to follow Wilfred.

As Wilfred grew from kitten to cat, his features became even stranger – yet somehow more beguiling. He developed an underbite and fangs, while his eyes seemed to grow enormously...

This cat isn't real – you're photoshopping him, people on Instagram wrote.

He's real, I promised.

Other people compared him with Kyle the dog in *Despicable Me*, the worm in *Labyrinth* and even Steve Buscemi! But Wilfred's his own cat, not a copycat.

Wilfred has 34,000 followers now and receives more post than Liana and me, as companies send him treats and toys to test.

'Got to keep you smart for your fans,' I say as I brush him. His fur is so fine, like candy floss, he needs grooming every day, but he enjoys it.

In fact, despite his sad and grumpy face, Wilfred is loving life – and people across the world are loving him, too.

Jenna Millward, 34, north London

Follow Wilfred's adventures on Instagram @wilfredwarrior



ASK NIGEL

Real People's resident 'doggie doctor', Nigel, answers your pet's problems

Dear Nigel,

I'm a three-year-old neutered male long-haired guinea pig, and I love chewing things, especially my hair. Now, though, I'm getting bald patches that itch – what should I do?

Freddie, Montrose

Dear Freddie,

'Barbering' can be down to boredom, so ask your owner for more toys, games and extra hay to play with, instead of your hair. You don't want to lose too much, or you might develop a skin condition.

Love, Nigel xxx

Nigel was helped by PDSA vet Rebecca Ashman. The PDSA is the UK's leading veterinary charity. To donate to the PDSA, visit pdsa.org.uk/get-involved



Furry & funny

My cat, Tubby Puddy, is enjoying the sunshine!

Lisa Matthews, Burton on Trent, Staffs

Get me one!

We're all hoping for a hot dawg of a summer, but your canine can stay cool throughout with a cooling T-shirt Body from Equafleece. Dogs, especially older ones and flat-faced breeds such as pugs and bulldogs, can struggle in the sun, but soaked in cold water, the 98 per cent cotton and two per cent elastane T-shirts act as air conditioning, lowering their body temperature. They come in a range of colours, and start at £13 from equafleece.co.uk



Real people 29



YOUR STARS



with *Jenny Blume*

HOROSCOPES
for the week of
10-16 May

ARIES 21 March-20 April
This week's high-energy stars need a positive outlet. If an urge to escape or break free intensifies, stick with the people you trust.
TIME TO TRY: Exercise to calm your nerves.

TAURUS 21 April-21 May
Social catch-ups should prove illuminating and, as a bonus, someone's bright idea could spark a new strategy. Beautiful things (and people) will test your self-control.
TIME TO TRY: Not overdoing things.

GEMINI 22 May-21 June
As new facts come to light, your plans will change and evolve. Your imagination is beginning to buzz, so get those ideas down on paper.
TIME TO TRY: Taking a deep breath and slowing down.

CANCER 22 June-23 July
Someone's attitude or lack of support may feel frustrating, but the weekend should bring sunnier skies. Say yes to an unexpected invitation – you could meet someone special.
TIME TO TRY: Circulating more.

LEO 24 July-23 August
Your enthusiasm is impressive, but be prepared for last-minute twists and turns. Someone's good news could spark impromptu celebrations.
TIME TO TRY: Watching out for an unexpected opportunity.

VIRGO 24 Aug-23 Sep
This week's unsettled patterns may feel like a roller coaster but, as usual, there's a silver lining. Old friends will come out of the woodwork. You might even rekindle a romance.
TIME TO TRY: Watching your wallet.

LIBRA 24 Sep-23 Oct
Insightful stars could dissolve confusion around a health or family situation. With Venus shining brightly, a lover might also reveal their feelings.
TIME TO TRY: Listening and learning.

★ GUESS the STAR SIGN

Veteran rocker Jon Bon Jovi was born under a spiritual sign. Very sympathetic and understanding, those who share his sign are intuitive and sensitive to others' pain. They can feel great joy and sadness. Which sign is he?
See foot of page.



SCORPIO 24 Oct-22 Nov
Your chart's social sector is basking in a golden glow. Music, as always, should act like a magic elixir, along with group pursuits and community events.
TIME TO TRY: Joining a local club.

SAGITTARIUS 23 Nov-21 Dec
If stressful people are doing your head in, Sunday's upbeat vibe should feel like a breath of fresh air. Searching for equilibrium? An alternative therapy may do the trick.
TIME TO TRY: Good food and music.

CAPRICORN 22 Dec-20 Jan
Don't be swept into other people's dramas, as mountains should turn into molehills. Let the dust settle before making decisions.
TIME TO TRY: Unwinding – catch a movie or take more long lunches.

AQUARIUS 21 Jan-19 Feb
The celestial spotlight is shining on your home – making you want to finish a stalled project or splash out on some new things.
TIME TO TRY: Spending quality time with family or close friends.

PISCES 20 February-20 March
There could be some mayhem, but don't overreact, things should settle down by Sunday. For lovebirds, a getaway might prove romantic.
TIME TO TRY: A family-friendly pastime.

PICTURES: GETTY

WIN £25!

Lost In Moo-sic

'Know it sounds funny but I just can't stand the pain, Girl, I'm leaving you tomorrow, Seems to me, girl, you know I've done all I can, See I begged, stole and I borrowed...'



For your chance to get your hands on the cash, simply answer the prize question below. See page 43 for full entry details.

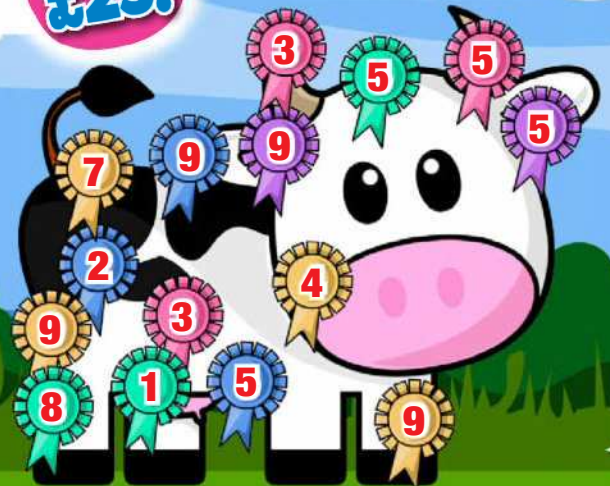
What song am I singing?

- A Easy B Bye Bye Love
C Girl You Know It's True

Cow-Culator!

WIN £25!

For your chance to get your hands on the cash, simply answer the prize question below. See page 43 for full entry details.



What is the sum total of the numbers on my rosettes?

- A 81 B 83 C 84

REAL PEOPLE PSYCHIC READING

KNOW YOUR FUTURE TODAY!

Get 10 minutes of spiritual insight for only £2.90*
Call now on 0800 067 8770

*This promotion is only available to new customers paying by credit/debit card. Your first 10 minutes will be billed at 29p per minute. Thereafter you will pay the standard rate of £1.50 per minute. The 10 minutes for £2.90 is subject to change. Please call the 0800 number for further information. Callers must be 18+ and have bill payer's permission. For entertainment purposes only. All calls are recorded. PhonePayPlus regulated SP: Stream Live Ltd, SE1 1JA, 0800 0673 330

★
WINNER
★
THE STAR
★
OFFERS

FOLLOW FLO TO PAGE 31!

FLORENCE'S TAKE YOUR PICK!

I've rustled up a great competition here, where one of you lucky lot will get to choose whether to bag the best prize I could get my hooves on – or accept my cash offer.

So, have a good look at what's up for grabs and see if it's something you absolutely must have – or if my Big Deal Money Pot is more like something you're after! And don't worry – you've plenty of time to think about it. If you're a winner, I'll give you a call and you can make your mind up then...

For your chance, simply answer my prize question. See p43 to enter.

Who is the manager of the England football team?

- A) Gareth Southgate
- B) Harry Redknapp

Go for this flipping amazing prize – or make off with the moo-lah!



GRAB THE GEAR...

Just take a look at this super-stylish, slimline Sony 40in Smart Full HD TV, worth £359. Now picture it, pride of place in your living room. It could happen – really! Because we've got one up for grabs here...

Imagine the excitement of the forthcoming footie World Cup, the spectacle of Britain's Got Talent or the drama of your

favourite soap on its sexy screen.

But that's not all this beauty has to offer. Other features include built-in Freeview, Motionflow XR200 and X-Reality PRO for high picture-quality. Screen Mirroring lets you watch what's on your mobile or tablet on the big screen, plus you can record all your favourite TV shows onto a USB drive to enjoy any time.

You've simply got to get your hands on this moo-vellous prize, right? Well, then, how about this helpful expression before I sign off: 'You've got to be in it to win it!'

To enter, answer my prize question, left...



...OR GO FOR THE CASH!

BIG DEAL MONEY POT



This week:
£309

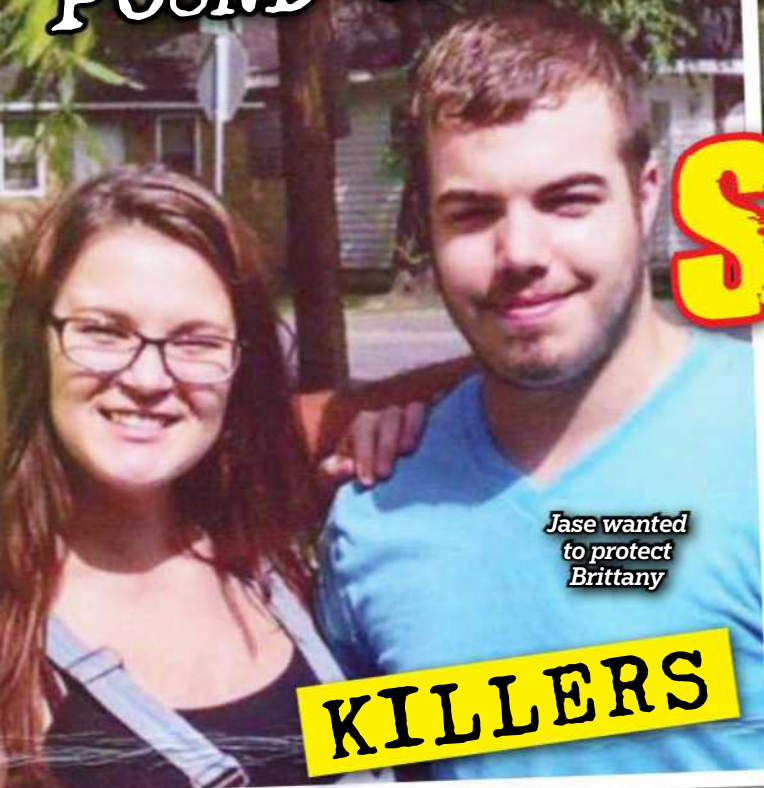


FOLLOW FLO TO PAGE 34



REAL CRIME

POUND OF FLESH



Jace wanted to protect Brittany

KILLERS

They were called Romeo and Juliet – but Brittany and Jace’s hearts were filled with cold revenge...

Childhood ended for Brittany Monk when she was just four years old. That was when her mum’s boyfriend – the only father she had ever known – held out a handful of pills like sweets and said, ‘Come to Daddy and be a good girl.’

Brittany had moved in to Robert Noce’s trailer in the town of North Zachary, Louisiana, USA, when she was just two, after her mum – who’d split from Brittany’s dad when she was a baby – started dating him.

But it wasn’t long before the relationship began to falter, and Brittany’s mother started begging Robert to prove he loved her.

You think your TV is more important [than me], or just sitting there holding me is

too hard for you, she said in one of her letters to him.

Then, one day, she walked out – leaving Brittany with him.

Soon after, Robert, 47, started to sexually abuse and then rape Brittany, sometimes drugging her with sedatives and sleeping pills so she would comply.

Robert would mentally torture her, too, saying that Mummy was coming home for her, then cruelly laughing and saying she’d changed her mind because she didn’t love her.

Brittany endured this for 10 years, until she finally broke away in the summer of 2012 and reported him to police.

Robert eventually appeared before a court in June 2015 – by which time, Brittany, 17, had

fallen in love with Jace Crehan, 20, a car salesman and volunteer firefighter.

They met on Instagram in early 2014 and began flirting.

Jace told his friends that he fell for her instantly, and soon they were engaged.

At the time of Robert’s court date, they were excitedly looking forward to the arrival of their first baby, which was due in two months and who they planned to call Vaan, after a character from the *Final Fantasy* video games.

She’d told Jace all about the abuse she had suffered, and he reassured her that Robert would go to prison for a long time.

But, in court, Robert pleaded

Fury burned inside Brittany

‘no contest’ to a charge, not of rape, but of ‘carnal knowledge’ of a juvenile, and was let off with a suspended 10-year term and probation for five years.

The only jail time he served was the 19 days he had spent behind bars after his arrest.

The fury at him and the justice system for betraying her burned inside Brittany. She wanted him to pay for what he’d done...

She was seven months

pregnant with Jace’s baby, and suffering from night terrors.

Jace became increasingly worried. He told Brittany he’d scare Robert so badly he would never dare hurt her again.

Brittany should stay at home, he said. But she was insistent, saying, ‘I want to see him suffer.’

At 1.30am on 4 July 2015, Brittany and Jace crept up to Robert’s mobile home.

They were masked and wore rubber gloves, and Brittany tied her long hair in a bun because she’d seen on *CSI* that forensics teams always look for hair.

Quietly, Jace used a screwdriver to remove an air-conditioning unit from the window, and they both climbed inside.

Robert was snoring when Jace jumped on him and wrestled him to the floor.

Robert kicked out wildly and tried to scream for help,

but Jace silenced him with a powerful chokehold.

Brittany grabbed her only weapon – an aftershave spray – and squirted the stinging liquid into Robert’s eyes and throat.

Then she punched him in the face, again and again, while screaming, ‘You ruined my life!’

Robert managed to splutter, ‘You got the wrong guy,’ and ‘God forgive me,’ but Jace was blinded

The pair broke into Robert’s trailer...

SHAKESPEARE IN BLO



...killed him and disposed of his body in a barrel

VICTIM

ARE GOOD

with righteous anger.

'Get me a knife,' he told Brittany.

She went into the kitchenette and rooted through the drawer, plucking out the biggest one, with a white handle.

Then, with Robert still pinioned, she handed Jace the knife and went into the tiny bathroom.

She heard a sound like crunching on dead leaves as Jace stabbed him six times in the neck.

She peeked out to see blood squirting out of Robert's throat, like a ketchup sachet being stepped on.

Jace tied Robert's hands behind his back, then put a belt he'd found around his neck.

Planting his foot on Robert's back, he pulled tightly on the belt before dropping it. He was dead.

They put the body inside a 55-gallon plastic barrel that Robert used to make wine, shoving in the rubber gloves and bloody towels they'd used to clean up.

Thinking running water would wash away any evidence, the pair left the taps running as they went home to bed.

That lunchtime, they were expected at Jace's grandparents' house for a family barbecue.

'We should go,' Brittany told him. 'If we don't, it'll look like

something's wrong.'

He agreed, and on the way they threw their bloodied clothes in a bin and the knife in a pond.

But while they plastered on smiles at the Independence Day party, officer Jason Fitzpatrick of the East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Department was at Robert's trailer...

Neighbours had called the police after seeing water pouring from under the door.

The water trick hadn't quite worked, as blood was still visible on the carpet.

The barrel had blood marks, too, so when police opened it, they found their victim... and potentially their culprit.

The discarded gloves and towels were sent off for DNA tests. Suspecting that Robert's child abuse victim might bear a grudge against him, detectives called at the flat Brittany shared with Jace.

Later, held in separate cells, Brittany agreed to give a saliva sample.

'What did you do that for?' Jace said when they were released after questioning.

'It's all messed up now.'

He was right.

The police found traces of Brittany's DNA in the gloves, and the two were charged.

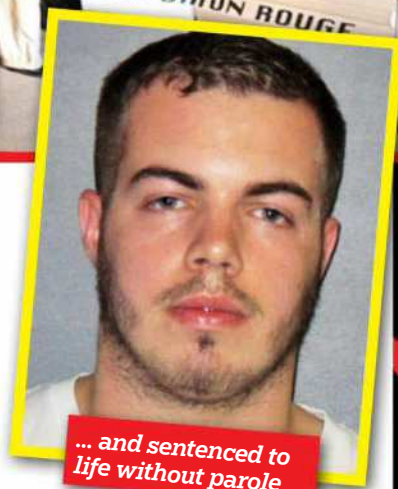
Jace immediately confessed. 'I feel a lot better,' he told the police. 'It's not regret. Is it



Brittany pleaded guilty to manslaughter



Jace was arrested and charged with murder...



... and sentenced to life without parole

remorse? I'm not sorry for what I did.'

In June 2017, 20-year-old Brittany pleaded guilty to manslaughter and was held in custody to await sentence after Jace's trial for second-degree murder in December 2017.

Jace was determined to save Brittany. He wanted her freed, insisting that she was innocent.

One of the first witnesses was Detective Enoch Sims, who had questioned Robert following Brittany's rape allegations.

Asked if there was any proof to back up her claims, Sims said no.

The prosecution suggested the arrest was based solely on 'the words of a kid', and that Brittany and Jace were 'on board' with Robert's plea deal.

But Jace's lawyer retorted, 'If everybody was on board, how do we end up with the killing of Robert Noce?'

Jace, now 23, had confessed he'd killed Robert, even writing a letter to a local paper. He wrote, *I, Jace Crehan, killed Robert Noce and he admitted in his final moments his rape against Brittany.*

He described his love for Brittany as something that 'overcame' him, and continued to write, *I couldn't control this enormous amount of obligation. I felt indebted to her. I was more than just her boyfriend, fiancé, lover. I was her guardian, her protector, her hope.*

His lawyer said that the story of Jace and Brittany was a 'modern-day version' of *Romeo and Juliet*.

The killing was Jace's way of preventing Robert from harming Brittany again.

'He took a bullet for her,' his lawyer explained. 'This is not a second-degree murder. It's something else.'

Transcripts of Jace's police interview, which were read out in court, said that Jace hadn't intended to kill Robert, and hadn't taken along any weapons.

After pulling him out of bed and putting him in a chokehold, Robert had passed out.

Jace had tried to bind Robert's hands, but when he got a knot wrong, he asked Brittany for a knife.

Robert woke up and the pair of them grappled on the floor.

According to Jace, it didn't escalate to murder until he became incensed, noticing Robert motioning towards Brittany.

It's not known what the gesture really meant, but that's when Jace stabbed Robert six times in the neck.

But the jury weren't convinced and they convicted Jace of second-degree murder.

When sentenced in January this year, he received life without parole.

Brittany was shocked to receive 35 years – five years short of the maximum.

In what he called a 'diabolical' act and 'vigilante' justice, District Judge Tony Marabella pointed out that Brittany had no reason to fear Robert, because he'd had absolutely no contact with her for the three years leading up to his June 2015 plea.

Jace's parents – who plan to adopt baby Vaan – don't believe that their mild-mannered son realises the implications of what he did.

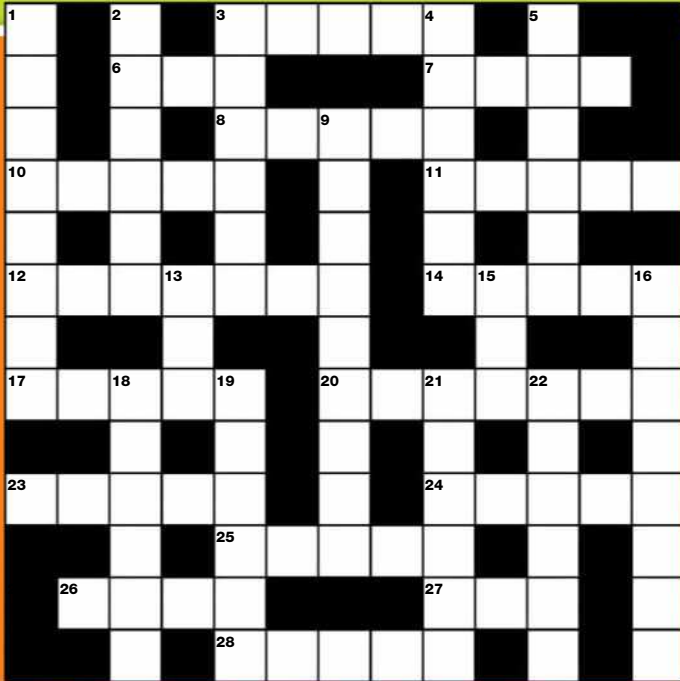
'I wish he'd have come to me first,' said his father, Layton Crehan. 'I'm not exactly sure what I'd have done, but it wouldn't be what happened.'

By Gillian Crawley & Gail Shortland (stories@realpeoplemag.co.uk)

Real 33 people

PICTURES: BIGSTOCK

Give your brain a boost and pit your wits against our mix of testing teasers. See p35 for the answers.



GIVE US A CLUE!

Take 10 minutes and give your brain a rev before your next wash load. Solution on p35.



A



B



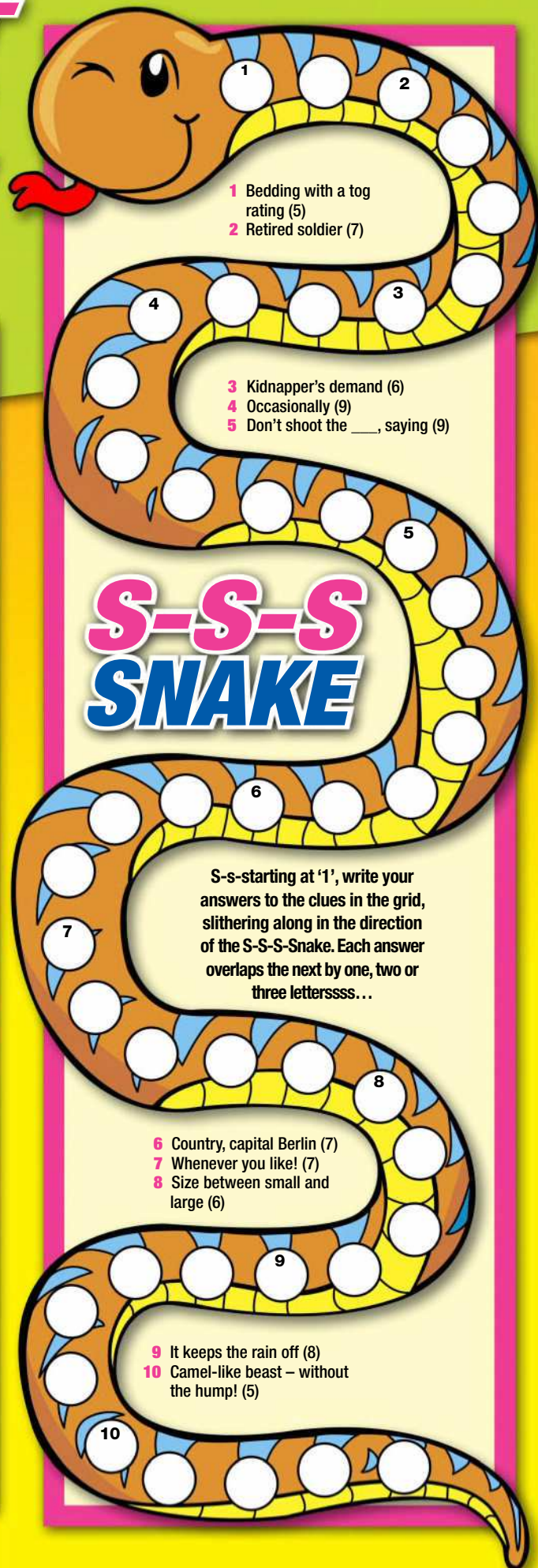
C

ACROSS

- 3 Will wonders never ____?, expression (5)
- 6 ____ Wednesday, first day of Lent (3)
- 7 ANAGRAM SUED
- 8 Bring on yourself (5)
- 10 PICTURE A What is this? (5)
- 11 What is the last letter of the Greek alphabet? (5)
- 12 Which poet wrote *The Waste Land*? (1,1,5)
- 14 In what country is Sharm el-Sheikh located? (5)
- 17 If cows are bovine, what are sheep? (5)
- 20 Subtle differences, fine distinctions (7)

DOWN

- 23 But now I'm older and ____, saying (5)
- 24 Measure of gold (5)
- 25 PICTURE B What is his first name? (5)
- 26 Discount chain that won *Which?*'s favourite supermarket 2018 (4)
- 27 ____ as you earn, tax deduction system (3)
- 28 Abnormally tall person, animal or plant (5)
- 3 Bird's-eye or Scotch bonnet are varieties of what pepper? (6)
- 4 Continent (6)
- 5 & 22D PICTURE C Name him (6,6)
- 9 One-hundredth anniversary of a significant event (9)
- 13 ____ Goodman, *Strictly Come Dancing*'s former head judge (3)
- 15 Gordon's tippie? (3)
- 16 Thin glass cylinder found in a lab (4,4)
- 18 To add ____ to injury, expression (6)
- 19 ANAGRAM IGREWA
- 21 Take receipt of (6)
- 22 See 5D



- 1 Bedding with a tog rating (5)
- 2 Retired soldier (7)

- 3 Kidnapper's demand (6)
- 4 Occasionally (9)
- 5 Don't shoot the ____, saying (9)

S-S-S SNAKE

S-s-starting at '1', write your answers to the clues in the grid, slithering along in the direction of the S-S-S-Snake. Each answer overlaps the next by one, two or three letterssss...

- 6 Country, capital Berlin (7)
- 7 Whenever you like! (7)
- 8 Size between small and large (6)

- 9 It keeps the rain off (8)
- 10 Camel-like beast - without the hump! (5)

I-SPY



Can you spot six differences between these two photos of an episode from new game show *Rob Beckett's Playing for Time*? As this one's just for fun, to see if you're right, check your answers below...



HERE'S A LITTLE SOMETHING!



You have 10 minutes to make as many words of three letters or more as you can out of the nine-letter word below. Plurals are allowed, but proper nouns are not. Letters can only be used once in each word. All words are in everyday use. Answers below.

TARGET:
30 or less – not bad
31–55 – good going
Over 55 – wowee!

D A S H B O A R D



Piece of cake!

Fill the grid using the numbers from 1 to 9 only. Each number must appear once in every column, row and 3x3 square.

5	9	7	2	6				
			1	5	3	7		4
4	3	1				2	6	5
			5		1	3	8	6
	2	5			7		4	
1	8	3	6		9			
8	4	9			6	3	2	
7		6	3	9	2			
				8	6	1	7	9

Can you beat the clock?



Not so easy!

Fill the grid using the numbers from 1 to 9 only. Each number must appear once in every column, row and 3x3 square.

4	2					1	7	
6	7		1		3	9		
			8	2	7	6		
				6		8	5	4
5			4		9			7
8	3	4		1				
			6	2	5	4		
			1	9		8	3	6
5	7						2	8

Can you beat the clock?



PRIZE ANSWERS FOR ISSUE 11

- P09 – The Whopper!**
Prize answer: Princess Anne
- P16 – Roulette**
Prize answer: Queen Victoria
- P21 – Playing The Field**
Prize answer: Hit
- P26 – Fill Your Boots**
Prize answer: Loch Morar
- P28 – Boxing Match**
Prize answer: Under
- P30 – Lost In Moo-Sic**
Prize answer: C) Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue
- P30 – Cow-A-Bingo!**
Prize answer: 33
- P31 – Take Your Pick!**
Prize answer: B) Queen
- P36 – Go And Arrow**
Prize answer: China
- P38 – Prize Question 1**
Prize answer: B) Emma Thompson
- P41 – X Factor**
Prize answer: 17
- P42 – Small Wonder**
Prize answer: More
- P42 – Nothing For A Pair**
Prize answer: Yacht
- P42 – Nice Little Earner**
Prize answer: Minefield
- P42 – I'm Too Hex-y!**
Prize answer: Eleven
- P46 – Diabolical**
Prize answer: Wedding anniversary

- P20 – Reader Puzzle 1**
Separate Lives, Phil Collins/Marilyn Martin; It Takes Two, Rod Stewart/Tina Turner; Up Where We Belong, Joe Cocker/Jennifer Warnes; Somethin' Stupid, Robbie Williams/Nicole Kidman; Endless Love, Lionel Richie/Diana Ross; Don't Go Breaking My Heart, Elton John/Kiki Dee; Guilty, Barry Gibb/Barbra Streisand; Islands In The Stream, Kenny Rogers/Dolly Parton; Under Pressure, Queen/David Bowie, I Knew You Were Waiting (For Me); George Michael/Aretha Franklin; The Girl Is Mine, Michael Jackson/Paul McCartney; Love Song, Prince/Madonna.
Extra answer: I Got You Babe
- P20 – Reader Puzzle 2**
Solution: Gift
- P20 – Puzzler Of The Week**
Reading top to bottom Ipso facto, À la carte, En route, En masse, Ex officio, Ad infinitum, Au fait, Nota bene, Double entendre, Compos mentis, Alter ego, Carpe diem, Fait accompli, Status quo, Haute couture.
Hidden phrase: Persona non grata
- P35 – Easy**
5 9 7 2 6 4 8 1 3
2 6 8 1 5 3 7 9 4
4 3 1 9 7 8 2 6 5
9 7 4 5 2 1 3 8 6
6 2 5 8 3 7 9 4 1
1 8 3 6 4 9 5 2 7
8 4 9 7 1 5 6 3 2
7 1 6 3 9 2 4 5 8
3 2 4 8 6 1 7 9
- P35 – Tough**
4 2 8 5 9 6 1 7 3
6 7 5 1 4 3 9 8 2
1 9 3 8 2 7 6 4 5
7 1 9 3 6 2 8 5 4
5 6 2 4 8 9 3 1 7
8 3 4 7 1 5 2 6 9
3 8 6 2 5 4 7 9 1
2 4 1 9 7 8 5 3 6
9 5 7 6 3 1 4 2 8
- P34 – S-S-S-Snake**
1 Duvet, 2 Veteran, 3 Ransom, 4 Sometimes, 5 Messenger, 6 Germany, 7 Anytime, 8 Medium, 9 Umbrella, 10 Llama.

JFF SOLUTIONS!

- P34 – Give Us A Clue!**
ACROSS 3 Cease, 6 Ash, 7 Used, 8 Incur, 10 Bagel, 11 Omega, 12 T S Eliot, 14 Egypt, 17 Ovine, 20 Nuances, 23 Wiser, 24 Carat, 25 Wayne, 26 Aldi, 27 Pay, 28 Giant. DOWN 1 Subbuteo, 2 Gaggle, 3 Chilli, 4 Europe, 5 Jeremy, 9 Centenary, 13 Len, 15 Gin, 16 Test tube, 18 Insult, 19 Earwig, 21 Accept, 22 Corbyn.
- P35 – I-Spy:** A3, B1, B2, B4, C2, C3.
- P35 – Here's A Little Something**
Abs, Add, Ado, Ads, Aha, Ahs, Arb, Ash, Baa, Bad, Bah, Bar, Bas, Boa, Bod, Bra, Bro, Dab, Dad, Dah, Dos, Had, Has, Hob, Oar, Oba, Odd, Orb, Rah, Rho, Rob, Rod, Sab, Sad, Sob, Sod, Adds, Arbs, Baas, Bard, Bars, Bash, Boar, Boas, Bods, Bora, Bosh, Brad, Bras, Bros, Dabs, Dada, Dado, Dads, Dahs, Dash, Drab, Hard, Hoar, Hobs, Hora, Oars, Odds, Orbs, Rash, Road, Robs, Rods, Shad, Shod, Soar, Soba, Soda, Sorb, Abash, Abhor, Bards, Board, Boars, Boras, Brads, Brash, Broad, Dados, Dobra, Dorsa, Drabs, Hoard, Horas, Roads, Sabra, Sarod, Shard, Abhors, Abboard, Aboard, Adsorb, Boards, Broads, Hoards.
- P36 – The Word Cup**
Solution: Bananas
- P46 – Just For The Hell Of It!**
Winning UK Eurovision songs: Making Your Mind Up, Puppet On A String, Save Your Kisses For Me.

2	1	5	3	4	6
6	4	3	2	5	1
4	3	6	1	2	5
1	5	2	4	6	3
3	6	4	5	1	2
5	2	1	6	3	4

Enter online at realpeplemag.co.uk




FOLLOW FLO TO PAGE 36

PUZZLE TRAIL

GO AND ARROW

If winning £100 sends you all aqiver, then this puzzle should hit the target!



Small garden scoop	Snake	Unhappy	Rearred, raised	Pig's nose	Day before	Greek god of love	Uncommon	Jewel	Small breed of chicken	Mistake	Opposite of fresh
					Creature with a backbone						
Hot ____, Easter treat (5,3)	Average golf score			Anne ____, Henry VIII's second wife	Historical period			Spoil, ruin		Second Greek letter	Fencer's weapon
		First performance				Naturally occurring mineral			Aristocratic		
Wise bird?	The pen is mightier than this!		Speck		Employ, utilise			Meryl ____, US actress			
			America (1,1,1)	Drinking tube				New film starring The Rock	__ and ____, show of superiority	Flow in a steady stream	Very serious or gloomy
Not fast!	Migraine, eg	Great ____, river of NE England						Extreme female fan	US state, capital Columbus	Pablo ____, Father of Cubism	Perfect example, embodiment
In need of a drink	Mend a hole (jn a sock, eg)							Small prawn-like shellfish			
		__ Oliver, British chef	Prize, trophy	Slip, skid							
Once possessed	Film about a Great White shark				Happen again	Popular Mexican dish	Water Lilies painter	Crack, fissure	Lazy	__ up, adds together	__ up, stop talking abruptly
				Would I __ You?, panel show (3,2)				Read the ____, criticise harshly (4,3)			
Colourful breed of parrot	A long dress or coat, eg				Open, frank				Capital of Norway		
			Score of 40-40 in tennis				Floating remains (of a ship)				
Church singing group	Lip, rim				Turn, spin				An unspecified amount		

WIN

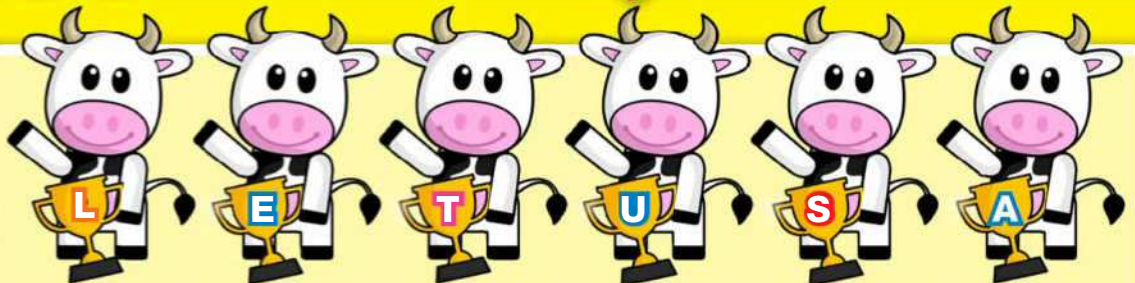
£100

Solve the arrow word in the usual way. When completed correctly, the yellow squares will answer the prize question. See p43 for entry details.

Q

Humans share fifty per cent of their DNA with which fruit? (7)

THE WORD CUP



Check out this prize-winning line-up! Simply rearrange the six letters on the cups above into a regular word. Each letter can only be used once. Solution on p35.

Enter online at realpeplemag.co.uk



FOLLOW FLO TO PAGE 38

SWEDISH-STYLE BALLS MAC & CHEESE

Serves 4 • Takes 35 mins

- ✓ 300g macaroni
- 1/2 onion, diced
- 30g butter
- 30g flour
- 600ml semi-skimmed milk
- 50g Cheddar cheese, grated
- 75g cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 stock cube, crumbled
- 1tbsp olive oil
- 200g Quorn Swedish Style Balls
- 1 courgette, diced

1 Bring a large pan of water to the boil and cook the macaroni for 10 mins until al dente. Drain well and set to one side. Preheat the oven to 200°C.

2 Meanwhile, heat the oil in a pan and sauté the onion for 4-5 mins until softened. Add the Swedish Style Balls, and cook for 4-5 mins more. Add the courgette and butter, and stir until melted. Stir in the flour, and cook for 2-3 mins. Add the milk little by little, stirring continuously until thickened, for approximately 10 mins.

3 Season to taste with salt and black pepper, then stir in two-thirds of the cheese, then the macaroni, tomatoes and stock cube. Place in an oven-proof container, sprinkle with the remaining cheese, and bake for 12 mins until golden brown and bubbling.

£1.40
per serving

VEG OUT

It's National Vegetarian Week, which makes it the perfect time to try out a marvellous meat-free meal...

Serves 4 • Takes 20 mins
(+ marinating)

- ✓ 4 frozen Quorn Fillets, defrosted
- 100ml BBQ sauce
- 4 brioche buns
- FOR THE COLESLAW
- 75g white cabbage, shredded
- 75g red cabbage, shredded
- 75g carrots, grated
- 50g red onion, chopped
- 2tbsp mayonnaise
- 1/2tsp Dijon mustard

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C. In a bowl, hand-shred the fillets and mix with the BBQ sauce. Leave to marinate for 30 mins. Meanwhile, mix all the coleslaw ingredients, season to taste, then chill until required.

2 Tip the fillets onto a baking tray and bake in the oven for 15 mins until cooked.

3 Divide the coleslaw between the brioche buns and fill with the pulled BBQ Quorn.

PULLED BBQ FILLETS

£1.30
per serving



★ This loaded bap is proof that veggie burgers can have a meaty taste and texture. The No Bull Burger teams tasty soya beans with beetroot powder for a realistic bite that's both veggie- and vegan-friendly. £1.50, Iceland.



★ Gone are the days when the BBQ veggie option was the sad, limp offering that no one wanted. These delicious Beetroot & Bean Burgers are made with cracking flavour combinations. £2.99, Amazon Fresh, Ocado and Whole Foods.



★ Thought the vegetarian version of pie and mash would be flat and flavourless? Feast your eyes on Pukka Pies' Veggie Tikka Masala. Chickpea and spinach combined with golden puff pastry and tasty veg in a cheeky aromatic Tikka sauce. £1.75, Asda.



★ All the qualities of a decadent burger without the meat! The combination of butternut squash and red pepper goes together for a tasty bite, and the sprinkling of sunflower seeds adds a cracking crunch. £1.50, Asda.



CHECK
THESE
OUT!

Laura (left) saved my little girl's life

If it wasn't for her best pal's eagle eyes, Charlotte's girl wouldn't have any...



HIDING PLAIN S

Weaving her way through the crowds, my friend Laura Power plonked two drinks down.

'Mocktail for you,' she grinned. 'Once upon a time, we'd have been knocking back the shots,' I laughed.

'Or singing Spice Girl songs,' Laura interrupted.

'God,' I groaned, 'remember those holidays in the caravan, blasting out *Wannabe*?!'

We'd lived next door to each other since I was five, and our families used to go caravanning together.

As kids – Laura was a year older – we'd be out on our bikes and climbing trees.

Then, as we grew up, it'd been giggling over crushes in our bedrooms.

Even when we'd gone to different senior schools, we'd stayed close.

Now I was 30, living in Lancaster, while she was 40 minutes away in Liverpool.

'Wish you could deliver this little one,' I smiled, rubbing my hint of a bump.

I was 15 weeks pregnant with my second child, and Laura was training to be a midwife.

It would've been a dream to have her with me on the labour ward, at the business end!

She had two children, Charlie, eight, and Sophie, five, who I was godmother to.

She doted on my eldest, Harrison, seven.

And I'd already decided that Laura would be god-mummy to this little one, although I wasn't telling her yet.

All too soon, it was time to leave the bar and head home.

'Let me know how the scan goes,' she grinned, hugging me. 'Blue or pink?'

'As long as it's healthy,' I smiled.

Harrison was staying with his dad, Nick.

The following week, we discovered at a private scan that the baby was a girl.

'You can name her,' I told Harrison.

'Cool!' he said. 'Felicity.'

I laughed. He had a crush on a girl called Felicity at school.

'It's pretty,' Nick said.

So, it was agreed.

With Harrison to look after and my hospitality job at a local hotel, the pregnancy sped by.

I had cravings for Rice Krispies, so Laura teased me, 'You've had the snap and crackle, now we just need you to pop!'

And, finally, on 19 January 2017, after just two-and-a-half hours in labour, I pushed our gorgeous Felicity into the world.

She weighed 7lb 5oz and was just beautiful.

We were allowed home the next morning, and Laura arrived the next day with a *Born in*



WIN!



An incredible iFly skydiving experience

Bagging the top prize in the lottery, swimming with dolphins, marrying Tom Hardy, having a No.1 record, meeting the Queen, marrying Tom Hardy, winning *The X Factor*, marrying Tom Hardy... we all have dreams, don't we? And everybody's different, right? But I think you'll agree that the one wish we all want to come true, the single most unifying ambition, is the desire to know what it feels like to jump out of a plane!

So, how exciting is this?! We're giving one of you lucky people the chance to know exactly what that exhilarating feeling is like. And, what's even better, it comes without the inconvenience of getting into an actual plane and flying, which nobody digs doing!

At your choice of one of three locations in the UK, you'll have the most amazing day out in the cleverly designed air chamber, enjoying all the thrills of skydiving, without having to leap into the sky from 50,000ft.

After a quick safety briefing, you'll be led to the observation deck to see how other people are faring in the wind tunnel – then it'll be your turn! The voucher includes two flights for one person with the gear provided, and you'll get a certificate at the end of the session.

It's for all ages from three up, although the cut-off age is 103 years – sorry about that, Grandma! What are you waiting for? Simply solve my prize question, below...

For a chance to win, answer my prize question below. See p43 to enter.

PQ1: In which film did Tom Hanks play a real-life hero pilot, who pulled off an emergency landing in the Hudson River in 2009?

A) The Aviator B) Sully

FOLLOW FLO TO PAGE 41





My brave baby went through rounds of chemo

IN SIGHT

2017 plaque to hang on the bedroom door.

'I couldn't resist these,' she said, handing me a pair of pink booties.

'You spoil her,' I smiled.

Felicity's best friend for the first few weeks wasn't me but a cuddly toy that mimics the comforting sounds of the womb – Ewan The Dream Sheep.

But when she was three months old, I noticed a funny reflection in her left eye.

It was only in a certain light and looked like a mini-moon.

I didn't think anything of it. 'Clever girl!' I cheered, as she started rolling and then crawling.

And then we had the fun of weaning – her face an almost permanent smear of cheese and broccoli mash!

But one day, when she was six months old, Laura was visiting us.

Felicity was playing with her toys. Suddenly, she turned and a stream of light reflected off her face.

'Have you seen her eye?'

Laura asked casually. 'I'd take her to see the doctor.'

'Why?' I panicked.

'I'm sure it's nothing,' she smiled, then changed the conversation.

Still, I went to the GP.

'How long's she had this?' he asked, shining a light into Felicity's eye.

'I saw it three months ago,' I croaked.

'Go to the clinic next Tuesday at the Royal Lancaster Infirmary,' he ordered.

'What's wrong?' I panicked.

'We can't say for sure,' he said. Worry churned.

Back home, I googled *Reflection in baby's eye*.

She was growing evil

When the results popped up, my stomach lurched. *Cancer...*

'But surely we'd know if she was ill?' I worried to Nick.

'Don't panic,' he said.

He'd always been the calm one.

Tuesday arrived. I wrung my hands together as we sat with the consultant, Felicity on Nick's lap. The consultant shone a light into her left eye.

In the tense quietness of the room, I heard her whisper, 'Oh, dear.'

'What's wrong?' I begged.

After a scan, the consultant said, 'There are bumps in

this,' he started. 'Felicity has three tumours in each eye – retinoblastoma. It's very aggressive in her left eye. If she didn't have the tumours in her other eye, we would have removed the left.'

'Not my baby!' I howled. Nick grabbed my hand.

'If chemo works in the left, great, as it means it'll work in the right, too, hopefully,' the doctor continued.

'How did she get this?'

I sobbed, 'She's just a baby.'

'It's likely she was born with it,' he said. 'Genetic malfunctioning.'

Bile rose in my throat. I'd carried her inside me, thinking she was safely growing, but she was also growing this evil.

'Did I do something wrong?' I wept.

'It's not your fault,' Nick said. 'It's just bad luck,' the consultant insisted.

Later, we cuddled Harrison on the sofa.

'Have you heard of cancer?' I croaked. He nodded. 'Felicity has it,' I whispered.

'Will she die?' he frowned.

'No, she'll get the best medicine,' I said firmly.

Later that night, I texted Laura with the news.

I knew something didn't look right, she replied. *I'm so sorry*.

Days later, we were on ward 84 in Manchester Hospital.

Felicity needed a Hickman line put in ready for chemo, but we made it comfortable for her with Ewan and her favourite

both her eyes.'

Nick was listening calmly, but I was in tears.

'Bumps?'

I sobbed.

She wouldn't say any more, though.

A few days later, Felicity was put to sleep for an in-depth scan at Birmingham Hospital.

When she woke 40 minutes later, I was waiting with a bottle of milk and her Ewan.

'Brave girl,'

I smiled.

A little while later, we were called in to see the doctor.

'There's no easy way to say



Felicity loves her cuddly sheep

That's Not My... books.

We needn't have worried, though.

One time after chemo, we got home and she started pulling all the pans out of the kitchen cupboard.

'Bang!' she laughed.

It was exhausting, though, juggling school and hospital...

One day, Laura appeared on my doorstep.

'You: bath and bed,' she said, plonking an overnight bag down. 'I'm staying the night.'

'Thank you,' I wept.

So grateful, I wrote Laura a letter: *If you hadn't told me to go to the doctor, who knows what would have happened...*

Doctors hadn't said it, but I knew that Laura had saved her life.

When I gave it to her, tears welled in her eyes. 'Love you,' she sniffed.

Chemo seems to have worked on Felicity's right eye, but stopped working on her left, the retina torn.

So, she's just finished three rounds of intra-arterial chemo, where a tube is inserted into her groin and the chemo travels to the back of her eye.

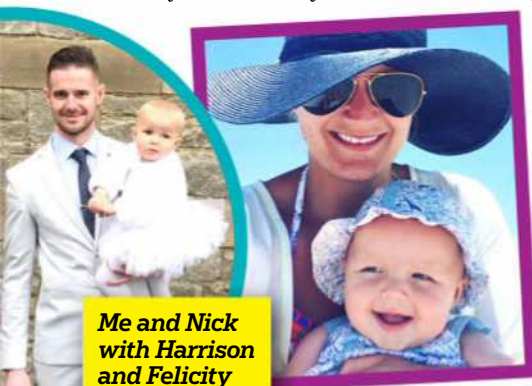
Touch wood, the tumours have gone.

I'm convinced she's blind in her left, but it's a small price to pay.

Now, 16 months old, if she's playing in the garden in her wellies she can still spot a ladybird a mile off, and will tell everyone about it!

She may have been born with cancer, but life will be golden for my girl.

Charlotte Salisbury, 33, Lancaster, Lancs



Me and Nick with Harrison and Felicity

■ As told to Clare Berrett and Lucy Laing (stories@realpeoplemag.co.uk)

PICTURES: JIM DUXBURY



★ Bob's **BiG** treasure hunt!



with auctioneer Bob Hayton

Got a boot sale bargain or an old ornament you reckon is worth a fortune? Why not let me - top auctioneer Bob Hayton - find out? Just send me a pic of your treasure. If it's printed, you'll get **£25** - even if it's trash!

Pretty in pink

I wonder if you can tell me more about this ornament of a flower girl in a pink dress, Bob. She's 11in tall and made of china, I think. I bought her for £2. Is she treasure or trash?

Julie Surtees, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear



■ She's no antique but, even so, you bought well, Julie. She should sell for £20 at auction.

£20

Ship in a bottle

My late father-in-law served in the Navy from 1930-45 and left us his ship in a Haig's dimple whisky bottle. Is it worth hanging on to as a curio, or should we just let it go?

Sue Angus, Wolverhampton, West Midlands

■ Part and parcel of a sailor's life are long hours at sea, Sue. Members of today's Navy use the internet and electronic games to fill their spare time. But in years gone by, sailors made things. After drinking a bottle's contents, they'd produce intricate models to put inside it. Ships are always popular at auction. Yours would sell for £80.



£80

ASK ME ANYTHING!

Need advice on a collectable? Just write in!

There's £25 for you, if we print it

Q My two Jesmar dolls are in good condition. Could you tell me something about them and what they're worth, please?

Sheila Wilkins, Tredegar, Gwent

A Jesmar is a Spanish company, which produced the Cabbage Patch Dolls. Your two would sell at £40 for the pair in a toy-related auction.



£40

UNDER THE HAMMER

What's hot at the auctions this week - check your loft... if you find one of these, you'll be quids in!

● This Heal's Victorian burr walnut pedestal desk sold for £1,800.



£1,800

● Compliments of the seasoning! A 1940s silver cruet set in a fitted case made £160.



£160

● A vintage crocodile leather holdall was snapped up for £280.



£280



£200

● Bids went swimmingly for this life-size painted fibreglass turtle, which sold for £200.



■ What an interesting find, Pauline! But in truth, the sweetie tin they were in holds as much interest for collectors as the silk handkerchiefs. Together with the tin, they're worth £30.

What sweet hankies

When I was clearing out my late parents' home, I found a confectionery tin filled with silk hankies from the war era. They're in excellent condition, and I wondered if they are of any worth.

Pauline Boffey,
Thornton-Cleveleys,
Lancashire

£30

WRITE TO ME AT...

If you'd like my opinion on the value of your item, send in a clear photo, with as much description as you can, including size. Give details of markings or labels, and don't forget to include your full name, address and phone number. Send them to: Bob's Treasure Hunt, Real People, Unit 9, Apollo Business Centre, Trundleys Road, Deptford, London SE8 5JE, or email Bob@realpeoplemag.co.uk. I cannot value every item sent in or respond personally to letters.

Boop-oop-a-doop

Way back in 1996, my mum bought me this Betty Boop sculpture. I'd never part with it, but I'd like to know if it's worth anything.

Karen Cowley,
Penygroes, Gwynedd

■ Way back in 1996, eh? You make me feel ancient, Karen! Your little Betty Boop in an iconic Marilyn Monroe pose is worth £20. But your memories make it priceless to you.

£20



★ Test your KNOWLEDGE

Guess the value of this week's item and

WIN £100!

You could've bought this Buddha table lamp at a recent auction. Can you enlighten us as to its winning bid?

A £80 B £160 C £320

HOW TO ENTER For your chance to win, simply answer the Test Your Knowledge question above, then turn to page 43, where you'll find full entry details.

Issue 16's item was a Samurai vest made from bamboo. Answer: B) £240

PUZZLE TRAIL

X Factor

Have you got what it takes to be successful? See if you can learn what that special something is from music star Dua Lipa. For £100, use Dua to work out the number code for each letter of the alphabet. We've placed the As, now you do the same with the Ds and Us. The number that represents the letter 'X' is your prize answer. See page 43 for full entry details.

WIN £100!

17	3	A	16	2	20		13		26	14	18	8	20			
20					13		3	A	8	5		20	6			
18	20	5		3	A	12		9		10		9	25			
8					22	20	20	18	8			14	10			
20	6	11	18		3	A		8		21	18	10	24	11		
					15	10	11		20			25		20		
11	3	A	12	14	14		10		18			20	24	1		
				18		24		25		20				20		
3	A	26	14	7	20				1	20	19	20	18			
2			24			1					2			2		
18			15						8		8			1		
3	A	13	20	24	1					20	24	8	2	20		
		3	A			3	A		19		4			20		
8	21	3	A			18			18		2	24	1	20	18	
4			24			20			20	23	20					
2	18	16	20	1					20		24	20	26	20	18	
20			20			20	11	5	10	25					2	
3	A		18			17			3	A		10	13	21	20	22
7			20			10	14	24			24					20
23	14	1	20	22				1		16	2	3	A	18	1	

~~A~~ B C ~~D~~ E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T ~~U~~ V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
D	U	A										
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26



FOLLOW FLO TO PAGE 42

PICTURE: GETTY

PUZZLE TRAIL

Here's your last chance to win this week's fab cash prizes! See p43 to enter.



Nothing For A Pair

... not in this game! The names of 12 current British music acts have been split in two and mixed up in the grid below. Cross out all the matches you make until one remains. This is your prize answer. See p43 to enter.

Ella	Ora	Calvin	Ware	Ed
Dua	Rita	George	Hus	Eyre
Faith	Man	Blue	Lipa	Ezra
James	J	Jonas	Bay	Sheeran
Jessie	Stormzy	Rag'n'Bone	Paloma	Harris

Small Wonder

Here's a small but wonderful example of the nation's favourite puzzle. Solve it in the usual way. When completed correctly, the letters in the yellow squares, reading top to bottom, left to right, will spell out your prize answer. See p43 for entry details.



ACROSS

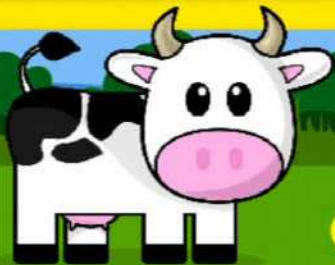
- 1 Shake with fear or nerves, eg (7)
- 4 Storm feature that precedes lightning (7)
- 5 Valuable relic (7)
- 7 Got on a horse (7)

DOWN

- 1 Small bird (3)
- 2 Refer to, drop into conversation (7)
- 3 Go wrong (3)
- 5 Target, goal (3)
- 6 Finish (3)

1				2			3
4							
5							6
7							

DON'T FORGET THE DEVILISH DIABOLICAL ON PAGE 46



NICE LITTLE EARNER

Cash in here by rearranging the characters below into a regular nine-letter word. Each letter must only be used once. See page 43 for full entry details.

M I N D P L U G S



I'm Too HEX-Y!

Write the six-letter answers to the clues in this grid around the hexagons, starting at the point indicated by the arrows and always in a clockwise direction. When done, the letters in the yellow boxes, reading left to right, will spell your answer. See page 43.

	What trees shed in autumn	Antenna	Extra-marital fling	Do up - your seatbelt	Go-..., ambitious person
	Bluish-purple colour	Cooked in water	False front, charade	Small yellow bird	Fire-breathing monster



ENTRY COUPON



Issue 19, 17 May 2018 Closing date: Midnight 30 May 2018

ENTER BY TEXT



Type a message starting with RPL19 followed by a space, using no punctuation, with your answer(s), name and address details to:

84988 *Texts cost 50p each per text, plus your standard network charge

ENTER ONLINE

Just visit our fantastic website at realpeplemag.co.uk



Select 'Puzzles' and click the cover of the week you want to enter and fill in the online coupon - it's that easy!

CALL THE HOTLINE



Simply list all your answers when prompted

UK: 09010 270071
IRL: 1550 787023

*UK calls cost 30p per min plus your telephone company's network access charge and 97 cents in ROI. Over 18s only. Calls last no longer than 1½ mins. UK SP: Spoke (0333 202 3390) ROI SP: Spoke (01437 8815)

OR ENTER BY POST: Send your answers to: **Real People, ISSUE 19, Hearst Magazines UK, The Data Solutions Centre, Worksop S80 2RT**

01 The Whopper! P12 GVRLPL18270

£150
ANSWER:

07 Cow-Culator! P30 GVRLPL18276

£25
ANSWER:

13 Nothing For... P42 GVRLPL18282

£50
ANSWER:

02 Roulette P17 GVRLPL18271

£250
ANSWER:

08 Take Your Pick! P31 GVRLPL18277

Sony 40in Smart Full HD TV or £309
ANSWER:

14 Nice Little... P42 GVRLPL18283

£25
ANSWER:

03 Playing The Field P21 GVRLPL18272

£50
ANSWER:

09 Go And Arrow P36 GVRLPL18278

£100
ANSWER:

15 I'm Too Hex-y P42 GVRLPL18284

£50
ANSWER:

04 Fill Your Boots P26 GVRLPL18273

£100 to spend on beachwear
ANSWER:

10 Question 1 P38 GVRLPL18279

iFly skydiving experience
ANSWER:

16 Diabolical P46 GVRLPL18285

£150
ANSWER:

05 Boxing Match P28 GVRLPL18274

£75 to spend on sunglasses
ANSWER:

11 X-Factor P41 GVRLPL18280

£100
ANSWER:

Test your KNOWLEDGE P41 GVRLPL18286

£100
ANSWER:

06 Lost In Moo-sic P30 GVRLPL18275

£25
ANSWER:

12 Small Wonder P42 GVRLPL18281

£25
ANSWER:

★ *Good luck!* ★

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READY, TE GO!

Living life at break-neck speed would catch up with Gemma's boy Riley eventually...

Grabbing the cereal from the cupboard, I called out to my family, 'Boys, breakfast time!'

Moments later, I heard footsteps as my eldest son, Harry, seven, came down the stairs, slowly and sensibly.

Then...

Bump-bump-bump-BUMP!

His little brother, Riley, five, followed him down – head first and on his stomach as usual.

'My little daredevil,' I chuckled to myself.

Of all my three boys – I also had 16-month-old Finlay – Riley seemed to be the most boisterous.

If he wasn't sliding down the stairs, he was throwing shapes on the trampoline outside, or practising his headstands on the living-room floor. I got used to watching the TV through his legs.

'Mum, can I go on the garage?' he asked, one sunny afternoon.

'Do you mean in the garage?' I replied.

'On the roof!' he beamed.

'Err... No, you can't. Don't you want to play with your teddies?'

His cuddly bears were the only thing that kept him sitting down for more than five minutes.

Otherwise, I'd be on hand with plasters and hugs for when his antics went south.

The prime season for accidents was summer so, in July last year, we were perhaps tempting fate with a trip to Laser Quest for Harry's eighth birthday!

Not a bit of it.

We had a roll call of 10 children, and all reported back in good working order.

My hubby, Steve, 35, manned the barbecue later that day.

A welcome break from our jobs – we run a building company together: I do the admin, he does the dirty work.

I sat back with a cold drink, swapping parenting notes with Rachel Dark from over the road.

Her husband and Steve had known each other for years.

Since her boy, Flynn, was born, two days before Finlay, we'd been much closer.

By the evening, she'd taken Flynn off to bed. Chance would be a fine thing for mine, still full of beans.

'I'm going to do a backflip,' Riley shouted on the trampoline.

'That's great, love,' I mumbled.

I heard the springs squeak... then there was a yelp.

I jumped up.

'Are you OK?' I gasped, climbing into the trampoline.

He crawled towards me, crying and shaken.

I winced as, through heavy sobs, he said he'd landed on his neck. So I rang 111.

'It sounds like a muscular injury,' they said, as Riley wailed in the background. 'Painkillers and rest. His neck will be stiff in the morning.'

He'd calmed down by the night, as I tucked him into bed.

The next morning, a scream shook the house.

Riley and Jamie Bear had been in the wars!

Riley! My stomach twisted with fear – it was a primal cry, like a wounded animal.

I scooped him out of bed and ran him down to the local cottage hospital.

'It's whiplash,' the doctor said. 'Keep him still for now, then encourage him to move more in a week's time.'

'Keep him still?' I smiled. The summer holidays were only a fortnight away. 'Well, I'll try...'

But the life seemed to drain out of Riley.

Next morning, he came downstairs... normally.

Then, he barely moved from the sofa all day.

After a week at home, he

begged to go back to school, so I relented.

But he came back exhausted, always tilting his head to the left.

After the school broke up, we went on our camping trip near the lake as planned, but Riley sat in a deckchair, watching the others swim and play.

This wasn't right.

Steve took him to a local physiotherapist, who sent him straight to Birmingham Children's Hospital.

I felt relieved. Now, at last we'd get it sorted...

But then at 11pm, my phone beeped with a short, simple text: *It's broken.*

What?!

I dialled Steve's number. 'He's b-broken his neck,' Steve said, shaken. 'I can't even bear to say it. It's a compound fracture to the C2 vertebra. The doctors are surprised he can still move.'

My whole body was trembling with shock.

A broken neck?

But we'd taken him to school, the park, the lake – even camping!

And at any moment, one



Rachel gave my little one a friend in his darkest hour

DDY,

Grin and bear it



Rachel's dad made several bears to help other kids



wrong move, he could have been paralysed – or worse...

I shuddered again, a wave of nausea rising inside me.

That night, Riley and Steve stayed in hospital, and I didn't sleep. What-ifs and if-onlys were flying around my head.

Why hadn't I insisted on getting an X-ray done?

I'd followed the doctor's advice.

Next morning, seeing Riley clambering around on the hospital bed in a neck brace, I broke down again.

The doctor explained he wanted to fit Riley with a halo – a frame bolted to his skull that would hold his neck still.

'We'd usually just use a neck brace, but we're not sure this will work with Riley,' he said, looking at him fidgeting.

It sounded horrific, and looked like an instrument of torture.

He'd have to wear it for 12 weeks.

'Yes, of course, whatever it takes,' I said.

After the two-hour operation, I heard Riley's screams from

down the corridor.

'Get it off!' he shrieked, trying to climb down from the trolley.

I caught him in my arms and tried to hold him tight, but the halo was in the way.

Those next few days were so hard for him.

The frame was heavy, he couldn't shower as it had to stay

dry, and the fleecy lining was sweaty and uncomfortable.

After three days in hospital, we came home.

Sitting indoors, listening to the clanking sound of Steve dismantling the trampoline, it felt like the fun had drained out of my son's life. He faced a whole summer cooped up at home.

Just then, the doorbell rang.

It was Rachel from over the road with a gift for Riley.

'I know he loves bears,' she said, 'so I made this.'

She had taken a teddy bear and added a homemade halo constructed from little plastic rods, electrical tape and pipe cleaners.

When she gave it to Riley, his eyes widened.

'He's got a halo, just like me,' he said, cuddling it. 'I'm going to call him Jamie Bear.'

Later, I saw Riley stroking the teddy, explaining how the halo was helping them get better, saying, 'Be brave, Jamie Bear, it'll be OK.'

This soft toy was helping him make sense of what had happened, and I saw a glimpse of the old Riley.

As he improved, we decided to go out and about just like before – walking in the park, taking day trips to the beach.

Riley clambered carefully around the rock pools hunting for starfish, showing what he'd found to Jamie Bear, who went everywhere with him.

Jamie was there for Riley's hospital appointments, too.

The screws of the halo had to be painfully tightened – making a grinding noise against his skull.

I heard Riley's screams down the corridor

Riley squeezed Jamie Bear. 'And what about your little friend?' the doctor, smiled.

I nearly willed up as he used his tools to pretend to carefully tighten Jamie's screws, too.

Riley reassured his toy, 'It'll be OK, I've had mine done.'

When term started again, he went in for four days a week.

In October, I was talking to his teacher in the playground when Riley decided to show off his high kicks to a friend...

He lost his balance, falling against a bench.

The halo slipped, the screws scraping into his skin.

He screamed as blood ran down his head.

Desperately holding it together for Riley's sake, I called 999.

The rush-hour ambulance ride to the hospital was fraught. *Had he caused more damage?*

Riley was sedated, and me and Steve waited outside the examination room while the doctors worked.

Suddenly, we saw a nurse we knew, carrying a simple neck brace.

She waved it and smiled.

'It's healed enough,' she told us. 'They're going to take the halo off tonight, and put this on instead.'

We were giddy with relief, hugging each other.

When Riley woke up the next day and realised the halo was gone, an enormous smile spread across his face.

'This is the best day of my life!' he grinned.

Later that day, we took him home. The first thing he did was take Jamie Bear's neck brace off, too.

'He's just a normal bear now,' he said, happily.

And now Riley could get back to normal, too.

Later, over a cuppa, I told Rachel what a huge help her gift had been.

'That's great,' she said.

'My dad's made some more!'

Rachel's father belonged to a club called Men Shed, where a bunch of practical-minded guys make things to help out the community.

They'd bought a job lot of bears from the local card shop, made four more halo bears and another with a leg brace.

Rachel showed me the photos of them lined up, and I smiled.

Those bears would make life a tiny bit easier for other kids going through the same ordeal.

A month later, Riley's brace came off. Then a few weeks after, he was riding his bike, wrestling his brother and running around.

His vertebra is fully healed, with just tiny dots on his head from the screws.

'Next time I try that backflip, I'm going to nail it,' Riley announced the other day.

Me and Steve stared at him in horror, and he laughed.

Our little angel's halo might have slipped, but we're glad to have our cheeky daredevil back!

Gemma Hoy, 32, Clevedon, Somerset



Me and all my boys



Riley's back to his daredevil self

■ As told to **Andreina Cordani & Harriet Rose-Gale** (stories@realpeoplemag.co.uk)

DIABOLICAL!

WIN £150!

Eurovision... All listed words are hidden in the grid, except one – which one? This is your prize answer. Enter on p43.

Y T Z B T F L A G N I R T S A N O T E P P U P M D F K N
 O C M Z K B L N L E F Q F X D S D E S O N I A N S L F B
 K U Q O I A J D A L B J F D R A W D E J J G H F D S D G
 T U L V L F T T E O E M P N L A R B O S R O D A V L A S
 Q J N U P S S R I C S B K L E U L B A Z J Y Y F X P A L
 S G Q X L R E K I I H W E F O L N D H N E U L N R U I U
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 H P B K X C L I F F R I C H A R D G X V M B B D S Y D E
 A N D Y A B R A H A M T C N E C Y N J H L S F O T V V P

- ABBA
- ANDY ABRAHAM
- BARDO
- BLACK LACE
- BLUE
- BONNIE TYLER
- BROTHERHOOD OF MAN
- BUCKS FIZZ
- CELINE DION
- CLIFF RICHARD
- CONCHITA WURST
- DANA INTERNATIONAL
- ENGELBERT HUMPERDING
- GINA G
- JADE EWEN
- JAVINE
- JEDWARD
- JEMINI
- JESSICA GARLICK
- JOE AND JAKE
- JOHNNY LOGAN
- JULIO IGLESIAS
- KATRINA AND THE WAVES
- LORDI
- LOREEN
- LOVE CITY GROOVE
- LULU
- MICHAEL BALL
- NIAMH KAVANAGH
- NICOLE
- OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN
- OLSEN BROTHERS
- SALVADOR SOBRAL
- SAMANTHA JANUS
- SANDIE SHAW
- SCOOCH
- SECRET GARDEN
- SONIA
- SURIE
- THE SHADOWS



AND... JUST FOR THE HELL OF IT!

We've hidden extra words in the grid above. But to make it fiendishly tricky, we're only going to give you a theme. This week: **WINNING UK EUROVISION SONGS.** To find out how many of them you have to look for, you have to solve the mini sudoku on the right. The number in the yellow square is your target... mwah, ha, ha, ha, ha!

	1		3		
	4	3			
	3	6	1	2	5
1	5	2		6	
		4	5	1	
			6		

PS We're not complete devils! If you want to know what the mystery words are, see Solutions on p35.

Enter online at realpeplemag.co.uk





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