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lower-cal desserts



Claire King

**I'm planning to grow
old disgracefully!**



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Winged Button Back Headboard shown in Sleedale Blush



Hello!

How we can all help

It's finally that 'waking up' time of the year when animals start to come out of hibernation. From hedgehogs to frogs and even butterflies, there are lots of things we can all do to help them thrive. From page 10, our handy guide not only showcases the cutest of the bunch, but also provides tips on what you can do when they make an appearance. Next year I'm thinking about joining them by sleeping from October to April. What a lovely idea!

Catherine

Editor-in-Chief
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@ti-media.com

PS Our fabulous Test Kitchen is now creating all our recipes. Look out for our Approved logo too – we've tested all these products and they're the best!



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COMING UP ROSES
If you love retro-style prints, you'll adore this pretty design. Cath Kidston pouch, £21.99, Very



IN BLOOM
These tulips will last much longer than the real thing! Cosmetics bag, £7.95, rexlondon.com



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Now you can enjoy peonies every day of the year. Clear wash bag, £12, Paperchase

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Good to SHARE

Royal fashion, fun book festival and Beatles break-up

From us to you

Love sun, sea and sand?

Seems we all do! The Maldives has been named by UK holidaymakers as Favourite Holiday Destination in the World, at the 13th Ultimate Luxury Travel Related Awards gala. Made up of 1,192 islands in the Indian Ocean, the Maldives is known for its high-end resorts.



FASHION ICON

Nearly half of Brits say Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, is the top royal female fashion icon, but only a fifth think it's Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, reveals research from the Fashion Retail Academy. The Queen is the third most influential royal fashion icon, with her bright coats, dresses and matching hats. Does Her Majesty inspire you?



DID YOU KNOW?

Nearly half of UK drivers worry about paying for unexpected repairs when getting vehicles serviced, research for RAC MOT Assist has found. And, of those drivers who are concerned about this, 24% say the uncertainty puts them off getting their car maintained in the future.



On this day

On 6 March 1970, the Beatles released the aptly titled song *Let it Be*. It was their final single before Paul McCartney announced his departure from the group. Both the *Let it Be* album and the US single *The Long and Winding Road* were released after his announced departure from, and subsequent break-up, of the band.

The modern way

Traditional piggy banks are falling out of favour with children, according to research by banking brand Halifax, which found 72% of youngsters owned one in 2019, compared with 80% in 2018. Over the same period, the number of children who have pocket money paid into a bank account increased from 19% to 23%.



NEW BAG ON THE BLOCK

Specially developed to reduce single-use plastic, Kind Bag recycles six plastic bottles to create each one of its super-cool, eco-friendly shopping bags. And that's not all – they have teamed up with the charity Against Breast Cancer, donating 25p for every Boobs bag sold, to go towards funding pioneering research into new treatments. There are 12 designs and they're just £10 each. Visit kindbag.co



Living their best life?

Millennials (those aged 24-39) and Generation Zs (aged 16-23) have been on almost twice as many dream holidays as their parents (over 50s). And, says a report from money.co.uk, as the generation of 'immediate gains', they are the most likely to pay for this by credit card.



STAYING ACTIVE

Good news for the over-60s. Active retirees were found to be more supple than those aged 35-44 who do very little exercise – 24% of whom claim to suffer from stiff joints, compared with just 16% of over-65s who get plenty of exercise.*

For your diary

The Essex Book Festival is back for another year! With more than 100 events at 40 different venues around the county, including theatres, libraries, schools and art galleries, the Festival has something for everyone. Names include author Val McDermid, Jess Phillips MP and human rights campaigner Peter Tatchell. On now until 31 March, across Essex.

Treat of the week

You can now buy Glo32 teeth whitening products for less. There's a third off the entire range at Boots, including this Glo32 Advanced Whitening Toothpaste (100ml) – it was £10, now £6.67. Offer ends 10 March 2020.



Good to SHARE

We love to hear what you've been up to, so do get in touch!

From you to us

Letter of the week



I subscribe to *Woman's Weekly* so I never miss an issue. Recently my mum was clearing out cupboards and came across a *Woman's Weekly* from 3 July 1982. What struck me is how the content, while understandably a little dated now, is still relevant today. It has always been great value for money and the knitting patterns have always been super – there were three in that issue! I missed the cookery column but quickly realised my mum had removed and kept it. Then I saw the part I always read as a little girl, The Robin Family. I loved reading about their adventures. The adverts and fashion brought back memories of 80s chic! My opinion? *Woman's Weekly* always has been, and still is, a quality ladies' magazine and has stood the test of time.
Sandra Silverson, Northern Ireland



Where I read mine

I bought my latest copy of *Woman's Weekly* at the airport en route to Hurghada, Egypt, by the Red Sea. It was the perfect holiday read.
Joanna Birtles, London

❖ We'd love to see where you read your copy of *Woman's Weekly*. The more exotic the location, the better!

Pantomime fan

Here is a photo of me and Bradley Walsh. He was in the audience watching *Goldilocks & the Three Bears* at the London Palladium in January. What a treat!
Cherrill Wheatley, Essex



Paws for thought

This is Bumble looking warm and festive in the coat I made her from one of your recent knitting patterns.
Carol, Carlisle

❖ Got a pet pic that makes you smile? We can give it a good home

Get in touch

WE LOVE LETTERS

Woman's Weekly, 161 Marsh Wall, London E14 9AP.
P.S. It really helps when you put your details in capitals.

We do not return photos (apart from You Wore It Well) so please do not send originals.



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We can't wait to hear from you!



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What you're WEARING

AMANDA SCOTT, 60

Tell us about your look

Quite casual with a touch of chic! I like easy, elegant pieces and prefer neutral shades. My coat and sweater came from M&S last year. My leggings, boots and bag are all by Ralph Lauren. I used to work for them and love the brand. My other favourite place to shop is Mint Velvet. I love their colour palette and relaxed shapes.

And the best bit of your body?

I've no problem with any of it!



MARTINA PIRKLBANER, 32

Tell us about your look

My look is modern and practical. I often spot things when I'm travelling. I bought my padded jacket in Germany – I loved the check print and layered effect. I like a monochrome look as it's so easy to throw together. My trousers are from Mango and my boots are Brunello. My favourite thing is my hat, which my mum knitted for me!

And the best bit of your body?

I like my ears as they're tiny.



You Wore It Well

Janet Higgins, 1961

I love this happy photo of me in Blackpool with my friend, Mary (left). We wore suedette jackets, slim tartan trousers and flat shoes – a look you could wear today. We are now in our 70s and have been friends since nursery school.



✦ We'd love to see how great you looked in any era up to and including the 1980s. Please send a good-quality photo with your name, address and daytime phone number clearly written on the back, to: Fashion Dept, Woman's Weekly, 161 Marsh Wall, London E14 9AP. Photos will be returned.

MIA AMON, 47

Tell us about your look

I work in a school so I usually wear a skirt or dress, but I love jeans at the weekend. I usually go for neutral shades so this bright pink jumper from La Redoute is a bit different. It's given my look a spring refresh! I bought my coat from John Lewis about two years ago and love its luxe feel. My jeans are Gap, my trainers are Adidas and my bag is Michael Kors. I love a great bag!

And the best bit of your body?

My lips.

DEBS BUNDY, 51

Tell us about your look

I'm not into any particular labels – I spotted my coat in Sainsbury's and I loved the emerald colour. My camel sweater is from Tesco and my boots are Sainsbury's too. I've had my bag a while. I think it's vintage M&S. My jeans are from Mint Velvet. I love to just scoot around the high street and see what catches my eye.

And the best bit of your body?

My hair.



'NO BOTOX I'm growing old disgracefully!'

The
**Woman's
Weekly**
interview

Emmerdale star Claire King reveals why she'll never go under the knife

Back in the 1990s, during her first stint at *Emmerdale*, Claire King was nominated the title Sexiest Female at The British Soap Awards.

Fast forward 30 years and the glamorous actress is still winning admirers for her portrayal of manipulative bad girl Kim Tate.

But while Claire looks amazing for 58, she says her looks are not something she gives much thought to.

'I won't be winning the Sexiest Female this time around,' she laughs. 'Probably wrinkliest because I don't do Botox. I'm very relaxed about ageing, I made the choice not to have anything

done and grow old disgracefully.

She adds, 'My fella [Claire has been with her partner for 10 years, but won't publicly name him] is happy with it. He can't stand the look of people on Instagram, he thinks they all look the same.'

Claire was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis in her 30s, meaning she suffers from painful joints. One side effect is that she has a low immune system – another reason she's avoided cosmetic surgery.

'To have an operation is risking my health, so I made the decision that I'm not going down that route,' she explains.

Funny, feisty and frank, Claire is great company and

despite her success on the small screen – with starring roles in *Coronation Street* and *Bad Girls*, as well as *Emmerdale* – she doesn't take herself, or life, too seriously.

It may be down to her non-conformist streak, honed as a teenage punk after an education at the highly respectable Harrogate Ladies' College. After initially working as a nightclub DJ, she sang in punk band To Be Continued, before moving to London.

'I still have a rebellious streak,' she smiles. 'I think that will always be in me.'

'I've still got all my leather jackets from when I was a punk gathering dust in the wardrobe.'

Claire later switched to acting and in 1989, landed the role that was to define her career, that of *Emmerdale's* lady of the manor Kim Tate.

'She's probably one of the best characters to play. There's no one like her in British soaps. I can have fun with her,



Soap star Claire has been in *Corrie* too

I'm a lucky girl,' Claire says.

'She was one of the first evil women on British soaps, after *Dynasty* and *Dallas* in America. She's got the big house, she's glamorous and a pain in the bottom.'

Claire left after 10 years, spending four years on *Bad Girls* and three years on *Corrie* as Liz McDonald's old pal, Erica

Holroyd. She also took part in *Strictly Come Dancing* and *Celebrity Big Brother*, but last year she was tempted back to the Dales.

Viewers have recently seen her racked with remorse for believing she was responsible for the death of her husband, Graham Foster, after angrily ordering her right-hand man Al Chapman to kill him.

The murderer turned out to be Rhona Goskirk's former husband Pierce Harris, who



Claire in prison drama *Bad Girls*



Back in *Emmerdale* as her scheming character, Kim Tate



‘I still have a rebellious streak, I think that will always be in me’

was recently released from jail for rape, but Kim still has conflicting emotions.

‘She’s feeling guilty because she did really love Graham and hadn’t even realised herself how much,’ Claire says. ‘She’ll feel pretty depressed and probably hit the bottle and maybe spill a few beans to people, which could land her in trouble.’

‘Even though the police can’t find anything, she might just drop herself in it, which could lead to her being arrested.’

A spell in jail for Kim would at least have the advantage of giving Claire a break to spend more time in her home of 25 years, a beautiful remote barn in the Yorkshire Dales.

‘I look out and see green fields, and the community in the country are generally friendlier,’ Claire says of her decision to eschew city life.

‘If I need something from the farmer, such as my drive clearing, or some straw for the stables, then I’ll make him sloe gin in return. It’s the old barter system, which is great.’

It sounds idyllic, but somehow we couldn’t imagine tough-talking Kim Tate agreeing to such an amicable arrangement!

❖ *Emmerdale* is on ITV, Mon, Tues, Wed and Fri, 7pm, and Thurs, 7pm and 8pm

WAKE-UP *time!*

Lots of animals are coming out of hibernation right now. Here's how you can help them thrive

Spring is just around the corner and, as your thoughts turn to getting outdoors and into the garden, spare a thought for hibernating animals.

Hedgehogs, dormice, bats, frogs, newts and toads, butterflies, slow worms and snakes all hibernate in the UK from October to April. And, while animals such as foxes, badgers and birds do not, there's still plenty you can do to help them as the weather

turns warmer. March is a vital time for animals, according to the RSPCA, as many are starting the breeding process ahead of the late spring and summer arrival of babies and young animals.

Supporting animals like hedgehogs, whose numbers are dwindling, can really make a difference.

There are simple things you can do in your garden to help them as they emerge in the springtime, as their needs are often very similar.



Butterflies will soon be coming out of hibernation

9 ways to support wildlife in your garden

1 Leave 'wild' insect-friendly areas in your garden to encourage insects for hibernating animals to eat in the spring.

2 Check carefully for animals before mowing or strimming your lawn.



3 Never disturb a hibernating animal or try to encourage it out of hibernation.

4 Ponds provide a natural source of water and attract food sources such as insects. It's a good idea to make a slope at the edges of the pond to create steps in case animals fall in.

5 **Things to avoid:** Bonfires, netting, uncovered drains, litter and chemicals, and be careful if dismantling a shed.

A pair of bee houses



6

Bee houses, hogitats (hedgehog homes) and bat boxes can all be readily bought or made, and these help animals find somewhere secure to shelter.

7 The best thing to feed hedgehogs is fresh water and meaty food such as dog or cat food. Some garden centres also sell specialist hedgehog food. Food and fresh water laid out regularly will encourage visiting hedgehogs to return.

8 Although birds in Britain do not hibernate, it's useful to leave food such as suitable nuts and grains, plain boiled pasta or potatoes, apples and pears.

Logs can provide shelter for hedgehogs in the garden

9

Logs, compost and leaf piles provide shelter for animals like hedgehogs, plus as havens for insects, they give an all-year food supply.

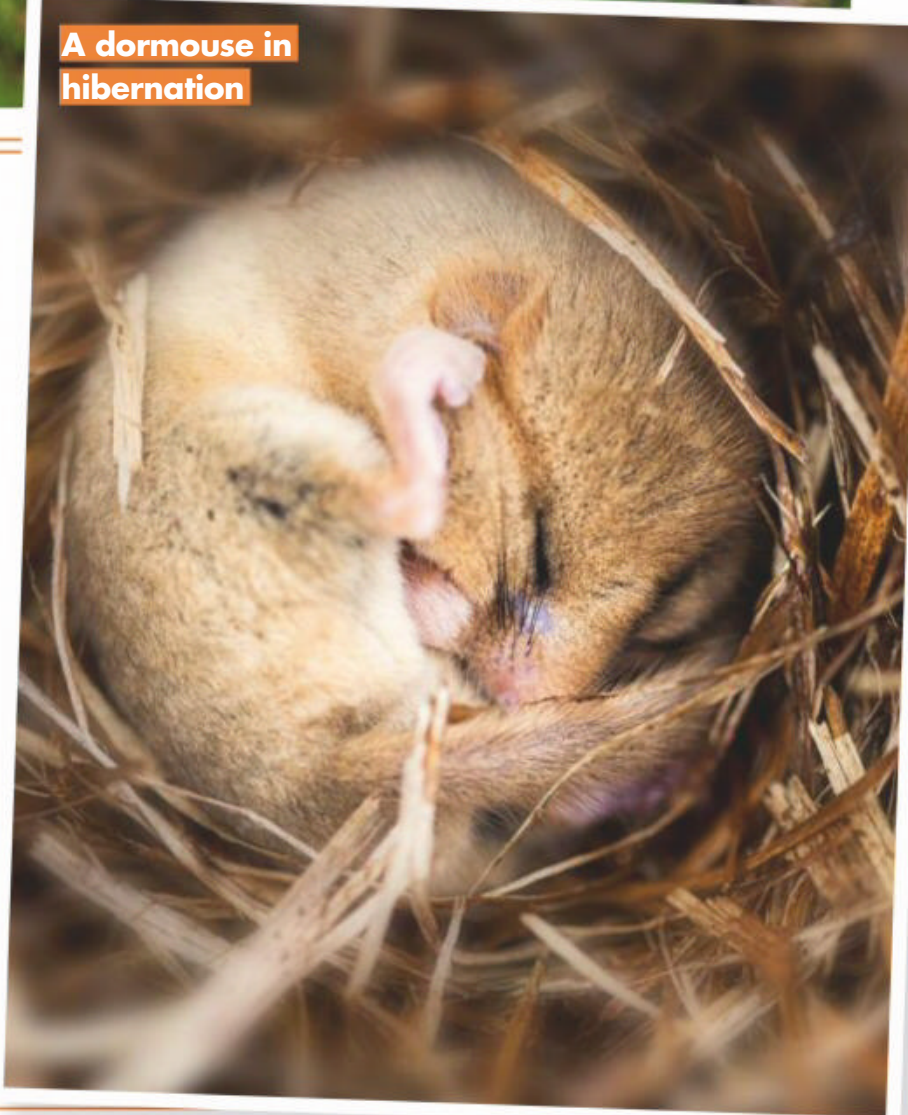


Ensure any bought bird foods, such as suet balls, are net-free to prevent entanglement by wildlife

Why do animals hibernate?

'Hibernation is crucial to the survival of many species, as it allows them to reduce energy consumption during colder periods when insect prey is limited,' explains RSPCA scientific officer Emma Horton. 'An animal's breathing slows and their heart rate drops, as well as their temperature.' If you catch sight of an animal that should be hibernating, don't be surprised – it's not uncommon for animals such as hedgehogs to move sites at least once. And with milder weather, many are coming out of hibernation earlier than usual. As long as it looks fit and healthy and there's no frost on the ground, there's no need to worry.

A dormouse in hibernation



❖ For more information about how you can support wildlife in your garden, visit rspca.org.uk. If you are worried about any animal or would like some advice, you can ring the RSPCA on 0300 123 4999.

That's a RELIEF!

Pinpoint what's causing your headache and you'll know how best to fix it

Cause: Tension

This is the most common headache type and can last from minutes to days. It can be triggered by poor posture, stress and strong emotion – not just anxiety but excitement too.

- ❖ Sit up straight, support your lower back and don't sit or stand in one position for long periods. See a physio or an Alexander technique practitioner for specific posture advice.
- ❖ Release tension with this relaxation technique from wellness consultant Sloan Sheridan-Williams (sloansw.com). 'Lie still, breathe in and out slowly, and relax your muscles. Visualise the pain as a colour or number and change the colour from black and dark grey to bright whites and yellows. Or count down from 10 to one over a few minutes.'
- ❖ Take a brisk walk. Regular aerobic exercise, such as walking, cycling or swimming, can reduce the intensity and regularity of headaches, says research from US body the National Pain Foundation.

DE-STRESS

Keep stress under control with relaxation techniques, such as tai chi and aromatherapy.

Cause: Food

Failing to eat regular meals is a very common cause of headaches, but certain food types can trigger pain too. Culprits include citrus fruits and ham – which contains tyramine and nitrates, which both increase blood flow to the brain. And triggers for migraine include cheese, red wine and chocolate.

- ❖ Keep a diary. GP Dr Dawn Harper says, 'When symptoms start, capture what you'd been doing or eating beforehand, the severity of pain, how long the attack lasted and medication taken.'
- ❖ Research from the New York Headache Center found half of migraine sufferers have low levels of magnesium. Eat wholegrains, nuts, seeds and dark green leafy veg to help relax nerves and muscles.
- ❖ Take a painkiller with coffee. An Oxford University study found combining paracetamol with 100mg or more of caffeine helped relieve pain in 10% more people. But take care – caffeine can trigger headaches in some people.



FEELING THIRSTY?

Dehydration is a common trigger. Drink a glass of water every 15-20 minutes until the pain subsides.

Cause: Your environment

Headaches can be caused by what's happening around you. Sounds and strong smells, the temperature and pollution – even changes in the weather – can have an impact.

- ❖ TV, mobile and computer screens can be aggravating, so have regular screen breaks. Follow the 20:20:20 rule – every 20 minutes, focus on something for 20 seconds at least 20 feet away.

- ❖ An indoor pot plant can soak up toxins and release humidity into the air, helping to ease head pain. Try spider, snake or rubber plants, peace lily or areca palm.
- ❖ Bright, flickering or flashing (fluorescent) lights don't help either, so try to avoid these and consider changing to soft, yellow-toned lighting at home.



ESSENTIAL OIL

Pop some lavender or peppermint oil into a diffuser to mask strong smells – research has found both offer headache relief.





Cause: Unknown

Pinpointing what's causing your head pain can be tricky and it may prompt us to start thinking the worst. But it's worth remembering that brain tumours account for less than 0.1% of people with headaches.

- ❖ If you have a severe headache accompanied by neck stiffness and fever, and perhaps mental confusion, speech disorders or any numbness or paralysis, it could be a sign of meningitis. Seek medical attention immediately.
- ❖ If a headache is accompanied by a sudden personality change, seizures, confusion and sleepiness, it could be encephalitis, another viral infection of the brain. Seek medical attention immediately.
- ❖ Trigeminal neuralgia is a sudden, severe (shooting)

SEE YOUR GP...

if you're worried or your pain doesn't ease after taking painkillers and it continues for more than two days.

pain in the face or head. It's usually caused by compression of the trigeminal – the nerve inside your skull that transmits sensations of pain and touch from your face and mouth to your brain.

Cause: Fatigue

Headaches often strike when you're tired or experiencing sleep disturbance – too much, too little, lie-ins, shift work or jet lag.

- ❖ Aim for seven to eight hours a night and boost sleep quality by reducing your chances of being disturbed – keep your bedroom dark, quiet and slightly cooler than the rest of your home. Natural-fibre bedding (cotton sheets, wool duvet) are breathable and better at regulating your temperature.
- ❖ Have sex! Last thing you fancy? It can lead to 'partial or complete relief' of head pain, say German

neurologists from the University of Münster, by triggering the release of endorphins, your body's natural painkillers.

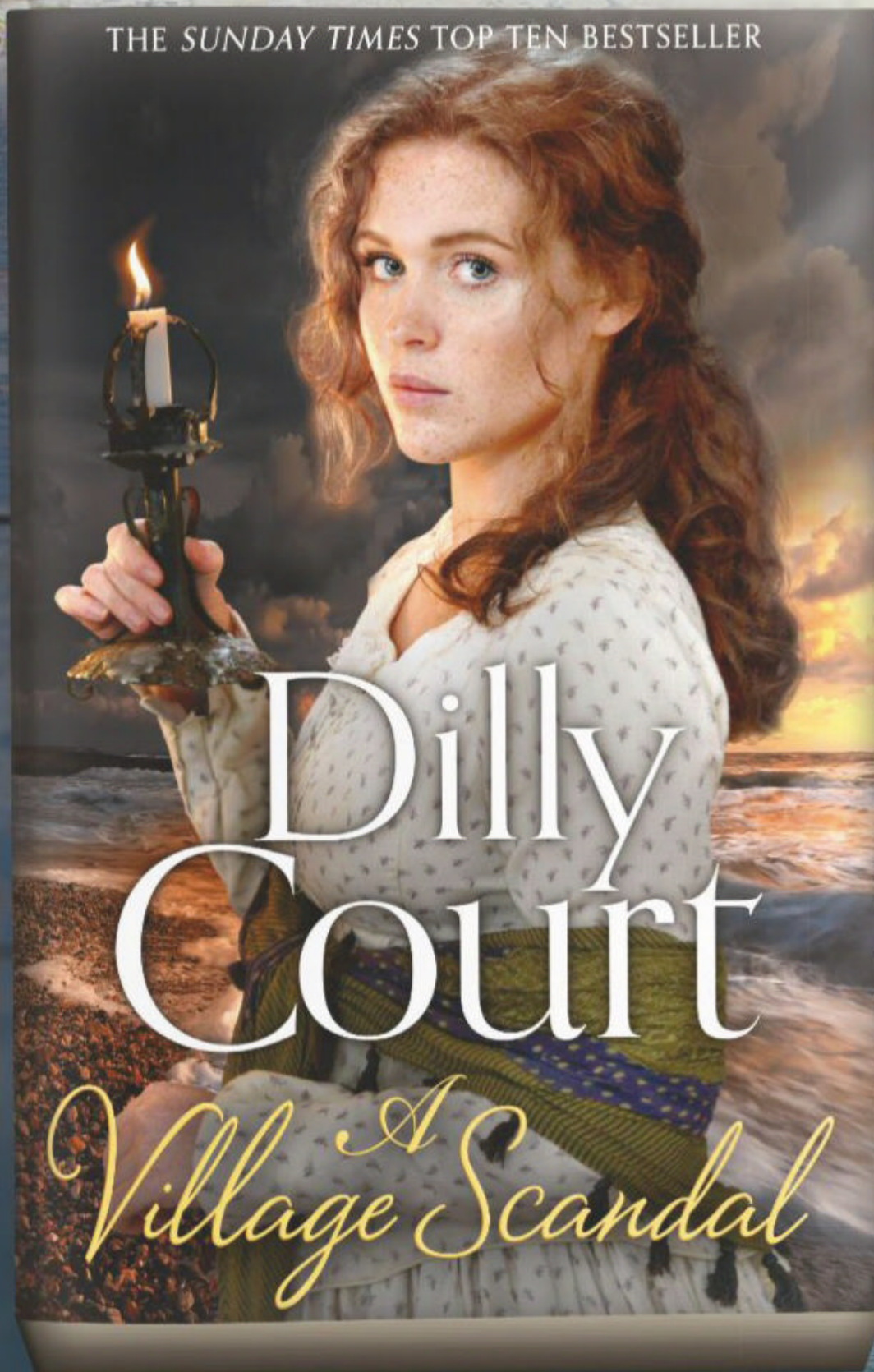
- ❖ Forget fancy painkillers. 'Pills with added ingredients – codeine or labelled 'extra' – aren't better for headaches than paracetamol, aspirin or ibuprofen,' explains headache specialist Professor Anne MacGregor (annemacgregor.com). 'They can worsen symptoms and are potentially addictive.'

SEEK HELP...

if you're taking painkillers for 15 or more days per month. Overuse can cause 'rebound' headaches.



The flowers are blooming
for Daisy's Spring wedding, but
clouds will soon be gathering...



'Dilly Court never
fails to produce the
best stories'



'Always a super read'



'Dilly Court writes
amazing sagas'



'My favourite writer'

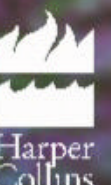


'I love Dilly Court'



REVIEWS FROM REAL READERS

The heartwarming new novel from the
Sunday Times bestselling author



**It's
a funny
old
world**

'I've never ironed anything in my life'

This week's columnist: Author Gabrielle Mullarkey

“Recently, I shocked a group of otherwise unshockable women by admitting that I've never ironed a piece of clothing in my life. Cue gasps around the room.

'That revelation explains a lot,' snorted one person less than cryptically, looking me over from top to toe.

This is because I like to wear a lot of cotton and linen, and don't give a monkey's how crumpled it is.

I watch people swanning round the tropics in TV costume dramas wearing beautifully pressed pleats, and think 'servants'.

As ever, there's a difference to how crumpled women are perceived compared to men. For a start, 'crumpled' often becomes 'rumpled' when it's a creased bloke. Think of Columbo's raincoat or any shabby-chic male politician and the implication is: 'His mind's on higher things.'

Cue me shuffling through a doorway and the prevailing wisdom is: 'She couldn't be bothered to iron that top.'

My mother's generation was always smartly turned out and knew a knife-pleat from a flat seam, as well as the difference between ironing and steaming. When I left home at 18 to go to university, she bought me an iron

as a going-away present, more in hope than expectation, I suspect.

Seeing as I'd actually wanted a portable telly, I chucked the iron in a cupboard and forgot about it.

Didn't matter for a few years, since I bought drip-dry, easy-to-pack stuff for sleeping on floors, in tents and in train compartments. Also, people expect a student to look like they've just got out of bed.

The only people who seemed as bothered as my mum were a few blokes, and not always because they were dinosaurs. No – some of these men were themselves keen Ironing John types and tutted at my sloth. I think it's because irons have gone

from mundane domestic appliance to high-tech gadget, with nozzles, settings, flashing LED panels and all the rest. Some of them probably have go-faster stripes.

There may be a therapeutic element to the ritual, I grant you. But doesn't stuff get crumpled again when chucked in a drawer or suitcase?

I'm happy to report that my other half has a thing about ironing sheets, which is fine by me. I do like slipping between two layers of crisped cotton that someone else has

de-rumpled. As to clothes, I now accessorise my scrunched-up hanky look with a loose, silky scarf and a faraway look in my eyes that suggests a mind on higher things.

I'm also happy to liberate others from the tyranny of being well-turned-out. And donate an unused domestic appliance, circa 1984, to the nearest Any Old Iron museum. ”

**'Doesn't stuff
get crumpled
again when
chucked in
a drawer?'**

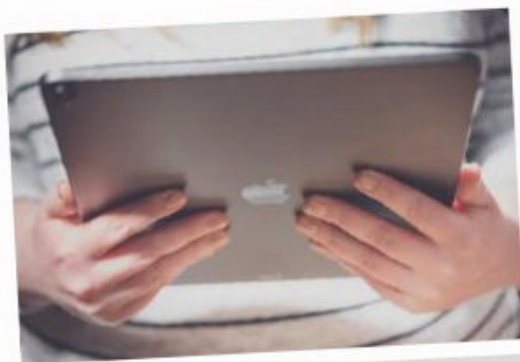
My funny old week

WHERE I'VE BEEN To a 'writing for wellbeing' session.

WHAT I'VE SEEN My friend's latest artworks.

WHO I'VE MET An IT guru who's shown me how to use my iPad properly, at last.

WHAT I'VE BOUGHT A little book of wellbeing poems.



NEXT WEEK Lisa Faulkner

WIN A holiday to MADEIRA

A refreshing holiday, thanks to Neutradol

Thanks to fresh-air specialists Neutradol, you and your partner could be jetting off to Madeira. Bursting with tropical flowers, stunning landscapes and lashings of sunshine, Madeira is a magical destination for a holiday.

You'll be staying at the four-star Four Views Oásis hotel, on the Reis Magos beach, in the Caniço de Baixo resort. The Four Views Oásis is near the famous Garajau Nature Reserve and close to the capital of Madeira, Funchal, so you can shop until you drop.

Enjoy a full week of hot days and balmy nights while you relax on the beach in front of your hotel. With two fabulous restaurants and two bars to

choose from, and an on-site hairdresser, beauty centre and spa, pampering is assured.

There's also a gym, a putting green and games room to keep you busy. Or why not take a dip in one of the hotel's three inviting, refreshing pools?

Get fresh

At home it can't always feel as refreshing as being on holiday in Madeira. Unpleasant smells can linger and even professional cleaning may not shift the bacteria that cause them. Covering them up with a cosmetic air freshener that's full of unpleasant chemicals is not the answer.

You can now buy the new, improved Neutradol, which uses the latest science to

eliminate the molecules that cause bad odours in your home, at work or in the car.

Hygienic and safe, with its unique formula of over 50 different ingredients, Neutradol keeps on destroying smells long after other air fresheners have stopped working, and this is why it is the world's most effective air deodoriser.

Fresh air is available from Neutradol, with new packaging, in Original, Super Fresh and new fragrance Fresh Pink, all in Spray, Gel and Carpet Powder. There are also products for smelly dustbins and Deofab for fabrics.

To find the range of Neutradol products and for a chance to win a holiday to Barbados, go to neutradol.com.



How to enter

Just answer this question:

Q In which country is Cape Town?

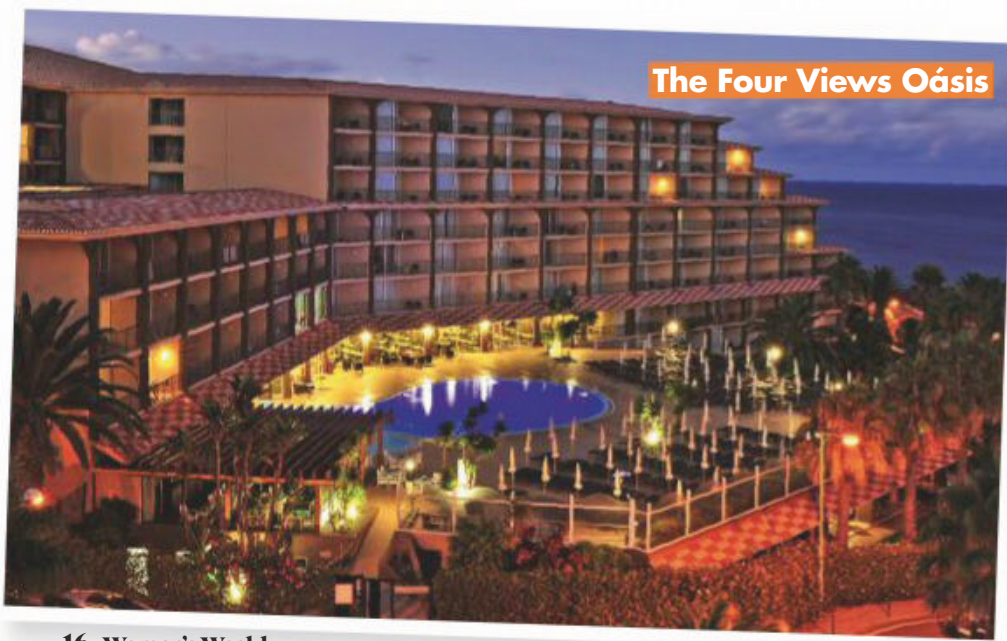
A Spain **B** South Africa

C Italy

If you know the answer, go to womansweekly.com, click Win and look for the competition. This competition is open from 9am on 5 March and closes at 11.59pm on 5 April 2020.



Terms and conditions Standard Woman's Weekly terms and conditions apply; for details, go to ti-media.com/standard-competition-terms/. UK readers only. Entry implies acceptance to these rules. For website rules of play, go to competitions.womansweekly.com/rules. The promoters are TI Media Limited and Neutradol (supplier of prize). In the event of a conflict between the terms and conditions in this promotional material and the Standard Woman's Weekly terms and conditions, the former shall prevail. The winner and their partner will receive round-trip flights from major UK airports and seven days accommodation at the Four Views Oásis on a room-only basis. The holiday must be taken by 31 March 2021 and excludes bank holidays, Easter and the Christmas period and is subject to availability. Travel to UK airports or incidental expenses are not included. There is no cash or other alternative to the prize stated and the prize is not transferable, and no part or parts of the prize may be substituted for other benefits, items or additions. Prior to departure, the winner must purchase comprehensive travel insurance either from the agent supplying the holiday or through their own source. No correspondence will be entered into.



The Four Views Oásis

COMPLEXION DE-STRESSER

Botanics Calm Hydration Serum, £11.49

This helps to eradicate the sensitivity and redness caused by cold winter weather. This nurturing combination of calming cannabis sativa seed oil and soothing aloe vera will instantly de-stress your complexion.

GET YOUR GLOW ON

Laura Mercier Pure Canvas Primer, £32

Want to know how make-up artists cheat naturally glowing skin? Illuminating primers are their number-one secret weapon. Apply a small amount before your foundation to ensure a radiance that everyone will notice.

A DEWY FINISH

Pür 4-in-1 Mineral Tinted Moisturiser, £25, M&S

Finding the right base can be tricky, but we think we've found a winner. This innovative formula not only hydrates the skin, but it also gives it a light wash of coverage and protects with SPF 20.

All about SKIN

Get a spring glow with these radiance-boosting beauty buys

DITCH DARK SPOTS

Bioderma Pigmentbio Foaming Cream, £15

This ingenious cleanser uses a new patented formula to target blotchy patches and leave you with smoother, more even-toned skin. Use it as a wash on your face and body, or leave it on as a hydrating mask.



LUMINOUS EFFECT

Guerlain Les Météorites Happy Glow, £45

Achieve a soft sheen of luminosity by lightly dusting these pearlescent shades all over your face. Working together, they help to seamlessly correct your complexion and leave your skin looking radiant and refreshed.



BANISH DARK CIRCLES

Liz Earle Instant Brightening Eye Cream, £22.50

Feeling more tired than usual? Fight fatigue with this lightweight tinted formula. Hydrating the delicate area around your eyes, the brightening shade also helps to reduce the appearance of dark circles.



SKIN PLUMPING

Garnier New Nutri Bomb Milky Tissue Mask, £2.99

The key to a glowing complexion starts with hydrated skin. Antioxidant-rich coconut and hyaluronic acid in this milky serum mask hydrates and soothes thirsty skin in just minutes!



20
under
£20

Stand out STRIPES

Get in the mood for spring with these best buys

BRILLIANT BAGS



£8, studio.co.uk



£12,
crewclothing.co.uk



£15,
M&S



£8, Matalan



£9.99, H&M

STATEMENT SKIRTS



£10,
sizes 8-22,
M&Co at
Amazon fashion



£10,
sizes 8-22, M&Co
at Amazon fashion



£19, sizes 12-26,
JD Williams



£14, sizes 8-24,
George at Asda

Vertical
stripes
elongate the
silhouette

Top, £12.50,
sizes 6-24;
trousers, £19.50,
sizes 6-20; both
M&S. Earrings,
model's own





£16, sizes 8-24,
Tu Clothing



£18, sizes 8-26,
Cotton Traders

TOP OF THE TOPS



£16, sizes 8-24,
Tu Clothing

£18.99,
sizes 10-22, M&Co



Add a
pop of
colour

£9.99,
sizes 4-22, H&M



Looks
great with
white
denim



£6.50,
George at Asda

£5,
everything5pounds.com



£7.99,
Shoezone



£16,
Tu Clothing

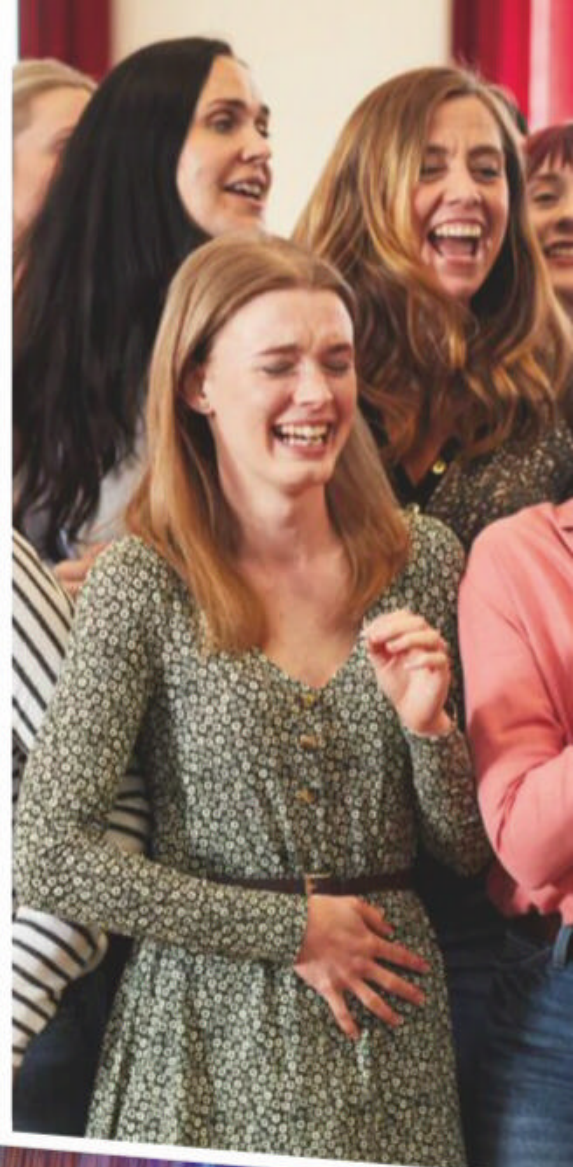
STYLISH FLATS



£9.99, Deichmann

Making MUSIC

As the film *Military Wives* is released this month, we speak to three women who are part of the real choir communities at military bases across the UK



'When I saw TV cameras, I nearly walked out!'

Victoria Forth, 36, Plymouth Military Wives Choir

When I first saw a leaflet about a new Military Wives Choir that was being set up, I had no idea it would change my life.

It was May 2011, and I'd been married to my husband, Tim, 36 – a submariner – for six years. He was on deployment at the time and, left at home with our two young children (who were aged three and 18 months then), I was feeling quite isolated. The idea of meeting with other wives and having something just for me really appealed.

When I entered the hall and saw TV cameras, I nearly walked out! Luckily, I was too embarrassed to make a scene. Staying was a good decision – Gareth Malone was a great musical director, and connecting with other ladies in a similar situation to me was so cathartic.

Since then, I've been on

an amazing adventure – topping the charts with the single *Wherever You Are* in December 2011 and singing at the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall.

That performance was particularly tear-jerking because, although the other ladies' husbands had returned, Tim was still out on his submarine. Some of the lyrics had been inspired by diaries Tim and I had written to each other, which I'd provided to Paul Mealer (the composer), so it felt really close to home.

Tim's sub returned a few weeks later, and he was in for a surprise. The submarine had been radio-silent, so he'd no idea I'd joined a choir. A group of us were taken to the sub before it docked and greeted my husband with a serenade. I'll never



Victoria with the choir and Gareth Malone, and below with her husband, Tim



forget the look on his face.

Now, there are 75 Military Wives Choirs across the UK and overseas. Knowing what a support these groups have been for me and other women makes this the best legacy of all.



Singing has brought Lorna support and friendship



Kristin Scott Thomas and Sharon Horgan (centre) star in the film

'For me, it's so much more than the singing'

Lisa Jones, 37, Brompton & Invicta Military Wives Choir
I've always enjoyed singing, so when I read about a new military choir in 2012, I jumped at the chance to be a part of it.

My husband, Jonah, 41, is a Royal Engineer in the British Army, and we've moved around a lot. In 2018, when we relocated to Maidstone, Jonah was deployed almost immediately and I was left coping with a small child, with no family or friends living locally. Luckily, though, when I joined the choir, I was scooped up by a group of women who understood my situation.

I'm now in my fifth Military Wives Choir, but keep in touch with my old groups on Facebook; it's lovely to see how other members are doing,

and when we get together to do national events, it's a huge reunion!

As well as our weekly meetings, which always start with cake, coffee and a good natter, we have a busy performance schedule. We've performed at the Last Post Ceremony in Ypres, Belgium, plus Rochester Cathedral, and even turned on the Christmas lights in Maidstone, in 2019.

As it's not always possible to have a babysitter when Jonah is away, our daughter Harriet has become an honorary member of the choir. In March 2019, when we were singing at a supermarket to raise money for an upcoming trip, I ended up singing and conducting while balancing Harriet on my hip!

I love the singing, but for me the choir is so much more than that. It's a second family who I know will always have my back.

'The choir was a lifeline'

Lorna Ashworth, 62, Rosyth Military Wives Choir

Although I run an HR company, I was part of the Royal Naval Reserves for about 20 years, and my husband, Andy, 63, a doctor, also served in the Navy for 18 years.

Living off-base, I'd lost touch with military life over the years. Work was manic, and when my mum fell ill

and moved in with Andy and me in 2016, any spare time I had was spent caring for her. When Mum died in January

2018, I was left with a huge gap in my life.

Knowing I was struggling, my friend and fellow Royal Navy Reservist, Jane, suggested I join the Military Wives Choir that she'd recently signed up to herself.

I went to my first session in April 2018, feeling nervous, but I was made to feel welcome.

Not only did joining the choir give me a boost after my mum's death, the group also proved invaluable when life threw me another challenge. In October 2018, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. I had to go through a 10-hour operation to remove

and reconstruct my breasts, followed by weeks of gruelling chemotherapy.

Throughout, the choir were a lifeline. Cancer treatment can take over your life, so having a dose of normality was a big relief.

As well as keeping my spirits up, the ladies would visit me in hospital, and even put together a chemo-survival pack – full of oils and products

to help my recovery. Once I was back home, if anyone felt under the weather, they would give the weekly choir practice a miss so that I could still go despite my weakened immune system.

For me, joining the choir has meant being embraced into a community full of love and care. ❖ **Military Wives** is in cinemas from 6 March. See our review in this issue's *What's On* pages



Lisa singing her heart out, and with husband, Jonah, and daughter, Harriet



Skinnier DINNERS

Try these lighter
one-pot suppers
from our Test
Kitchen team

TEST
KITCHEN
UK

TIP If you don't have ras-el-hanout use ½tsp each of ground cumin, cinnamon, coriander and ginger.

**PER
SERVING**

598 cals, 25g fat,
9g sat fat,
11.5g carbs

MIDDLE EASTERN LAMB

An easy recipe for anyone with leftover spices in the cupboard, this cooks slowly and melts in the mouth.

SERVES 8

- ❖ 2tbsp olive oil
- ❖ 2 large onions, sliced
- ❖ 2 garlic cloves, sliced
- ❖ 5cm (2in) piece fresh root ginger, grated
- ❖ 2tsp ground cinnamon
- ❖ 2tsp ground cumin
- ❖ 1tsp paprika
- ❖ 2tsp ras-el-hanout blend
- ❖ 1kg (2¼lb) lean leg lamb, cut into chunks

- ❖ 250ml (8fl oz) chicken stock
- ❖ 12-18 fresh figs (or dried)
- ❖ 45g (1.6oz) chopped pistachios
- ❖ 6tbsp chopped fresh coriander and mint
- ❖ Pomegranate seeds and giant couscous, to serve

1 In a large casserole dish, heat half the oil and cook the onions for

10 mins. Add the garlic, ginger and all the spices. Stir well and cook for 2-3 mins. Add the lamb and mix it well into the spices, stirring. Add the chicken stock and some seasoning, then bring to the boil and simmer for 1 hr or until the lamb is tender. At this point, you can cool then put it in the fridge for

up to 2 days, or freeze.

2 When you're ready to serve, heat the oven to 200C/Gas 6. Halve the figs and put cut side up in a lined dish. Drizzle over the remaining oil, and roast for 10 mins. Add to the lamb and stir in gently. Scatter over the pistachios, herbs and pomegranate seeds, and serve with couscous.

BRAISED CHICKEN CASSEROLE WITH APPLES

Apples add a beautiful sweetness to balance the saltiness of the bacon.

SERVES 3

- ❖ 2tbsp sunflower oil
- ❖ 2 red-skinned apples, cored and cut into chunks
- ❖ 1 onion, peeled and cut into thin wedges
- ❖ 2 celery sticks, sliced
- ❖ 6 rashers smoked streaky bacon
- ❖ 6 skinless chicken thighs
- ❖ 500ml (16fl oz) bottle cider
- ❖ 1tbsp wholegrain mustard
- ❖ 1 chicken stock cube
- ❖ 2tbsp creme fraiche

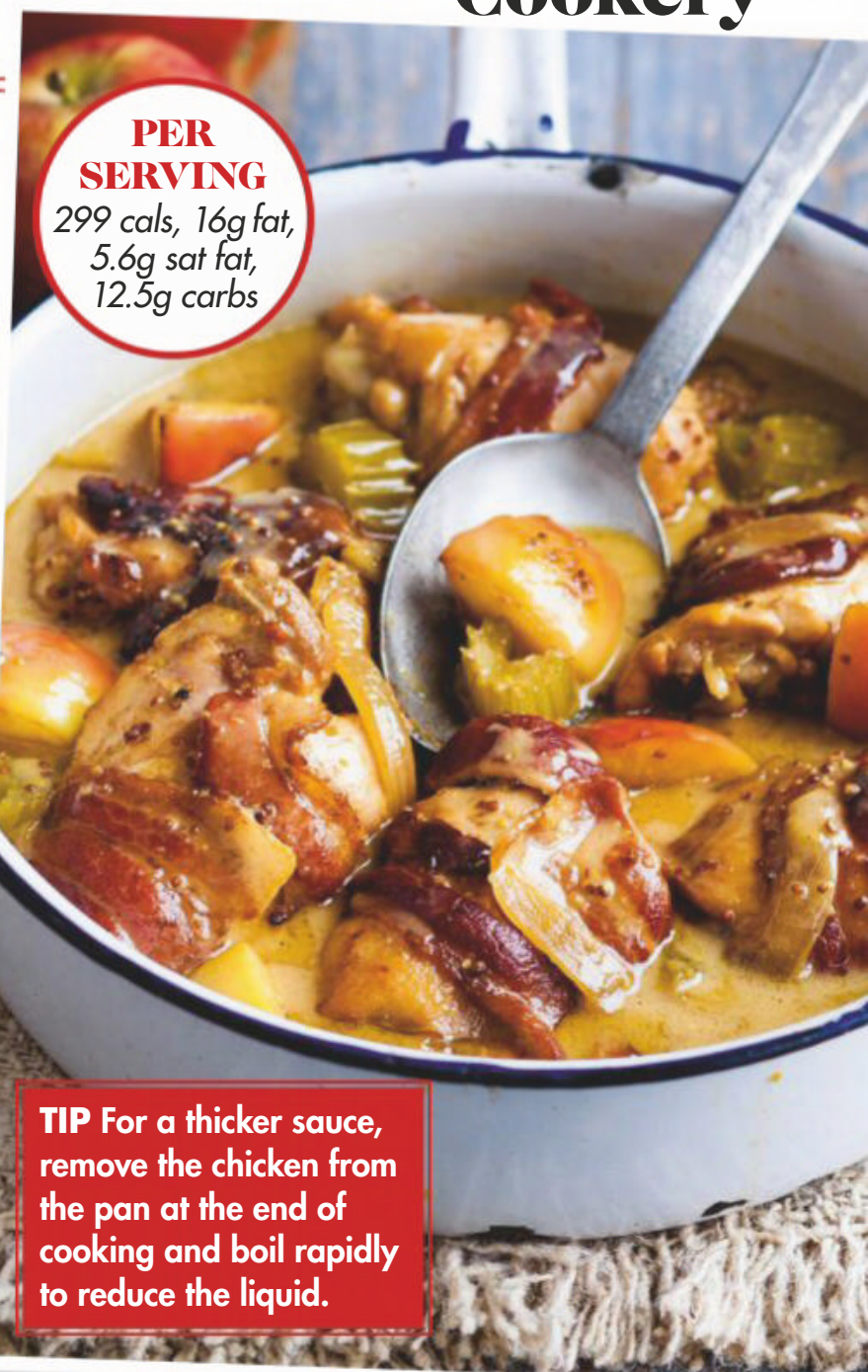
1 Heat half the oil in a saute pan, add the apples and cook for 3-4 mins until starting to turn golden, then remove from the pan and set aside.

2 Add the remaining oil to the pan and cook the onion and celery for 5-7 mins, until starting to soften,

then remove from the pan.

3 Stretch the bacon against the back of a knife and wrap one slice around each chicken thigh. Add the chicken to the hot pan and cook for about 10 mins, turning the chicken to crisp the bacon on all sides. Return the onion and celery to the pan and stir in the cider. Add the mustard and stock cube, and stir until the stock cube dissolves. Bring the mixture to the boil, then cover the pan, reduce the heat and simmer gently for 30-40 mins, or until the chicken is tender.

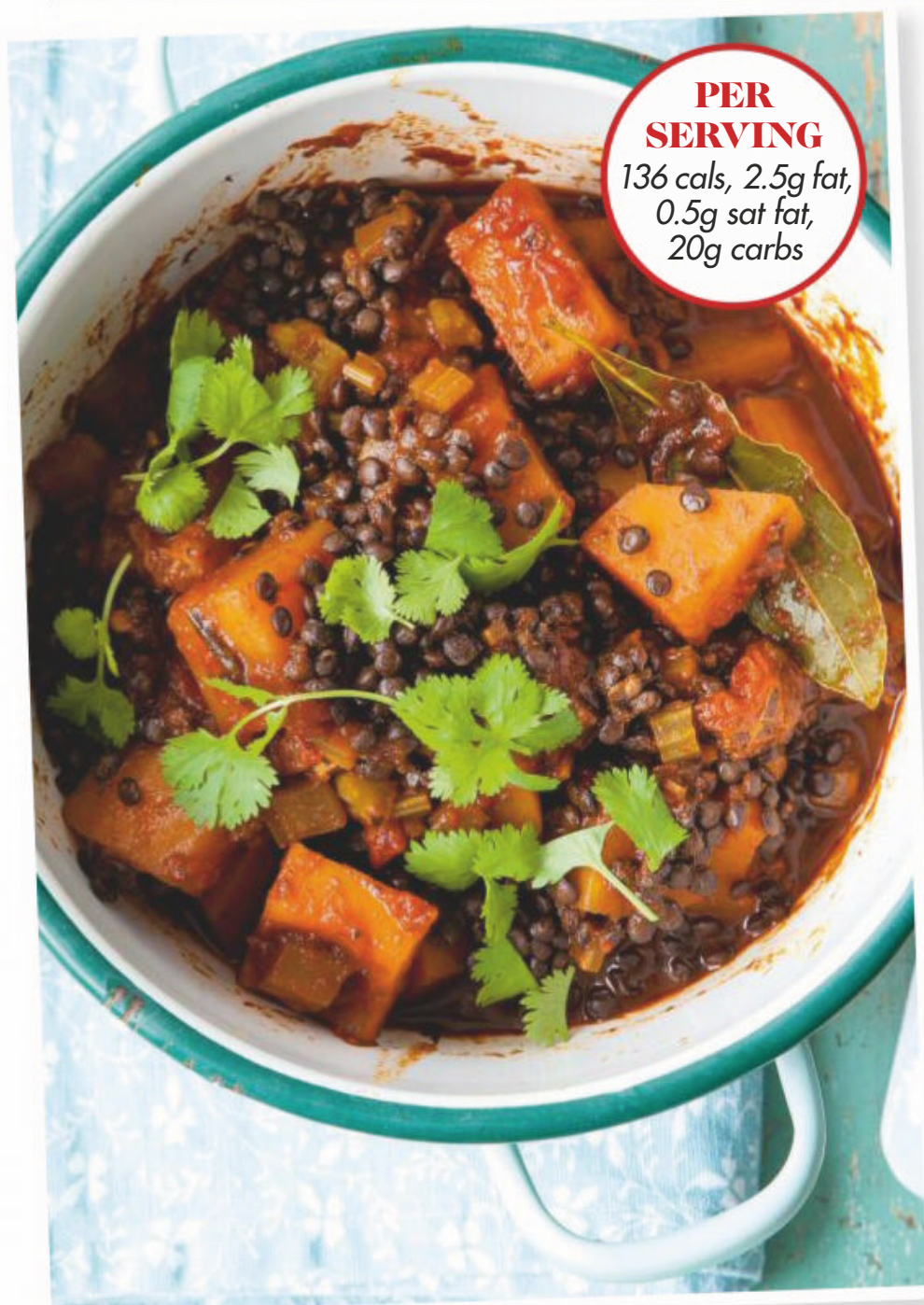
4 Add the apples and creme fraiche to the pan and bring to the boil. Season to taste with salt and pepper, and simmer for a few mins before serving.



PER SERVING

299 cals, 16g fat,
5.6g sat fat,
12.5g carbs

TIP For a thicker sauce, remove the chicken from the pan at the end of cooking and boil rapidly to reduce the liquid.



PER SERVING

136 cals, 2.5g fat,
0.5g sat fat,
20g carbs

BUTTERNUT SQUASH AND PUY LENTIL CHILLI POT

Add a taste of Mexico to your gathering with this spicy little one-pot.

SERVES 4

- ❖ 15g (1/2oz) butter
- ❖ 2 celery sticks, chopped
- ❖ 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- ❖ 400g can chopped tomatoes
- ❖ 1 vegetable stock cube (gluten-free if needed)
- ❖ 2 bay leaves
- ❖ 1 small cinnamon stick
- ❖ 2tsp dried chilli flakes
- ❖ 450g (1lb) butternut squash, peeled and cut into 2cm (3/4in) chunks
- ❖ 150g (5oz) cooked puy lentils
- ❖ 15g (1/2oz) coriander leaves, chopped

1 Melt the butter in a heavy-based saucepan or casserole

dish, and cook the celery and garlic over a medium-low heat for 7-8 mins, until softened.

2 Pour the tomatoes into the pan along with the stock cube, bay leaves, cinnamon stick and chilli flakes, and stir the mixture well.

3 Bring to the boil, reduce the heat, then season to taste and simmer gently for 10 mins until thickened slightly.

4 Stir the butternut squash into the chilli, cover loosely and simmer gently for 20-25 mins, stirring occasionally, until the squash is just tender. Stir the puy lentils into the chilli for the final 5 mins.

5 Remove from the heat, ladle into bowls and scatter with chopped coriander.

Peter Hahn

Twice the luxury. Twice the comfort.

This beautiful Tasmanian Merino Wool Twin Set is the perfect blend of elegance and comfort – both cut in a flattering, figure smoothing shape, made with **100% merino wool**, and bearing the prestigious **WOOLMARK** label.

And, with **£50 OFF PLUS FREE DELIVERY** when you order today, it's a little luxury that comes at an exquisite price.



"Delighted with the quality, fit, colour and comfort of the twin set." JW

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2. Poppy 935 406 K6
3. Red 816 975 K6
4. Brandy 870 298 K6 - **NEW**
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6. Mint 803 661 K6
7. Sea Blue 935 429 K6
8. Light Blue 803 635 K6

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Should you not be 100% satisfied with a purchase you may return it with proof of purchase at any time for a full refund. It's that simple.

* The offer is only valid once, until 30.06.20, and only for this Tasmanian Merino Wool Twin Set. Cannot be combined with other current offers. No compensation in cash. 100% Satisfaction guarantee; ordered articles may be returned at any time for exchange or refund if not suitable. Articles must be returned new, undamaged, in their original packaging with the returns/exchange voucher. PETER HAHN Limited • Woodview Road • Paignton • Devon • TQ4 7SR • Registered No. 3341321. Your privacy is important to us. To find out about our privacy policy please either visit www.peterhahn.co.uk/dataprotection or telephone us for free on 0800 054 2120.

BRUSH UP YOUR finances

The end of the tax year is a good time to do a money check – you could save all year round

1 Get rid of what you don't need

Gather up the past year's bank statements and credit card bills, and check direct debits and standing orders. Research by Sky Mobile found the average person pays £40 a month on forgotten subscriptions and services – insurance policies for long-gone appliances, magazines still delivered to an old address, for example. If you don't need it, cancel it.

2 Plan to shop around

We all know we can save money by shopping around for insurance and utilities, but the thought of it can be daunting. So instead of blitzing everything at once, do one a month. Check all your insurance renewal dates, then put a date in your diary two weeks before to check comparison sites, such as moneysupermarket.com or confused.com, for the best price. In-between those dates, slot in times to find a better deal on your electricity and gas, landline, mobile, TV and broadband. For a couple of hours work a month, you could save hundreds of pounds by the end of the year.

3 Check your tax code

Most of us trust the tax people to take only what we owe, but HMRC does make mistakes, and if you're assigned the wrong tax code, you can end up

overpaying by thousands. It's most likely to happen if: you've moved jobs; you work for more than one employer; get employee benefits, or have recently retired. If that's you, there's a useful tax code checker at moneysavingexpert.com, or you can contact HMRC on 0300 200 3300 and ask to have your tax code checked.

4 Do a simple benefits check

You don't necessarily have to be on the breadline, or unemployed, to be entitled to benefits. If you're on a low

6 Start saving

Pick one big expense that you'd usually put on your credit card – your holiday, perhaps – open a regular savings account and put money aside for it each month. You'll pay less overall because you won't be charged interest, and you'll get some interest on the savings too.

income or have caring responsibilities or health problems, you could be entitled to help without knowing it. You can do a simple check online at turn2us.org.uk or ask at your local Citizens Advice.

7 Track down lost money

Could you have money in a forgotten account? It's estimated that banks and building societies hold around £850 million in dormant accounts. Find out using the free My Lost Account service – ask for a form at any bank or building society, or visit mylostaccount.org.uk.

8 Check up on your pensions

If you're coming up to retirement, now's the time to track down any old pensions – even if you were only in a job for a short time, the pension may be worth having, especially if it's one of the older-style defined contribution pensions that were common up to around 20 years ago, which pay a proportion of your final salary in that job, often increased each year. You can trace them through the free Pensions Tracing Service; gov.uk, 0800 731 0193.

5 Get organised

If your financial paperwork is to hand, it's easier to shop around for better deals, check for mistakes or make insurance claims if need be. File in a simple concertina folder, with sections labelled for utility bills, bank statements, and so on. Keep it near where you open the post, so it's easy to store new bill and statements as they arrive.



Promotion

SPRING CLEANING *essentials*

Take the hard work out of making your home sparkle with these must-have products

Find
your
nearest
stockists at
**marigold.
co.uk**

With ever-growing pressures on our time, it can be difficult to keep on top of the housework, let alone take on a deep spring clean.

That's why what we all really want are helpful solutions that reduce the time and effort we need to put in to get sparkling results.

Marigold is well known for its best-selling yellow rubber gloves*, but that's not all that's up its sleeve for fast, efficient cleaning. The brand also now offers a range of cloths and scourers, which use the latest technology to achieve a shining home in a fraction of the time, and here are four handy products from the range, which do just that...

To cut through grime

Marigold Cleaning Me Softly Non-Scratch Scourers are tough on dirt, but delicate on surfaces. These Teflon-tested and approved scourers have a unique scouring layer, which quickly breaks down dirt and burnt-on food, with minimal effort on your part and without damaging delicate surfaces**. Great for tackling dried-on spills when you're cleaning out the fridge.

RRP £1.19 for a pack of two



For a gleaming finish

Remove dirt, grease and dust with ease with Marigold Let It Shine Microfibre Cloths. Unlike traditional cloths, these hard-working cloths contain thousands of tiny fibres, ideal for deep cleaning into even the finest grooves. Thanks to their microfibre cleaning power, you won't even need to use cleaning chemicals, and the cloths can be used wet or dry. They're great for buffing glossy surfaces, such as high-gloss kitchen units, granite work tops and stainless steel hobs, giving the perfect finish to your deep clean!

RRP £2.99 for a pack of four



To protect you

Don't forget your gloves! Marigold Extra-Life Kitchen Gloves are the UK's best-selling gloves* for a reason. They are three layers thick to protect hands and nails from hot water and detergents, while the fitted wrists with roll-top cuffs ensure they stay up and don't let in water. So, don't just save them for the washing-up – don a pair to tackle the spring clean.

RRP £2.50



For a spotless kitchen

Meet the next generation of dishcloth – Marigold Wash & Wipe. Perfect for washing the dishes and wiping down surfaces, it combines the deep-cleaning power of microfibre with a special 'waffle' structure, which traps dirt and grease. Great for wiping down kitchen cupboards after a declutter; it's also bleachable and can be washed at up to 60°C, so you can use it time after time.

RRP £2.99 for a pack of two



Your wellbeing

Latest health solutions for your mind and body

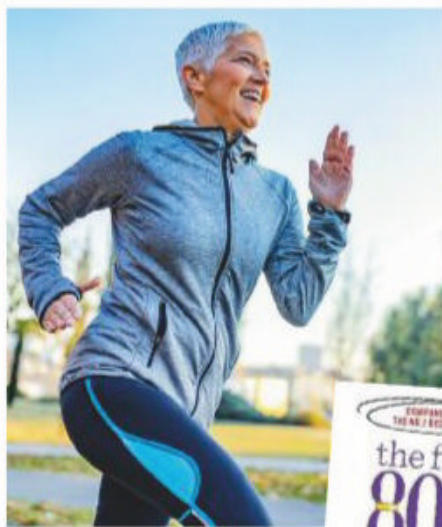


MY HEALTHY LIFE Dr Clare Bailey

Dr Clare Bailey is the author of *The Fast 800 Health Journal*

My go-to remedy
As a GP, I've had years of building up my immunity and rarely get ill. But I also regularly eat fermented foods such as sauerkraut, kimchi and other fermented vegetables, known to improve gut health and immunity. I keep the jars lined up in the fridge, looking gloriously colourful.

My favourite meal
Easy chicken tagine with preserved lemons, served with bulgar wheat and drizzled with full-fat live Greek yogurt. I throw it all in the pot and leave it to cook slowly in the oven. The Moroccan flavours work brilliantly – mixing the sweetness of the apricots with the slightly sour lemon, some veg and plenty of spices.



How I keep fit and healthy

I do outdoor circuits and fitness training once or twice a week in the local park, even in the snow! I also run two or three times a week around the fields nearby. It clears my head and makes me feel light of foot and well-oiled for the day.



My perfect day

It would be full of small but satisfying things; a run with the dog, work on my rewilded veg patch or seeing a friend in a cafe. I love meeting up with our kids and partners for brunch in London. In the summer we go for a swim in the Thames. As a treat, I'll get Chinese takeaway and curl up on the sofa to watch a film with my husband (TV doctor Michael Mosley) and a glass of red wine – full of health-promoting polyphenols!

❖ *The Fast 800 Health Journal* (£9.99, Short Books) is out now.



3 ways to... prepare for hay fever

USE A BARRIER BALM

Apply around your nostrils to help trap allergens and stop them entering your system. Try HayMax, £6.99 from Boots.

MONITOR POLLEN COUNTS

When they're high, stay indoors if you can. Or shower, wash your hair and change clothes when you get home. Don't dry wash outside on these days.

TALK TO YOUR PHARMACIST

Plenty of the newer antihistamine drugs don't cause drowsiness, unlike some of the older ones. Talk to your GP or pharmacist about what's available.



Newsflash

Scientists have discovered how to 'switch off' pain

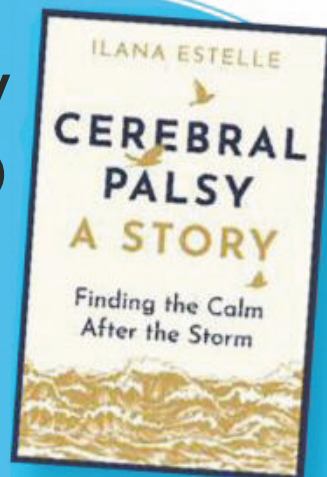
American researchers have discovered a technique that changes our DNA by editing out a gene to stop pain signals being sent. Trials are starting and the treatment may be available within five years. It could offer relief for millions who suffer from chronic or long-term pain. A similar technique has been used to fight rare hereditary diseases, such as sickle-cell anaemia.

NEW READ

CEREBRAL PALSY: A STORY

(£9.99, REDDOOR PRESS)
Living with this group of movement disorders is hard enough. But what

if you never knew you had it? This is the incredible story of Ilana Estelle, who was 46 when she was diagnosed. Part memoir, part motivational guide, it's a heart-warming read.





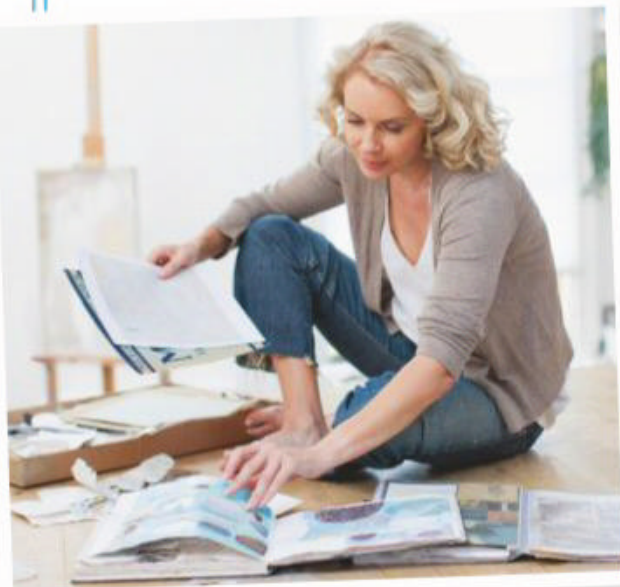
Dr Gill Jenkins
has more than 25 years'
experience as a GP

Dr Gill

Advice from our Woman's Weekly doctor

Art is good for you

Theories that involvement in the arts of all types helps longevity by improving mental health, reducing loneliness and developing cognitive reserve are supported by a recent national study. The study followed 7,000 over-50s across 14 years, using linked mortality data from NHS records. The association may be partly explained by differences in mental health and physical activity among those who do or don't engage in the arts, but is independent of these factors.



HEALTHY DRIVERS

British scientists are developing a car seat with a series of electric motors in the foam, causing constant micro-adjustments that stimulate one leg after the other. This triggers muscle contraction and tricks the brain into thinking you're walking. This may help mitigate against the risks of being sedentary, possibly reducing the risk of blood clots developing. It could work for drivers and passengers, and could be adjusted to suit individual needs.

Coping with...

SPONDYLOARTHRITIS

This group of inflammatory arthritis conditions is associated with extra-articular inflammation

Spondyloarthritis (SpA) is increasingly recognised as a specific group of conditions causing pain, inflammation and swelling of joints, with a key feature of enthesitis – inflammation at the tendon attachments to bones, rather than just the joint surfaces. Associated inflammatory conditions that may be relevant include psoriasis and inflammatory bowel disease such as ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease, and uveitis (an inflammatory eye condition). Also gastric or genito-urinary infection can trigger a reactive SpA.

SpA occurs as two main types – axial SpA, affecting central joints such as the spine, sacroiliac joints and rib attachments to the vertebrae; and peripheral SpA, affecting peripheral joints such as hands and feet, with enthesitis and tendonitis. Dactylitis – inflammation of the fingers or toes, causing a sausage-shaped swollen digit – is often indicative. Axial SpA affects men and women equally – ankylosing spondylitis is one form of axial SpA.

SpA can be slow to develop and may be mistaken for chronic mechanical back pain or unrelated tendonitis.

The symptoms

These include pain, tenderness, stiffness (especially for greater than 30 minutes after waking), swelling and general tiredness. Often patients note that they wake in the night when the tendons down their arms and thighs on the side they are

What you need to know

Spondyloarthritis self-care

- ✦ **Keep flexible and fit.** It's vital to maintain joint flexibility, strength and symptom control. Take regular activity – of whatever form you enjoy and can maintain.
- ✦ **Oral pain relief** can be supplemented by topical NSAIDs or other topical treatments, such as menthol or capsaicin, or simple local heat pads.
- ✦ **Sleep can be difficult.** Daytime exercise will help, but consider changing your mattress, pillows and other supports to make you comfy at night.
- ✦ **Have a healthy diet** and lose excess weight to reduce stress on joints. Omega 3 supplements may help some people.

lying on become painful. Frequent turning then follows, disturbing sleep and adding to the overall tiredness.

Being referred

Factors that may suggest you need specialist referral include persistent non-traumatic back pain in a younger person, being woken in the night by pain, the pain improving with movement, a family history of SpA or of conditions such as psoriasis or inflammatory bowel disease. Also relevant is a personal history of the associated inflammatory



conditions or previous episodes of other non-traumatic enthesitis or tendonitis.

Blood tests help exclude other inflammatory arthritis such as rheumatoid. Testing for a genetic factor HLA B27 is indicative for ankylosing spondylitis. Inflammatory markers ESR and CRP are often checked, although they may still be normal.

GPs may find it hard to make an early diagnosis so may refer you to a rheumatologist if symptoms don't settle.

Treatments will depend on the type of SpA, but start with non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen or naproxen, with physiotherapy.

**TRUE
OR
FALSE?**

Skipping breakfast is a good way to help you lose weight
FALSE. Skipping any meal, especially breakfast, can make you feel tired and hungry, and more likely to reach for high-fat, high-calorie snacks later in the day. In fact, people who eat breakfast are more likely to maintain a healthy weight than those who don't.

Q Should I go low-carb for diabetes?

A The definition of low-carb levels is less than 130g per day of carbohydrate. Very low-carb diets are 20-50g/d. It's important to remember that low-carb diets (such as Atkins) don't calorie restrict, yet for those who are overweight, calorie restriction is probably important. Trials show that low-carb diets are beneficial to glycaemic control, lipids (reducing triglycerides and increasing HDL, the 'good cholesterol') and hormone parameters, even without weight loss. Recent trials show that, if you can stick to it, a very low-calorie low-carb diet (800 calories/d) using food replacement shakes can, for some patients, lead to weight loss and diabetes remission. However, a Diabetes UK evidence review in 2017 pointed out that weight management should be the mainstay of glycaemic control in the overweight. Low-carb diets are safe and effective in the short-term, and result in better glycaemic control, weight loss and CV risk factors. But there is no clear evidence that low-carb diets are any better than any other approach to weight loss in the long-term. Patient preference and the ability to maintain any diet is probably more important.



4 fixes for... high cholesterol

CUT SATURATED FAT

Swap animal fats, palm and coconut oil for unsaturated fats, such as rapeseed, olive or sunflower oils, nuts, seeds and oily fish.

MAKE SWAPS

Healthier options include nuts instead of crisps, and low-fat milk and vegetable spreads instead of butter. For lower-fat meat options, just cut the fat off.

MOVE MORE

More activity strengthens your heart, increases your good HDL cholesterol and pushes bad non-HDL cholesterol to your liver where it will be disposed of.

STOP SMOKING

It prevents the 'good' cholesterol from helping to clear 'bad' cholesterol, increasing the risk of heart disease.

**“YOUR BODY IS SO
POWERFUL WHEN YOU
LISTEN TO IT”**

Jonny Wilkinson

Photography By jameswilliamson.co.uk

Suffer from muscle and joint twinges but like to keep fit?

Nobody knows more about this than England Rugby World Cup winner Jonny Wilkinson who now believes in listening to his body, and working with it. “I used to push my body to its limits all the time, but now I see the importance of rest. Therapies borne of nature are very powerful ways to get back on track.”

Puressentiel has developed a combination of natural and sustainable ingredients to create its Muscles and Joints Roller, a pain-killing solution which ticks all the boxes for Jonny Wilkinson. Jonny is now fitter than ever. “When I was playing, I saw my body as a functional tool. Now I know that your body is at its most powerful when you listen to it and work with it.”

Puressentiel Muscles & Joints Roller contains 100% pure and natural active ingredients

including Wintergreen and Roman Chamomile and is also available in Gel, Soothing Balm and Heating Patch formats that allow for different parts of the body and personal preference.





Our relationship expert Keren Smedley has over 20 years' experience

Here to help

Let counsellor Keren lighten your load

I'm at a loss over my son's smelly room

Q My 15-year-old son's room has been untidy and smelled for the past few months. I had been cleaning it and removing his clothes and the dirty crockery. But, following reading one of your answers, I stopped doing that and told him I wouldn't clean the room or wash his clothes unless he put them in the wash bin. His room has become worse and the smell now permeates the house, so it has to change. I'm at a loss.
Karen, Wiltshire

A I'm sorry that the sanctions you applied didn't make any difference. It sounds like he's still getting all his needs met, so he hasn't had to change much. I have two further thoughts: first, I wonder if he knows how to clean a room and what it would involve. Try explaining that what's happening clearly isn't working and it's now affecting the whole house. Second, I'd suggest you offer to clean his room and wash his clothes and so on, with him doing it alongside you until he feels confident about doing it himself. Agree that you'll do this twice a week at a certain time so he doesn't feel you're invading his space. Then he needs to take over these chores.

They won't accept it

Q I've decided to stop drinking as I know it isn't good for me, because I'm a bit of a binge drinker – so once I start, I end up having a few. I'd also begun drinking alone. My friends are finding my change of heart hard to accept and, whenever we go out, they nag me to have just one. Why can't they leave me to have a soft drink in peace?

Sally, Swansea

A It does seem hard at times for friends to accept us when we're doing something different from

Would I get thrown out?

Q I'm in my 50s and have decided to start my own business. But I don't have anywhere to work at home or a place where I can see clients, and I can't afford to take any office space. A friend of mine said I should work in a cafe. I was wondering if it was all right to set up a business there or will they throw me out?
Lorna, Basingstoke

A As long as you're buying a coffee and ideally something to eat, there's no reason why they would throw you out; after all, they want customers.

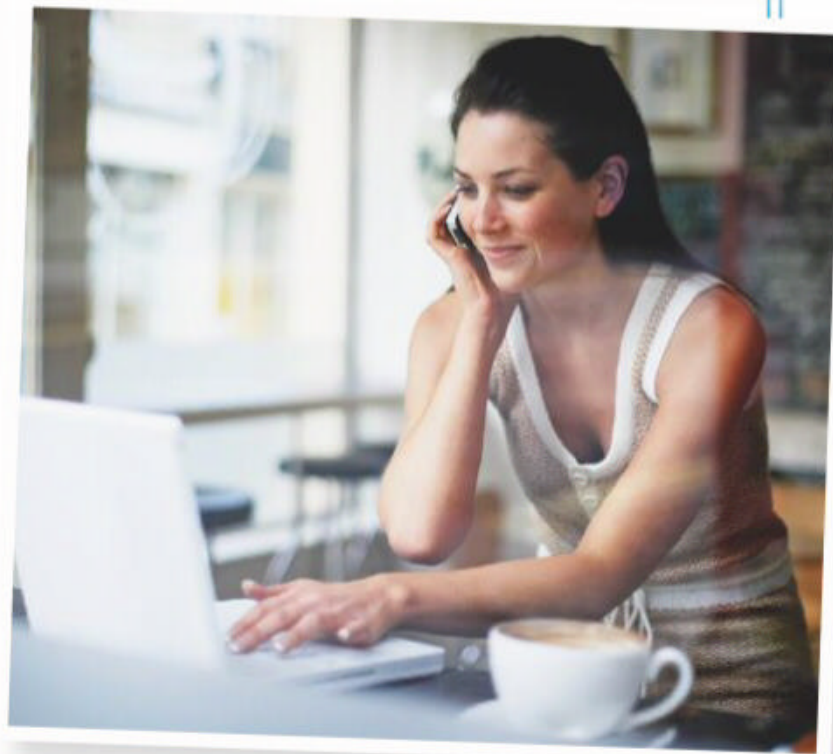
Over a day, you'd consume quite a bit! Increasingly, people

are using cafes and hotel lounges as places to meet for business, so you won't be alone.

You could change your venue through the week so you don't overstay your welcome, and bring business to a number of

establishments. I'm sure they'll be delighted.

❖ Keren welcomes your letters, emails and texts, but she cannot reply to individual cases and will select correspondence at random for publication.



them. We like our friends to be like us and also it holds up a mirror to our habits. Be aware that their insistence is all about them, not you, so stay with your decision and they'll accept it after a while. Gently explain your reasons and tell them that, if they're the good friends you thought they were, they should support you trying to look after yourself.

My dog dilemma

Q Our eight-year-old dog has been diagnosed with cancer. The vet says that she'll probably recover if she has treatment. We're not insured and the treatment is very expensive. I don't think we can afford it, unless we forgo our summer holiday. The children are adamant that they want the dog

more than a holiday. I would prefer a holiday. I don't know what to do.
Name and address withheld

A I understand a holiday would be lovely but just imagine a holiday with your children after your dog has been put down. How would that be? Not much fun, I'd imagine, as they'd hold you responsible for her death and look on you as someone who doesn't care. But, if you pay for the treatment, they'll see you as a caring person, much like themselves. By doing everything you can for the dog, you're also looking after them, which is good parenting. Isn't that more important than a holiday? Let's hope your dog will recover and you'll be able to have occasional days out this year. Then you can enjoy a family holiday away next year.

LOWER CAL desserts

Skimp on calories, not flavour, with these puds from our Test Kitchen experts



POACHED PEARS AND RHUBARB IN MEAD WITH SAFFRON AND CARDAMOM

Perfect for a dinner party, simply poach ahead of time and warm the pears slightly before serving.

SERVES 6

- ❖ 450ml (¾ pint) mead or similar sweet white wine
- ❖ 75g (2½oz) caster sugar
- ❖ Juice of 1 lemon
- ❖ 1 vanilla pod, split lengthways
- ❖ 4 cardamom pods
- ❖ A pinch of saffron

- ❖ 6 pears, peeled (we used conference)
- ❖ 200g forced rhubarb, cut into chunks
- ❖ Creme fraiche, to serve

1 In a saucepan, combine the mead, sugar, lemon, vanilla, cardamom pods and

PER SERVING

205 cals, 0g fat,
0g sat fat,
35g carbs

saffron with 650ml (22fl oz) water and bring to a slow rolling simmer. Simmer the pears for 7-12 mins (this depends on the ripeness; very ripe pears will be closer to 7 mins and less ripe 10-12).

2 Turn off the heat and remove the pears from

the poaching syrup. Reduce the syrup for a few mins and add the rhubarb for 2 mins. Take off the heat and remove the rhubarb with a slotted spoon. Serve each pear on a plate with rhubarb, drizzled with sauce and a dollop of creme fraiche.



BAKED APPLES WITH OATY FILLING

One of your five a day in pudding form!

PER SERVING

241 cals, 5g fat,
3g sat fat,
44g carbs

SERVES 4

- ❖ 75g (2½oz) rolled oats
- ❖ 60g (2oz) coconut sugar
- ❖ 1tbsp melted coconut oil
- ❖ ½tsp cinnamon
- ❖ ¼tsp nutmeg
- ❖ 1tsp vanilla extract
- ❖ 4 medium apples
- ❖ Frozen yogurt or fat-free creme fraiche, to serve

1 Heat the oven to 180C/Gas 4. Combine the oats, coconut sugar, coconut oil, cinnamon, nutmeg

and vanilla in a bowl until slightly sticky.
2 Wash and core the apples, leaving them whole.
3 Place the cored apples in a deep baking dish. Carefully spoon the filling into the apples until it's about to overflow.
4 Pour 250ml (8fl oz) hot water into the bottom of the dish, cover with foil, and bake for 1 hr or until the apples are soft and sugar melted. Serve with frozen yogurt or creme fraiche.



TIP You could also make these into carrot muffins and pipe the filling on top of each.

PER SERVING

250 cals, 15g fat,
4g sat fat,
19g carbs

NO-ADDED-SUGAR CARROT CAKE

The solution to those cake cravings when you're trying to reduce your sugar intake.

SERVES 12

- ❖ 150g (5oz) self-raising flour
 - ❖ 1tbsp ground mixed spice
 - ❖ 1tsp bicarbonate of soda
 - ❖ 100g (3½oz) ground almonds
 - ❖ 100g (3½oz) raisins
 - ❖ 3 large eggs
 - ❖ 100ml sunflower oil
 - ❖ 3tbsp milk
 - ❖ 350g (12oz) carrots, peeled and grated
- For the filling and topping:**
- ❖ 400g (14oz) low-fat

cream cheese

- ❖ 2tbsp powdered stevia sweetener, eg Sukrin icing
 - ❖ Zest of 2 oranges – 1 finely grated and 1 peeled and cut into strips
- You will also need:**
- ❖ 20cm (8in) cake tin, lined with baking parchment

1 Heat the oven to 180C/ Gas 4. Sift the flour, mixed spice and bicarbonate of soda into a bowl. Stir in

the ground almonds and raisins. Beat together the eggs, oil and milk, and pour into the dry ingredients. Add the grated carrots and fold it all together. Spoon into the cake tin and level the surface.

2 Bake for 50-60 mins or until the cake has risen and feels just firm to the touch in the centre. Remove from the oven and leave it to cool in the tin for 10-15 mins. Transfer it to a wire

rack to cool completely.

3 Peel the lining paper from the cake and cut it in half horizontally.

4 Beat the cream cheese to soften it and beat in the sweetener and grated orange zest. Use half the mixture as a filling for the cake and the rest as a topping, spreading it out evenly. Top with the strips of orange rind. Keep the cake chilled until serving.



Recycled jug, **£10**,
large potted fern, **£20**,
double bedding set,
£21, cushion, **£14**,
all Sainsbury's



Bunny in jar, **£12**,
George Home



Duvet set, **from £10**,
George Home

Supermarket SHOP

Style up your bedroom
with a trip down the aisles



Ombré vase,
£8, Tesco

Storage basket,
£6, Morrisons



Faux flower
arrangement,
£16,
Sainsbury's



Mug, **£3.50**,
Sainsbury's

**From
£3.50**



Table lamp,
£17, Morrisons



Purple throw, **£20**,
George Home

COMPILED BY: ESME CLEMO

Woman's Weekly Survey 2020

**WIN A SHARE OF
£500**
£250 main prize 10 x £25 runners-up prizes

DEAR READER,

Please help us to make your favourite magazine even better by completing this survey and you could also win a cash prize. Thank you!

Catherine Westwood
Editor-in-Chief

You can take part online by going to womensweekly.com/readersurvey2020

A. BUYING MAGAZINES

1 Do you tend to buy:

Mainly/exclusively monthly magazines	☐ 1
Mainly/exclusively weekly magazines	☐ 2
An even mix of both	☐ 3

2 How often do you buy each of the following:

	Subscribe 1	Regularly 2	Occasionally 3	Never 4
Good Housekeeping	☐	☐	☐	☐
Platinum	☐	☐	☐	☐
Prima	☐	☐	☐	☐
Woman	☐	☐	☐	☐
woman&home	☐	☐	☐	☐
Woman's Own	☐	☐	☐	☐
My Weekly	☐	☐	☐	☐
Yours	☐	☐	☐	☐
People's Friend	☐	☐	☐	☐

3 How often do you buy Woman's Weekly?

I subscribe	☐ 1
Every week but don't subscribe	☐ 2
Every 2-3 weeks	☐ 3
Once a month	☐ 4
Once every few months	☐ 5
Less often	☐ 6
Never	☐ 7

4 How long have you been buying Woman's Weekly?

Under 1 year	☐ 1
2-3 years	☐ 2
4-5 years	☐ 3
6-10 years	☐ 4
10-20 years	☐ 5
Longer	☐ 6
Can't remember	☐ 7

5 What made you buy this issue of Woman's Weekly?

I always buy Woman's Weekly	☐ 1
I flicked through it and it looked interesting	☐ 2
Good for money-saving ideas and offers	☐ 3
It was on offer	☐ 4
The main story on the cover: Claire King	☐ 5
20 ways to beat a headache	☐ 6
Inside stories of the real Military Wives	☐ 7
Slimming suppers, lower-cal desserts	☐ 8
20 under £20: Chic stripes for all shapes!	☐ 9
Softer skin from £2.99	☐ 0
Win a holiday to Madeira	☐ x

6 How often have you bought each of these themed magazines published by Woman's Weekly?

	Regularly 1	Occasionally 2	Heard of, not bought 3	Not heard of 4
Fiction	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gardening	☐	☐	☐	☐
Healthy Living	☐	☐	☐	☐

B. WOMAN'S WEEKLY MAGAZINE

7 Would you describe Woman's Weekly as:

Your favourite women's weekly magazine	☐ 1
One of your favourites	☐ 2
Not usually one of your first choices	☐ 3

8 How important are each of the following subjects to your enjoyment of Woman's Weekly?

	Very important 1	Quite important 2	Not important 3
Beauty	☐	☐	☐
Books	☐	☐	☐
Celebrity	☐	☐	☐
Columnists (eg, Rosemary)	☐	☐	☐
Competitions	☐	☐	☐
Consumer/money advice	☐	☐	☐
Cookery/food	☐	☐	☐
Craft	☐	☐	☐
Diets/slimming	☐	☐	☐
Exercise	☐	☐	☐
Fashion	☐	☐	☐
Fiction (serial)	☐	☐	☐
Fiction (short story)	☐	☐	☐
Film/concerts/theatre/arts	☐	☐	☐
Gardening	☐	☐	☐
Health and wellbeing	☐	☐	☐
Home	☐	☐	☐
Knitting/Crochet	☐	☐	☐
Nature	☐	☐	☐
Offers/deals	☐	☐	☐
Pets	☐	☐	☐
Puzzles	☐	☐	☐
Reader letters	☐	☐	☐
Reader photos	☐	☐	☐
Stories about real people	☐	☐	☐
The environment	☐	☐	☐
Travel	☐	☐	☐
TV	☐	☐	☐

9 And how do you rate the quality of the content in the following areas of the magazine?

	Very good 1	Quite good 2	Average 3	Poor 4
Beauty	☐	☐	☐	☐
Celebrity	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fashion	☐	☐	☐	☐
Food	☐	☐	☐	☐
Health and wellbeing	☐	☐	☐	☐
Home	☐	☐	☐	☐
Real life	☐	☐	☐	☐
Travel	☐	☐	☐	☐

10 Do you feel the content of Woman's Weekly is:

A bit young for you	☐ 1
Right for women around your age	☐ 2
A bit old for you	☐ 3

11 How long do you usually spend reading your copy of Woman's Weekly?

Under 1 hour	☐ 1
1-1½ hours	☐ 2
1½-2 hours	☐ 3
2-3 hours	☐ 4
Over 3 hours	☐ 5

12 Have you noticed any changes to Woman's Weekly in the last year or so?

Has improved considerably	☐ 1
Has improved a little	☐ 2
I have noticed some changes but preferred it the way it was	☐ 3
I haven't noticed any changes	☐ 4

13 What changes have you noticed?

14 At £1.30, what do you think of Woman's Weekly in terms of value for money?

Very good	☐ 1	Fair	☐ 3
Good	☐ 2	Poor	☐ 4

15 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Woman's Weekly?

	Agree strongly 1	Agree slightly 2	Disagree slightly 3	No opinion 4
Keeps me up to date with things people are talking about	☐	☐	☐	☐
I prefer not to read anything upsetting in Woman's Weekly	☐	☐	☐	☐
I trust the information and advice	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am often inspired by the content	☐	☐	☐	☐
Thought-provoking/makes me think	☐	☐	☐	☐
Looks a bit old-fashioned	☐	☐	☐	☐
I mainly buy it out of habit	☐	☐	☐	☐
A bit of a treat	☐	☐	☐	☐
Attractively presented	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lots of useful content	☐	☐	☐	☐
Relates to me and my life	☐	☐	☐	☐

16 Overall, how much did you enjoy this issue of Woman's Weekly?

Very much	☐ 1
Quite a lot	☐ 2
Not very much	☐ 3
Not at all	☐ 4

17 Listed below in order, are all the items in this issue of *Woman's Weekly*. For each item, please tick the column which comes closest to your opinion. *Tick one box per item*

	Did not read 1	Very interesting 2	Quite interesting 3	Not very interesting 4	Not at all interesting 5
P3 Hello!	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P4-7 Good to Share	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P8-9 Celebrity: Claire King	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P10-11 Celebrating Britain: Wake-up time!	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P12-13 Headaches	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P15 Funny Old World	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P17 Beauty: Skincare	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P18-19 Fashion: 20 under 20	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P20-21 The real Military Wives	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P22-23 Cookery: Skinnier dinners	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P25 Good to Know	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P27 Your wellbeing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P28-29 Dr Gill	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P31 Here to help	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P32-33 Cookery: Lower-cal desserts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P34 Supermarket shop	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P37 Fiction: Living with the Past	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P38-39 Travel: Days out for Mother's Day	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P41 Craft: Sew a glasses case	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P42-43 Gardening	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P44-45 Fiction: Never Done That	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P47-49 Knitting: Dress-up dolls	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P52-54 Serial: Stepping Out	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P55 Horoscopes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P58-59 Puzzles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P60-61 What's on	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
P62 Rosemary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18 How interested are you in reading about the following health features in *Woman's Weekly*?

	Very interested 1	Quite interested 2	Not that interested 3
Holistic health	☐	☐	☐
Natural medicines/remedies	☐	☐	☐
Mental health and wellbeing	☐	☐	☐
Healthy recipes	☐	☐	☐
Advice from medical specialists	☐	☐	☐
Diets	☐	☐	☐
Exercise	☐	☐	☐
Men's health	☐	☐	☐
Children's health	☐	☐	☐

19 How interested are you in reading the following types of fiction in *Woman's Weekly*?

	Very interested 1	Quite interested 2	Not that interested 3
Comedy	☐	☐	☐
Thriller	☐	☐	☐
Murder mystery	☐	☐	☐
Romance	☐	☐	☐
Nostalgia	☐	☐	☐
Wartime	☐	☐	☐
Period drama	☐	☐	☐

C. YOUR LIFESTYLE

20 What do you particularly enjoy doing in your spare time? *Tick as many as apply*

Animals/pets	☐ 1
Cinema	☐ 2
Concerts/music events	☐ 3
Cooking/baking	☐ 4
Crosswords/puzzles	☐ 5
Days out	☐ 6
Gardening	☐ 7
Gym/exercise class	☐ 8
Home improvements	☐ 9
Knitting/Crochet	☐ 0
Reading	☐ x
Sewing	☐ v
Shopping	☐ 1
Social media	☐ 2
Socialising	☐ 3
Spa days/beauty treatments	☐ 4
Theatre	☐ 5
Travel	☐ 6
TV	☐ 7
Volunteering	☐ 8
Walking	☐ 9
Other crafts	☐ 0
Other types of exercise	☐ x

21 How often do you use the internet?

Several times a day	☐ 1
Once a day/most days	☐ 2
At least once a week	☐ 3
Once every 2-4 weeks	☐ 4
Less often	☐ 5
Never	☐ 6

22 Which, if any, social media do you use on a regular basis? *Tick all that apply.*

Facebook	☐ 1
Twitter	☐ 2
Pinterest	☐ 3
Instagram	☐ 4
YouTube	☐ 5
Ravelry	☐ 6

23 Do you follow *Woman's Weekly* on:

	Yes	No
Facebook (<i>Woman's Weekly Magazine</i>)	☐ 1	☐ 1
Twitter (@Womans_Weekly)	☐ 2	☐ 2
Pinterest	☐ 3	☐ 3
Instagram	☐ 4	☐ 4

24 Have you ever purchased anything from a *Woman's Weekly* offer?

Yes, in last 3 months	☐ 1
Yes, in last 6 months	☐ 2
Yes, in last 12 months	☐ 3
Longer ago	☐ 4
No	☐ 5

25 Which of the following diets have you tried? And which are you interested in reading about in *Woman's Weekly*?

	Tried	Interested
Slimming World	☐ 1	☐ 1
WW (Weight Watchers)	☐ 2	☐ 2
Fasting (including 5:2)	☐ 3	☐ 3
Meal replacement	☐ 4	☐ 4
Low-carb (including Keto, Paleo)	☐ 5	☐ 5

26 How would you describe the number of changes you've made in order to live a greener lifestyle?

Not many	☐ 1
Quite a few	☐ 2
Quite a lot	☐ 3

D. ABOUT YOU

27 Are you:

Female	☐ 1	Male	☐ 2
--------	----------------------------	------	----------------------------

28 Please write in your age last birthday

..... years

29 And now tell us what age you feel!

..... years

30 Do you live:

On your own	☐ 1
With partner only (no children)	☐ 2
With partner and children	☐ 3
With children only (no partner)	☐ 4
Other	☐ 5

31 What is your working status?

Working full-time	☐ 1
Working part-time	☐ 2
Self-employed	☐ 3
Do not work	☐ 4
Retired	☐ 5

32 How would you describe your financial status? Please be honest

Very comfortable	☐ 1
Comfortable	☐ 2
Managing	☐ 3
Struggling a bit	☐ 4
Struggling a lot	☐ 5
Not sure	☐ 6

33 Which of these best describes where you live?

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Living With THE PAST

Her frustration had reached boiling point, but would Greg ever part with his treasures?

Linda sank onto the sofa and eased her broken ankle up on it, scratching beneath the cast delicately with a knitting needle. She didn't know which was worse – the itching or not being able to do things. If Greg had listened to reason, she wouldn't be in this situation.

She glanced at her watch, wondering what was taking him so long. It was a five-minute walk to the chip shop and he'd been gone half an hour. At the sound of a vehicle, she grabbed her crutches and moved to the window. A van had pulled up outside with Greg in the passenger seat. Her heart sank. What had he bought this time?

'You can put it in the hall for now, mate,' Greg instructed as he opened the front door.

Linda gave a frustrated sigh. 'Not another chest of drawers!'

'Mahogany. Saw it in the collectables shop and couldn't resist.'

'We don't need more furniture, though.'

He ran his fingers lovingly over the wood. 'Mum –'

'Let me guess. Had one just like it before she downsized?'

Buying stuff because it reminded him of his childhood had gone too far. Their house was full to bursting. Tripping over an old sewing machine was how she'd broken her ankle. Navigating her way around on crutches was a nightmare.

It had started when his mum passed away. He couldn't bear to part with her belongings and had kept nearly everything. Linda hoped that once he'd come to terms with his loss, he'd have a sort out and life would

return to normal. But he kept adding to the collection.

'Where's it going to go?' she asked.

'I'll find somewhere.' Greg placed his hands on his hips. 'We need a bigger house.'

'This one's plenty big enough,' Linda said, firmly. 'Or it would be if you had a proper clear-out. The place is a mess, I'm too embarrassed to invite people round.'

'It's not that bad –'

'I never thought I'd say it, but I'm ashamed to call this my home. Your stuff has taken over our lives and if you don't deal with it, I will.'

'You wouldn't...'

'Try me.' She glared back. 'Greg. I've had enough.'

He stormed off, bashing his knee against a bookcase.

Assuming he'd forgotten all about their fish supper, Linda ordered a takeaway, clearing space on the kitchen table. She glanced round at the clutter on the work surfaces: his mum's old recipe books, storage jars, wine racks... all things that other people would be glad of if only

Greg could let go of the past.

They ate in silence.

'I've been thinking,' he said, eventually. 'We could buy another shed and put stuff in there.'

'No.' Linda struggled to contain her temper.

'A storage unit, then.'

She banged down her cutlery. 'You're just avoiding the issue. I had hoped that breaking my ankle would have made you see sense, but evidently not.'

'It's all right for you,' he snapped. 'Your parents are still in good health and living nearby. You can see them whenever you want.'

'I know. I'm fortunate. And I do sympathise, but –'

The unspoken words hung in the air. They were covering old ground. As a 10-year old boy, Greg had lost his dad. It had been the worst time of his life. The possessions that filled their rooms reminded him of the happy times they'd shared before he died. But recreating his childhood wouldn't bring him back.

Despondently, he pushed

his plate away. 'Does everything have to go?'

'No, Greg,' Linda said, gently. 'I wouldn't ask you to part with your most treasured items.'

'But I treasure them all.'

He left the table, looking round the kitchen, touching things as if for the last time. He picked up a cricket ball, its leather casing cracked with age. 'Dad hit this for six. Took him to his first century. I still have his bat somewhere.'

Greg disappeared upstairs. She listened as he rummaged through cupboards and drawers in search of it.

'Success?' Linda sat on the top step.

'Could be anywhere,' he conceded, perching beside her. 'I just wanted to hold it...'

She slipped an arm round his shoulders. 'What difference would it make? It's the memories that count, not things. They're what keep your mum and dad alive in your heart, nothing else. No one can take those away.'

'I suppose,' he said.

Linda left him to his thoughts, hoping the message would finally get through.

'Do you know where the camera is?' he asked later that evening.

'In the sideboard probably. Why are you looking for it?'

'I want to take pictures of Mum's things. You're right. This is no way to live, I see that now. Sorry it's taken so long for the penny to drop.' He kissed the top of her head. 'Don't expect miracles, though. Finding new homes for it all could take weeks.'

Linda didn't care how long it took. They'd have a home to be proud of again and Greg would still have his memories. There would always be room for those.

THE END

Hilary Middleton, 2020



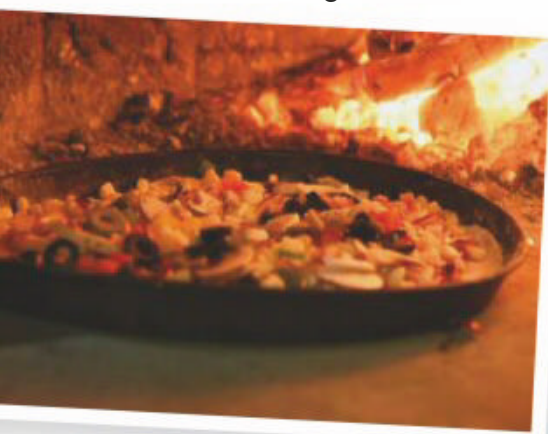
Great days out for MOTHER'S DAY

If you're celebrating Mothering Sunday this year, here's some very special days out!

Traditional baking in West Sussex

If your mum's a foodie, take her to Saddlescombe Farm in West Sussex, where you'll experience making your own bread or pizza in a clay oven. And while the dough rises, you'll discover more about the history of bread-making at the farm on a guided tour.

❖ Mother's Day baking at Saddlescombe Farm, £14 for adults, £7 for children; nationaltrust.org.uk



Flower arranging in Gloucestershire

Take your mum to the Tudor Farmhouse Hotel in the Forest of Dean for a Mother's Day flower-arranging workshop. Afterwards, relax over afternoon tea.

❖ Mother's Day Flowers workshop, 21 March, £50pp including afternoon tea; tudorfarmhousehotel.co.uk

Steam train adventure in Norfolk

Join the Bure Valley Railway in Wroxham and experience a nostalgic steam train ride through nine miles of pretty Norfolk countryside before arriving at Aylsham, where you'll hop off and enjoy a two-course lunch before your leisurely train journey back.

❖ The Mothers' VIP package on 22 March costs £27 for adults, £13.50 for children, under-5s £5. Pre-booking essential; bvrw.co.uk

Cupcake decorating in Northern Ireland

Get crafty in the kitchen at a cupcake decorating class at Causeway Cookery School in Ballymoney. Sip Prosecco as your host demonstrates how to make your cupcakes look fabulous, then decorate your own, which you can take home.

❖ The Daughter & Mum Cup Cake Decorating – With a glass of Prosecco! class is on 21 March. £25pp, plus booking fee; eventbrite.co.uk





Glorious gardens in Wales

Visit the fabulous 560-acre National Botanic Garden of Wales in Carmarthenshire and admire its remarkable collection of plants. All mums will get free entry on Mother's Day, plus you'll find a craft and food fair.

❖ Standard admission is £10.45pp for adults, children £5, under-5s free; botanicgarden.wales

Afternoon tea in York

Step into the elegant Grand Hotel in York and indulge in its delicious Grand Afternoon Tea, where you'll be presented with an elaborate tower of sweet and savoury treats on a silver stand in the five-star hotel's The Rise Restaurant.

❖ The Grand Afternoon Tea, £25.50 per person; thegrandyork.co.uk



Scottish spa break

Treat your mum to an indulgent spa day at Stobo Castle, nestled among the Scottish Borders. Relax in the sauna, then lounge by the pool, which overlooks stunning countryside. There's a range of treatments, from facials to holistic therapies you can book for her too. Also, make time to explore the Japanese Water Garden.

❖ The Revive Spa Day includes a relaxing 15-minute water massage; three-course lunch; use of the spa facilities; fitness, relaxation and aqua classes; plus complimentary slippers and use of bathrobes. £99pp Mon-Fri, £119pp Sat and Sun; stobocastle.co.uk



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- Tour Lake Orta, and its medieval village of Orta San Giulio
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YOU WILL NEED

(to make one case)

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- ❖ Prym piercing and snap tool
- ❖ Colourful snap fastening

STOCKISTS Prym piercing and snap tool, £12.99, coloured press fasteners, £3.09 for 30, Minervacrafts.com

1 Fuse the interfacing to the centre of the reverse of the lining fabric, following the manufacturer's instructions.

2 Take the outer and lining fabric and pin together along two edges of the same lengths, with right sides

together. Sew together with a 5mm seam allowance.

3 Open out the fabric, press seam towards the lining.

4 Fold the case in half along the longest length of the sewn-together fabrics, with right sides facing, and press. Pin the raw edges together and sew all the way around with a 5mm seam allowance – leave a small gap for turning through along the lining.

5 Turn the case right sides out and press. Turn the edges of the opening under by 5mm and topstitch closed.

6 Push the lining down inside the outer fabric until you have a 1.5cm cuff of contrasting fabric at the top.

7 Using the piercing and snap tool, add a snap fastening in the centre of the contrast cuff to keep the case closed.

Gardening ROYALTY

Opulent peonies are the beauty queens of the plant world – they'll bring romance and glamour to your plot

Handsome and hardy

Stunning lookers, resilient and long-lived, peonies deserve a place in every garden. Plant in spring, no deeper than 2.5cm (apart from tree peonies, which need the graft 15cm below the surface), in sun or light shade and fertile, well-drained soil.

They like plenty of space, so they're not competing with other hungry plants. Apart from their beauty, they're low maintenance.

Give them a mulch and feed in spring, then simply remove the dead stems in autumn.



'Coral Charm'



Aroma therapy

Most peonies are fragrant, but some are more intense than others. One of the top scented varieties is 'Myrtle Gentry', with pale pink double flowers that fade to white and smell of tea rose. Other perfumed favourites include 'Duchesse de Nemours', which has ivory-white ruffled blooms with hints of yellow and a perfume akin to lily of the valley, and 'Dr Alexander Fleming', a short, bushy peony, with rich pink, honey-scented flowers, perfect for cutting.

'Myrtle Gentry'



Max your display

There are three types of peony. Herbaceous perennials have sumptuous, showy flowers in a range of hues from white to yellow and pink to red. Tree peonies are deciduous shrubs with dinner-plate-sized flowers up to 25cm wide. There are also the rare intersectional peonies (a tree-herbaceous cross), which are the longest flowering and come in more unusual shades, such as apricot. As peonies flower for a short period of about 10 days, plant varieties that bloom at different times (early, mid and late summer), for a display from May to July.

A stunning Japanese tree peony



'Bowl of Beauty'



Scene-stealing show

❖ Create a dazzling focal point in a border or large container with 'Bowl of Beauty', which as its name suggests, has wide, cup-shaped flowers made up of cerise-pink outer petals and lemony-cream centres, set off by dark green foliage.

❖ Another head-turner is 'Souvenir de Maxime Cornu', a tree peony growing up to 90cm high, with outsized double flowers in yellowy-orange, edged in deep pink.

❖ 'Kansas', a fuchsia pink/carmine red double with densely packed, fragrant petals, has strong stems and an upright shape that make it popular for cutting.

❖ For flowers that change hue as they age, try 'Coral Charm', which opens as salmon pink and fades to a peachy cream.

Peonies as cut flowers

Soft, silky and romantic, peonies make gorgeous cut flowers. New plants take a few years to establish, so buy specimens that are three to five years old, and don't cut flowers the first year after planting. For established plants, cut stems with plump buds in the early morning. They'll open and keep in water for up to 10 days.



They look great massed in a vase

Woman's Weekly

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Try as she might, Jessica Ryder wasn't feeling all that chipper.

Earlier in the week she'd been involved in a minor accident and it had brought her life into sudden and sharp focus.

It had made her think about what she'd done – and, more importantly, just what she hadn't done.

She'd never, for instance, been drunk. She'd never been inside a nightclub. Never been to the opera, nor to a football match. She'd never ridden a motorcycle nor flown in an aeroplane. And Anglesey was the farthest from home she'd ever been.

Now, here she was, in hospital, staring death in the face. Literally.

'Nice scythe,' she said.

'For the reaping of souls, see,' he said.

Another thing Jessica Ryder had never done was imagine the Grim Reaper with a Welsh accent.

'I suppose that does come off.' She pointed. 'Or have you just been on a very severe diet?'

'What? Oh!' A bony hand came up and removed the skeletal mask to reveal what was obviously a student within the black hood.

He'd arrived with two friends: one dressed as a stormtrooper from *Star Wars* and the other as the Doctor, Tom Baker era, complete with long multicoloured scarf and floppy hat.

It was with a jolt that Jessica realised she'd never been to a fancy-dress party, either.

She took down the relevant details – her job was, after all, receptionist in the Minor Injuries Unit – and entered them into the computer. The stormtrooper – Colin

Mickleby, apparently – had done something to his wrist. Possibly broken it. Possibly sprained it. The not-so-Grim Reaper – 'I'm Robin, by the way!' – had brought him into the hospital from the nearby university campus.

'If you'd like to take a seat,' Jessica said, 'someone will be with you soon. And could you tell Doctor Who to make his phone call outside, please.'

'Who?' Robin looked round the waiting area, frowning. 'Oh, him! He's not with us. He just followed us in.'

'That's the new neurosurgeon from upstairs,' said Angie, walking into Jessica's reception area with an armful of patient notes. Angie was an MIU nurse.

'He's a neurosurgeon?'

Jessica found that hard to believe. 'So, um, why is he dressed as...'

'As a Time Lord?' Angie shrugged. 'No idea. Maybe he's a big fan.'

'Not big enough,' said Robin the Grim Reaper. 'Hat's the wrong style for a start. And as for the scarf...' He wandered away, shaking

his head, and took a seat.

Jessica took advantage of the slight lull in Wednesday afternoon casualties to sit back in her chair.

'Do you ever wonder,' she asked Angie, 'just where you're going?'

'I'm going to Nuneaton tomorrow,' Angie said, as she sorted her folders, 'to see my sister. Why do you ask?'

'No, I mean going – as in

life in general. It's this car accident. It got me thinking.'

'You only dented your bumper,' Angie said.

'Well, yes, but I almost had a serious accident.'

'You clipped a bollard.'

'Well, yes, but that sort of thing makes you reassess your life.'

'Does it really?' Angie didn't sound convinced.

'I had a proper fright,' Jessica went on. 'And it's made me wonder what would have happened had it been more serious. Here I am, not really having done much with my life, all alone, and you see people come through here every single day whose lives are changed forever because of one slip or a silly accident or taking the wrong turn at the wrong time. And you wonder whether today's your day and you've missed your chance entirely. Then what?'

'Best not to dwell on it, I reckon,' Angie said. 'And just get on with life.'

'Which is exactly the point I'm trying to make,' Jessica said. 'What life?'

But before she could make her point properly, Angie was called away.

Jessica stared at Robin, thinking. He winked and she debated whether to ask him to wait elsewhere. Seeing Death himself in the waiting area wasn't the most reassuring of sights for other ailing visitors.

But having him loitering outside was probably just as bad. Perhaps she ought to confiscate his plastic scythe until he was ready to leave with his injured friend. Without the scythe and the mask he could just about pass for a scary monk.

'Excuse me, Robin. Could I have a word?' She beckoned him over and he was very agreeable to her suggestions,



NEVER Done That

*She'd missed out on so much
– perhaps this was exactly
the wake-up call she needed*

**He'd been full
of plans, but
was always too
busy to put
any of them
into action**

even handing over his stormtrooper friend's laser.

'Different on campus,' he said. 'You get all sorts there. Had a flash mob of zombies the other day. Great fun.'

Jessica sometimes felt like a zombie, lurching aimlessly around since her big break-up. She'd been dating the manager of a plumbing supplies centre. Four years they were together. Four whole years! She'd thought they were doing all right.

Then one day it turned out he'd decided she was the girlfriend equivalent of an avocado bathroom suite and he tore out her fittings, lobbed her in a skip and installed a brand-new model with shiny new taps.

Metaphorically speaking.

Jessica sighed. He'd been full of plans for their future, but was always too busy to put any of them into action. Jessica thought waiting wouldn't hurt, that patience would pay off in the end. Turned out she was wrong.

The new neurosurgeon finally finished his call and strode on through to the minor injuries cubicles.

Jessica wouldn't mind dating a neurosurgeon. *A neuromance, if you will.*

Although perhaps not that one, judging by the outfit. She'd settle for any normally scarfed consultant, though, neurosurgical or otherwise.

Trouble was, she didn't get to meet many men as an MIU receptionist. Usually, the nice men were either injured or accompanying the injured. Hardly conducive to striking up a sparkling conversation.

And it seemed all the staff were happily married, or happily dating, or unhappily doing both, or unavailable for some other reason. In a hospital this size, why couldn't she stumble across

anyone even half-decent?

Not that having a man to call her own was the sole point of her existence.

And she didn't really care about half the things she'd never done. She didn't have any desire to travel. Not abroad, anyway. She enjoyed touring the sites and sights of Britain, but overseas places simply didn't interest her.

No, Jessica didn't want to suddenly become a drunken party girl posting messages on the interweb about her exploits at a football match in Berlin. Or whatever.

And her life was full. She did lots of things. For a start, she'd read way more books than

anyone she knew. And she was absolutely brilliant at crosswords. And her knitting was world famous. Well, among her family, anyway. And she had... well, she...

No, hang on, she had...

'What's that frown for?' asked Angie, reappearing at her side.

'Oh, nothing. Just thinking.' Jessica swivelled on her chair.

Which was when Robin the Grim Reaper walked back up to the reception desk.

'Hello, again,' he said.

'Oh, hello.' Jessica grabbed the counter to stop her swivel. 'What can I do for you?'

'It's more like, what can I do for you?'

'Sorry?' Jessica wasn't sure she liked the sound of this. He was far too young for her.

'My good friend Colin...'

He gestured at his stormtrooper companion, still waiting to go in for his examination. 'He's from this little village near Lichfield. Brought up on a pig farm, see. You know the sort: no proper broadband, never

seen *Star Wars*, never been to the big city.'

'Hey!' shouted Colin. 'You make me sound like a country bumpkin. I had broadband and I have seen *Star Wars*.'

'Not been to the big city before, though, have you, my friend?'

'I saw *The Mousetrap* in London. Been to New York and Paris too.'

'Oh.' Robin the Grim Reaper was momentarily derailed. 'Right.' He looked at Jessica.

'Crikey. Wires crossed, eh?'

'Is that what the list is all about?' Colin said. 'You think I've never done anything so you're going to introduce me

to every new experience you can think of?'

Robin nodded slowly. 'That was the general idea. What did you think I was doing?'

'I thought we were just having a laugh.' Colin rolled his eyes at Jessica. 'He has this list.'

'A list?' Jessica replied, raising her eyebrows.

'Yeah, a list,' Robin said.

But then Colin Mickleby's name was called and he had to go.

'Be there in a mo,' Robin called after him. Hurriedly, he turned back to Jessica. 'Anyways, the plan was I wanted to show Col that there was more to life than farming and singing songs around the piano.'

'Does he have a piano?'

'Dunno. Not sure now. Sort of just assumed, like.' Robin looked mightily confused. 'Anyways, I always carry the list on me.'

He delved into his black robes and produced a tatty piece of folded paper. 'And I heard you commenting on

how boring your life was...'

'Steady on.' *Bit personal.*

'So, do you want a look?'

Robin said. 'You can copy it, if you want. Although you should probably ignore some of the items, mind. I cross them off when we manage each one, see. Like today. We can cross off fancy-dress assassins roof raid.'

Jessica took the paper from him, unfolded it and scanned down the list. Some entries had lines through them, but they were mostly readable. She wasn't sure what some of them meant, though, including the fancy-dress assassins roof raid.

'I don't see "break arm" on here,' she commented.

'Ooh, you're sharp.

Anyways, must dash. Give it me back when I return, like.'

And off he went, chasing into the cubicles after his stormtrooper friend.

'Students!' said Angie. She came over to have a look at the list. 'So where are you going to start, then?'

There were quite a few things that Jessica didn't fancy, and quite a few that were probably impossible. And after discounting the illegal, immoral and downright stupid ones, she wasn't left with many options.

But then one of the entries stood out, as if calling to her.

It was really, for her, just another item on the long list of things she had never experienced, but she had to start somewhere.

And who could say where it might lead?

'You know, Angie, I've never done that.' And Jessica Ryder started to get excited.

Because it wasn't every day that Death stared you in the face and offered you a choice.

THE END

Steve Beresford, 2020

One of the
entries stood
out, as if
calling to her



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These adorable knitted dolls each have their own extra special outfit

Difficulty
level



MEASUREMENTS

Approx 28cm/11in tall

MATERIALS

For all: 1 x 50g (165m) ball of Sirdar Snuggly DK (55% nylon, 45% acrylic) in each of Biscuit (494), Soft Brown (428), Bramble (501), White (251), Pastel Blue (321), Surf Blue (496), Sunshine (500), Spicy Pink (350), Lemon (252), Black (312), Tangerine (489)*. Pair of 3mm (No.11) knitting needles; stitch holder; sewing needle; toy filling; pair of 6mm black beads or safety eyes per doll; pink pastel crayon or blush (optional for cheeks); cotton buds (optional); black

cotton thread; oddments of dark brown 4-ply yarn.

Pink dress: A few metres of light pink DK yarn for flower; size 3mm crochet hook; small button.

Blue dress: 2 pairs of snap fasteners; light blue or white cotton thread.

Yellow dress: 2 pairs of snap fasteners; orange or white cotton thread.

Yarn is available from theknittingnetwork.co.uk

TENSION

26 stitches and 30 rows, to 10x10cm, over stocking stitch, using 3mm needles.

ABBREVIATIONS

St(s), stitch(es); **k**, knit; **p**, purl;

ss, stocking st (k on right side and p on wrong side); **tog**, together (decrease, by working as many sts together as stated); **inc**, increase 1 st (by working into same st twice); **up1**, pick up loop lying between needles and k into back of it (to increase 1 st); **skpo**, slip 1 st, k 1 st, pass slipped st over the knitted st (to decrease 1 st).

NOTES

You can use cotton buds inserted into the neck for extra stability but if you are giving the doll to a young child, please omit for safety reasons. For under-threes do not use beads for eyes

or buttons for clothes, instead use black yarn for eyes and sew on the clothes. If using safety eyes, attach them before stuffing head and follow manufacturer's guidance. Leave long ends at the beginning and end of pieces, for sewing. Sew seam with right side out, using mattress stitch. Yarn amounts are based on average requirements and are therefore approximate. Instructions in square brackets are worked as stated after 2nd bracket.

**TESTED
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work for
you**

DOLL A

LEGS, BODY & HEAD

Right leg: With Biscuit, cast on 10 sts.

1st row (wrong side): P.

2nd row: [Inc in next st] to end – 20 sts.

3rd to 7th rows: Starting with a p row, ss 5 rows.

8th row: K6, [k2tog] 3 times, k8 – 17 sts.

9th row: P.

10th row: K6, k3tog, k8 – 15 sts.

11th to 27th rows: Starting with a p row, ss 17 rows.

Break off yarn and slip sts onto a st holder.

Left leg: 1st to 7th rows: Work as given for right leg.

8th row: K8, [k2tog] 3 times, k6 – 17 sts.

9th row: P.

10th row: K8, k3tog, k6 – 15 sts.

11th to 27th rows: Starting with a p row, ss 17 rows.

Change to White.

Join for body: 28th row: K15 from left leg, k15 from right leg – 30 sts.

29th row: P to end.

30th row: [K4, inc in next st] to end – 36 sts.

31st to 37th rows: Starting with a p row, ss 7 rows.

38th row: [K4, k2tog] to end – 30 sts.

39th row: P.

40th row: [K3, k2tog] to end – 24 sts.

41st row: P.

42nd row: [K4, k2tog] to end – 20 sts.

43rd to 49th rows: Starting with a p row, ss 7 rows.

Change to Biscuit.

Neck: 50th row: [K2tog] to end – 10 sts.

51st to 53rd rows: Starting with a p row, ss 3 rows.

Head: 54th row: [Inc in next st] to end – 20 sts.

55th row: P.

56th row: [K1, inc in next st] to end – 30 sts.

57th row: P.

58th row: [K2, inc in next st] to end – 40 sts.

59th to 67th rows: Starting with a p row, ss 9 rows.

68th row: K14, [k2tog, k1] 4 times, k14 – 36 sts.

69th to 77th rows: Starting with a p row, ss 9 rows.

78th row: [K4, k2tog] to end – 30 sts.

79th row: P.

80th row: [K1, k2tog] to end – 20 sts.

81st row: P.

82nd row: [K2tog] to end – 10 sts.

Break off yarn, thread through remaining sts, pull up tightly and fasten off. With fasten-off yarn end, sew the seam from top of head to neck. With cast-on yarn end, sew each leg seam from foot to crotch. Sew back seam halfway. Stuff legs and head, remembering to attach safety eyes first if using them. Add toy filling between body and neck, adding cotton buds within neck filling for extra support if preferred (see Notes on page 47). Finish stuffing body and close body seam. Sew eyes with black thread, if not using safety eyes.

With Biscuit, make a French knot for the nose. With Dark Brown, embroider the mouth.

With pink pastel crayon or blush, colour cheeks.

With Lemon, make hair as follows: make long straight sts on head, leaving long yarn ends at the sides of the face, then make back sts for front of hair, leaving long loops every other st, then cut loops. Tie hair at the sides with Spicy Pink.

ARMS (make 2 alike)

With Biscuit, cast on 10 sts. Starting with a p row, ss 20 rows.

Break off yarn, thread through remaining sts, pull up tightly and fasten off. Seam each arm, stuff and attach them to body.

SHOES (make 2 alike)

With Surf Blue, cast on 12 sts.

1st row (wrong side): P.

2nd row: [Inc in next st] to end – 24 sts.

3rd to 7th rows:

Starting with a p row, ss 5 rows.

8th row: K9, [k2tog] 3 times, k9 – 21 sts.

9th row: P.

10th row: K9, k3tog, k9 – 19 sts.

Cast off. Sew sole of the shoe, encase foot and join the back seam of shoe. Secure shoe to leg, stitching all around. With length of same yarn, pierce foot from sole, take needle out from ankle and repeat. Pull yarn to flatten sole and shape ankle.

With Sunshine, make a bow, stitching small loops. Repeat for second shoe.

Pink dress

With Spicy Pink, cast on 27 sts.

1st and 2nd rows: K.

3rd row: K1, [up1, k1] 25 times, k1 – 52 sts.

4th row: P.

5th row: K9, [up1, k1] 8 times, k18, [up1, k1] 8 times, k9 – 68 sts.

6th and 7th rows: Starting with a p row, ss 2 rows.

8th row: P9, cast off next 16 sts, p17 more sts after casting off, cast off next 16 sts, p to end – 36 sts.

9th row: K8, k2tog, k16, k2tog, k8 – 34 sts.

10th row: P4, [inc in next st] 26 times, p4 – 60 sts.

11th to 29th rows: Ss 19 rows.

30th and 31st rows: K.

Cast off knitwise.

Join back seam from cast-on edge to the waist.

With Spicy Pink and crochet hook, make short chain for a button loop at corner of back neck. Attach small button.

Flower centre: With Sunshine,

cast on 8 sts. Break off yarn, thread through remaining sts, pull up tightly and fasten off. Stitch sides of flower centre together to form a circle. Using photo as a guide, attach flower centre to dress and embroider petals with light pink.

DOLL B

Work as for Doll A, using Soft Brown in place of Biscuit, Pastel Blue in place of White, Sunshine in place of Surf Blue for shoes and Bramble in place of Lemon for hair. Plait hair and tie with Spicy Pink. Use Surf Blue for bow on shoe.

Blue dress

With White, cast on 50 sts.

1st and 2nd rows: K.

3rd to 10th rows: Working in 2 rows stripes of Surf Blue and White, and starting with



a k row, ss 8 rows.

Break off White and continue in Surf Blue only.

11th row: [K3, k2tog] to end – 40 sts.

12th row: P.

13th row: [K2, k2tog] to end – 30 sts.

14th to 20th rows: Starting with a p row, ss 7 rows.

21st to 23rd rows: [K1, p1] to end.

24th row: Cast off 8 sts (1 st on needle), k13 sts more, cast off to end – 14 sts.

25th row: Rejoin yarn, skpo, k10, k2tog – 12 sts.

26th and 27th rows: K.

28th row: K4, cast off next 4 sts, k to end – 8 sts.

First strap: Next row: K4, turn, slip unworked sts onto a st holder.

Knit 19 rows. Cast off.

Second strap: Rejoin yarn to remaining sts. Knit 20 rows. Cast off. Join back seam from cast-on edge to the waist. Attach snap fasteners to the end of straps and back side of waist.

Doll B



Doll C



DOLL C

Work as for Doll A, using Bramble in place of Biscuit, Lemon in place of White, use Spicy Pink in place of Surf Blue for shoes and Black in place of Lemon for hair.

Yellow dress

With Tangerine, cast on 60 sts.

1st and 2nd rows: K.

Change to Sunshine.

3rd to 18th rows: Starting with a k row, ss 16 rows.

19th row: [K2tog] to end – 30 sts.

Change to Tangerine.

20th row: P.

21st to 23rd rows: [K1, p1] to end.

24th row: Cast off 8 sts (1 st on needle), k13 sts more, cast off to end – 14 sts.

25th row: Rejoin yarn, skpo, k10, k2tog – 12 sts.

26th and 27th rows: K.

28th row: K4, cast off 4 sts, k to end – 8 sts.

First strap: Next row: Skpo, k2 – 3 sts, turn, slip unworked sts onto a st holder.

K 17 rows.

Next row: Inc in next st, k2 – 4 sts.

Next row: K.

Cast off.

Second strap: Next row: Rejoin yarn to remaining sts, k2, k2tog – 3 sts.

K 17 rows.

Next row: K2, inc in next st – 4 sts. **Next row:** K.

Cast off.

Left shoulder: With right side facing, and with Tangerine, starting at 2nd row of strap and finishing with 5th row from cast-off edge, pick up and knit 8 sts along outer edge of left strap.

Row 1 (wrong side): [Inc in next st] to end – 16 sts.

Row 2: K.

Row 3: [P1, inc in next st] to end – 24 sts.

Cast off.

Right shoulder: With right side facing, and with Tangerine, starting at 5th row from cast-off edge and finishing with 2nd row from waist, pick up and knit 8 sts along outer edge of right strap. Work as

for left shoulder to end. Join back seam from cast-on edge to the waist. Stitch bottom outer corner of shoulder to 1st row of strap to shape sleeve. Attach snap fasteners to the end of straps and back side of waist.

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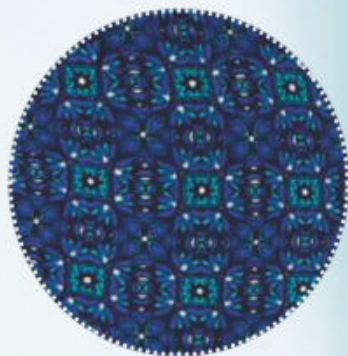
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STEPPING *Out*

After all this time, she finally knew the truth. But could she forgive them for all they had done?

THE STORY SO FAR: Vicar's daughter, Carrie, out of step with the Victorian values of her parents, aspires to go on the stage. After a trip to Yakov's Variety Show, she resolves to run away to join the troupe. Carrie is happy in her new career. But one night, from the stage, she sees her father in the front row of the stalls. She is terrified he intends to drag her back home and, although she avoids detection, she is told to leave for the trouble she has brought. Pursued by an agent who wants her for a new Paris revue, her career is back on track, but she finds herself facing intense jealousy from the other performers. Just when she thinks she's won their friendship, Carrie receives an anonymous letter from someone wanting to meet her the very next day.

She recognised the woman immediately by the red hat she said in her note she'd be wearing. Carrie hovered in the doorway. Something momentous was about to happen, she was certain. Did she have the courage to stay to find out what? Or should she turn round, walk away and live the rest of her life in blissful ignorance? But it was too late already. The woman at the table had spotted her and was already rising to her feet.



Carrie's coffee, untouched, was cold now. On the table in front of her lay two more photos of the same young woman whose photograph was stored in her bag.

'You must have realised this was your mother. Your likeness is astonishing.'

Anna Picard's voice was a soft murmur, a background hum to the commentary rolling around in Carrie's head. Surely none of what she'd just learnt could

possibly be true. And yet... a memory from many years ago floated up into her conscious mind. A boring afternoon on a hot summer's day. Her parents dozing after Sunday tea. She remembered wandering around the house and her footsteps took her to her father's study.

Idle curiosity led her to try the drawers of his desk. One of the drawers was locked. But the key was still there, so naturally she turned it. She only caught a glimpse of it. A sepia photograph of a young girl, hair tumbling to her shoulders. What happened next was swift. A door opening, footsteps across the room, her father's strong hand around her wrist, jerking her across the room and out of the door.

'Tell me everything again,' said Carrie.

'Of course. The facts must be hard for you to process,' said Madame Picard. 'But let me get you some fresh coffee.'

Carrie shook her head

vehemently. 'Just tell me,' she said.

'Your mother was an art student, here at the Sorbonne,' Anna began. 'Her family had been against her leaving home, but she'd fought them so hard that in the end they'd capitulated.'

'And my father?'

'An artist too. They fell in love. Set up home together. Were blissfully happy for a while. But then Sebastien, your father, caught TB and died. Shortly afterwards your mother got sick too. She died soon after you were born.'

The Nashs, as next of kin, dutifully turned up in Paris to claim Stella's child, Anna then told her.

'All the conversation was about duty. You could almost smell the disapproval from him in particular,' she went on. 'I'd hoped your aunt would show more affection.'

Carrie turned away.

'The paintings of my mother. Do you still have them?'

'I'm sorry. No. Your new

father... he destroyed them.'

A chill ran through Carrie's bones. So she had nothing, not even a photograph, to remember her father by. She was suddenly furious. Not with Anna. But with the couple she'd always thought of as her parents. She needed answers and she needed them now.

'I'm sorry,' she said, jumping from her seat. 'Thank you for everything. But I can't stay any longer. I have to go.'



It was strange, being back in Sittingford. Nothing had changed, she thought, as she marched up the drive to the front door of the vicarage. Except for herself. She was a different person. Her rage – which hadn't subsided one iota despite the length of time it had taken her to cross the Channel to get here – had emboldened her.

A slightly built girl she didn't recognise opened the door.

'I'm here to see my





'Sit down, please. We can talk about this.'

'All I want is for you to tell me why you kept the identity of my real parents a secret for so long.'

'We brought you back from that ungodly place for your own

good,' her father said.

'For my own good?' Carrie was furious. 'Have you any idea how it felt, growing up in this place with you, always wondering why I didn't fit in? Being slapped down whenever I dared to express an opinion contrary to yours?'

'Just listen to yourself!' her father said when she'd finished. 'Look at yourself too. You're going just the same way she did.'

'Edwin, dear!'

He put up a hand to silence his wife, as, it occurred to Carrie, he'd done so many times before.

'They say blood will out,' he said. 'You're proof of it.'

She thought she caught a glimpse of sadness in the way her mother glanced at him.

But when he demanded that she rang the bell for Susan to show her out, she complied, just as she always did.

'I think it's time you left, don't you?' he said, coldly.

Her mother made a move towards her, but his hand on

her arm restrained her.

'Where are you staying?' she ventured.

Susan was already hovering at the doorway, awaiting orders.

'At The Grand,' said Carrie. 'But don't worry, I'm leaving tomorrow. So neither you nor your parishioners need ever set eyes on me.'

And with that, she turned on her heels and followed Susan out.



Monsieur Marengi, back in Paris, had allowed her a week's grace to solve her 'family problems' and she'd booked into The Grand for two nights, but the thought of having to stay another night dismayed her. She'd done what she came to do. She was done with this town.

On a whim, she decided to spend a couple of days in London. Once aboard the train, however, she wondered what on earth had possessed her to make such a rash decision.

It was as the train pulled into St Pancras Station that she had a sudden flash of brilliance. She could drop in on Hugo Waters! He was her agent, after all. 'Don't lose touch, whatever you do,'

he'd said, before she'd left for Paris. 'I'm always in my office, day and night.'

She got a cab to Mr Waters' office, a tall, soot-covered

building down a shabby side street. His office was on the top floor. Snatches of conversation followed her up the long, creaky staircase; telephones rang, typewriters click-clacked. But as she approached the top floor,

those noises were replaced by something much sweeter.

Someone was playing the piano. For a moment, she thought she was imagining it. She was immediately transported back in time, to a dusty theatre in a little English town, whose name had suddenly escaped her. She knew that tune. And she knew who was playing it too.

She lingered outside Mr Waters' door, her heart beating fast. This time the tune was accompanied by words.

I turned my back on life, it's true, until I met you.

My heart was cold, it's true, until I met you.

But then you came and 'cos of you, I turned to love.

Jack Carter could sing as beautifully as he played, it seemed. The one real conversation they'd had came flooding back to her, word for word. He'd been stuck for a lyric, didn't believe in love songs, blamed the war for his cynicism.

Carrie had felt sorry for him, longed to lift his gloom. Surely it was better for the world if everybody turned away from hatred and turned to love?

'You might have something there,' he'd said, turning to her with a smile that had lit up his face, totally transforming it.

She smiled to herself, her spirit lifted. How she'd missed him. She turned the handle and opened the door.



12 MONTHS LATER

First night. Her own dressing room, her name on the door. On every available space, vases of flowers. From her agent, Mr Waters, of course; from Mr Yakov, who'd given her that first break, and everyone in the company; from Monsieur Marengi and

Continued overleaf

**Carrie had
pulled out all
the stops, but
apparently
she'd fooled
no one**

parents,' she announced.

The girl, flustered by Carrie's resolute manner, immediately stood aside.

It was the same domesticated scene she was used to. Her parents in their usual seats. At her entrance her mother dropped everything, her eyes wide with surprise.

Her father, equally surprised, sprang to his feet. She sensed his eyes roaming over her, from the top of her newly shorn auburn bob to her knees, blatantly on show in her fashionable Parisian frock.

An expression of distaste immediately replaced that of shock. At one time, it would have hurt her deeply. But he could no longer make her feel shame.

'I'm not staying,' she announced, unfastening her clutch bag and removing the evidence. 'I just wanted to tell you that I know what you did.'

She held up the photo Anna Picard had sent her along with the request to meet. Her mother's hand flew up to her mouth. Her father, after the briefest of glances at the photograph, averted his eyes.

'Darling!' Her mother made a move towards her.

Madame Simone and all the girls back in Paris too. Even Laure had signed!

Then there were the flowers from Jack. Red roses accompanied by his message – *To my leading lady and my love. A star is born.*

So much had happened since that afternoon, when she'd burst into her agent's office, to find Jack at the piano while Mr Waters sat at his desk, a look of rapture on his face.

'It is you!' she'd squeaked in the same moment Jack said, 'What the hell are you doing here?'

Once everyone had stopped talking over everybody else, things became clearer. Carrie kept things simple, not wanting to divulge what had brought her back to England.

'I just wanted to say hello to Mr Waters,' she said. 'And tell him how grateful I am for everything he's done for me.'

But Mr Waters didn't need her gratitude. In fact, the boot was on the other foot, he said. Tales of

her success in the Paris review had reached his ears. And in fact, for her to show up now, just when Jack Carter was in town with the score to his new musical – well, obviously, it was meant to be.

Now it was Jack's turn to explain. If asking more questions could be described as explaining.

'Didn't you get my letter?' he demanded.

'What letter?' Carrie said.

He had written to her, he insisted, having got the address of the theatre from Belle, to whom she'd written

already. She remembered that letter, written before she'd settled in.

'Reading between the lines, Belle suspected you were unhappy,' Jack said.

Carrie had pulled out all the stops trying to convince Belle she was having the time of her life, but apparently she'd fooled no one. After what Belle told him, Jack made the rash decision to visit her in Paris.

'But you didn't,' Carrie said, puzzled.

'No,' he said. 'Because Belle got in the way.'

His words cut through her like a knife.

'Oh! You're in love with Belle,' she said.

Jack stared at her, clearly embarrassed.

'Don't be silly!' Mr Waters interrupted her thoughts.

'He's in love with you!

Except he doesn't know it yet.'

Carrie felt her colour rise. She didn't dare look at Jack. She was the embarrassed one now!

'That tune

– the one you heard me playing,' he said. 'The day we spoke, that morning in the empty theatre, you sparked an idea. I wrote words for the tune. Then I wrote more tunes, more words.'

Then he began to think of a story to connect the songs. Belle told him he needed to pitch his idea to someone. She remembered Mr Waters from the day he'd come looking for Carrie after she'd crept away without telling anyone. It was only a matter of moments before they found Mr Waters' address



in the telephone directory.

'One phone call led to a visit. The visit led to introductions. And now we have backers, a theatre, a male lead,' Jack said.

'All we need is a female lead and we have a show,' Mr Waters said.

Why were they both looking at her so intently?

'I wrote it for you, Carrie,' Jack said. 'You inspired it. Made me believe I could be happy again.'

Carrie's heart was thumping madly.

'But I have to go back to Paris,' she said. 'I have a contract.'

Mr Waters waved his hand, dismissively. Her contract was up at the end of the week, he said. He should know, he was her agent. Monsieur Marengi and he had been in talks about renewing it. He'd like her back, of course.

'But this... this is a much better offer,' said Mr Waters.

'I don't know what to say,' she said.

'Say you'll take it,' the two men said, simultaneously.



So here she was. Ten minutes before curtain up. A knock at the door. It would be Jack. He'd promised to drop in, knowing how nervous she would be.

'Here,' he said, once he'd kissed her on the cheek so as not to disturb her make-up.

He handed her a note. She recognised the handwriting. It was her mother's. She

didn't want to take it at first, but Jack insisted. She'd told him the truth about her real parents, and what had happened when she'd come back to England.

'I wouldn't let you read it,' Jack said, softly, 'If I hadn't read it first myself. I hope you don't mind.'

She shook her head. She trusted him. She unfolded the note. The message was brief.

'Darling,' it said. 'I am so proud of you and wish you every success on your first night. I hope you can forgive me for being such a coward. I should have stood up to your father sooner. But tonight I'm here – alone – to see you perform. I'm staying in London for two more nights. Here is my address. If you have time in your busy schedule, then I hope you will agree to meet me.'

Slowly, Carrie folded up the note. Right now she had everything. The chance to make her name on the stage, friends who supported her. Most of all she had Jack's love. Perhaps finally she and her adoptive mother could get to know each other properly.

Another knock on the door. 'Beginners please,' came the instruction.

Carrie handed back the note.

'Find out where she's sitting. Bring her backstage after the performance,' she said.

Jack nodded and smiled.

'Good,' he said. 'I'm glad you said yes.'

Carrie took a deep breath and rose from her chair. A quick glance in the mirror told her everything she needed to know. She was ready. It was time to step out onto the stage and be the star she was destined to be.

THE END

Geraldine Ryan, 2020

**A quick
glance told
her everything
she needed
to know**



ARIES 21 Mar – 20 Apr

TAURUS 21 Apr – 21 May

GEMINI 22 May – 21 Jun

The question is, will you walk in and go on an adventure?

CANCER 22 Jun – 23 Jul

This may be the moment to consider a new direction in your career or some adaptations of your existing work and skills.

LEO 24 Jul – 23 Aug

Cleaning, recycling,
decluttering and generally
making space for the new
is your focus for this week.

VIRGO 24 Aug – 23 Sep

Make sure you take time to care for your physical health. Good food, regular exercise and quality sleep are all very important.

LIBRA 24 Sep – 23 Oct

It's a good time for writing, sharing information, learning, studying and teaching. Stretch your mind and you'll come up with some amazing new ideas.

SCORPIO 24 Oct – 22 Nov

Even if it feels a bit scary,
now is the moment for action
and forward momentum
– so – do it anyway! You
won't be disappointed.

SAGITTARIUS 23 Nov – 21 Dec

Relationship issues may come to the surface. It's important to be honest and to express your needs.

CAPRICORN 22 Dec – 20 Jan

The stars are encouraging you to go beyond your comfort zone. Try something new, you might even enjoy it!

AQUARIUS 21 Jan – 19 Feb

Make a list of 20 things that give you pleasure and resolve to do at least three of them every day this week.

PISCES 20 Feb – 20 Mar

Your aspects are positive in all areas this week. Expect the best, focus on what is working and miracles will abound.

ANSWERS TO 25 FEBRUARY PUZZLES

JUMBO PUZZLE ACROSS: 1 Puffed 4 Irrigated 9 Aspect

15 Lords 16 Resigns 17 Pence 18 Arm 19 Noun,
20 Fisherman 21 Estate 24 Partnership 26 Historical
29 Tissue 31 Events 32 Edged 33 Hit, 35 Playgrounds
36 Scratching 40 Strengthen 42 Responsible 44 Tar
45 Stall 47 Anchor 48 Stages 50 Constructs
52 Handwriting 56 Russia 57 Religious 59 Much
62 Ear 63 Ideal 64 Silence 65 Other 66 Melody
67 Mysteries 68 Obeyed.

DOWN: 1 Piling **2** Formula **3** East **5** Rests **6** Ingredients
7 Assume **8** Expensive **10** Sheltered **11** Elastic **12** Tame
13 Drifted **14** Investigation **22** Struggle **23** Plate **25**
 Seventh **27** Stops **28** Uses **30** Scatter **33** Handbag
34 Congratulated **37** Respond **38** Hesitate **39** Beast
41 Neat **42** Rectangular **43** Stick **45** Satisfied **46** Literally
49 Trusted **51** Neutral **53** Naughty **54** Closet **55** Shared
58 Ounce **60** Germ **61** Bomb. **Answer:** DOCTOR WHO

LINKWORDS TARGET, LETTER, BUCKET, TABLET, PILLOW, WINTER, LIGHTS, NATURE, FALLOW, TENNIS **Answer:** WELLINGTON

WORDWISE Also, chaos, chow, coach, coal, coals, coca, coco, cocoa, coho, cola, cool, cools, coos, cosh, cowl, crows, cows, halo, halos, howl, howls, loach, loch, loco, lows, school, scowl, shoal, shoo, show, slow, soho, solo, wahoo, whoa, whoso, wool, woos, woosh.

Answer: SLOWCOACH

SUDOKU

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

CODEWORD

O S J P
 FODIAC SHALLOTS
 P S A C V Y W
 NEWCOHER EDITOR
 N L P E L N B
 INTOXICATING
 C R M H J
 USHERS SEESAW
 A Y E X I
 UNINSTAKABLY
 H N M C G M B
 QUICHE OVERPAID
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How to get fit without trying!



Cakes for Mother's day



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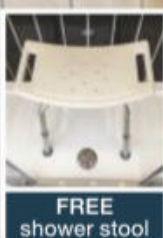
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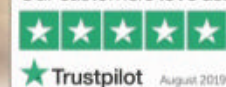
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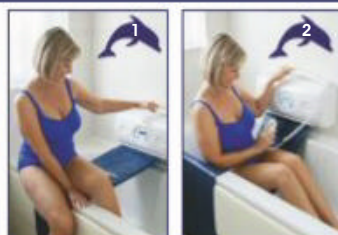
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PUZZLE TIME

Wordwise

You have 15 minutes to find as many words as possible using the letters shown in the grid. Each word must contain four or more letters, one of which must be the central square. No proper nouns, plurals or foreign words are allowed. There is one nine-letter word in the grid, for which this week's clue is: **Committing a crime**

I G F
N D F
N O E

Average = 8 More than 16 = well done

SUDOKU

To solve this puzzle, fill in the grid so that each 3 x 3 box, each row and each column contains the numbers 1-9.

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

LINKWORDS

Fit 10 words into the grid so each links with the end of the word on its left and the beginning of the one on the right. Then unscramble the letters in the shaded squares to make a word.

CLUE: A LIST OF SOME OR ALL OF THE WORDS IN A LANGUAGE

DOG
NOTTINGHAM
BEG
SEVENTH
PEARL
HEALTHY
NUCLEAR
WINDSOR
RABBIT
ROMAN

BONE
FIRE
ME
SENT
WATER
APPLES
MUSHROOM
WALLS
INTO
LIGHT

Codeword

A codeword is like a crossword puzzle but there are no clues!

Every letter of the alphabet has been replaced by a number, the same number representing the same letter throughout the puzzle. Just decide which letter is represented by which number. To start you off, we've revealed the codes for three letters. Once you've filled in these letters throughout the puzzle, you'll have enough info to guess words and discover other letters. Use the letter checklist and letter grid to keep track of the letters you have found.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
											A	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
V	C											

~~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~~

	6		19		9				12		6		12	
14	12	24	10	12	13	24	26		24	9	10	16	5	26
	5		21		23		22		20		5		9	
7	10	11	11		26	22	15	4	12	16	5	21	16	5
	12				23		26		24		26		21	
17	2	21	23	1	23		8	2	21	3	2	9	23	26
			15		26		1				16		26	
	8	12	2	9	25	18		10	8	17	12	2	25	
	4		12				1		24		10			
26	18	26	8	12	1	15	4		12	15	1	21	14	26
	23		13		21		21		1				12	
25	21	23	9	2	25	26	2	24	18		12	2	15	4
	15		9		21		1		8		15		10	
15	12	15	20	24	26		18	9	10	1	4	7	10	24
	24		23		2				23		18		3	

YOU CAN WORK IT OUT...

Just
for
fun!

Jumbo PUZZLE

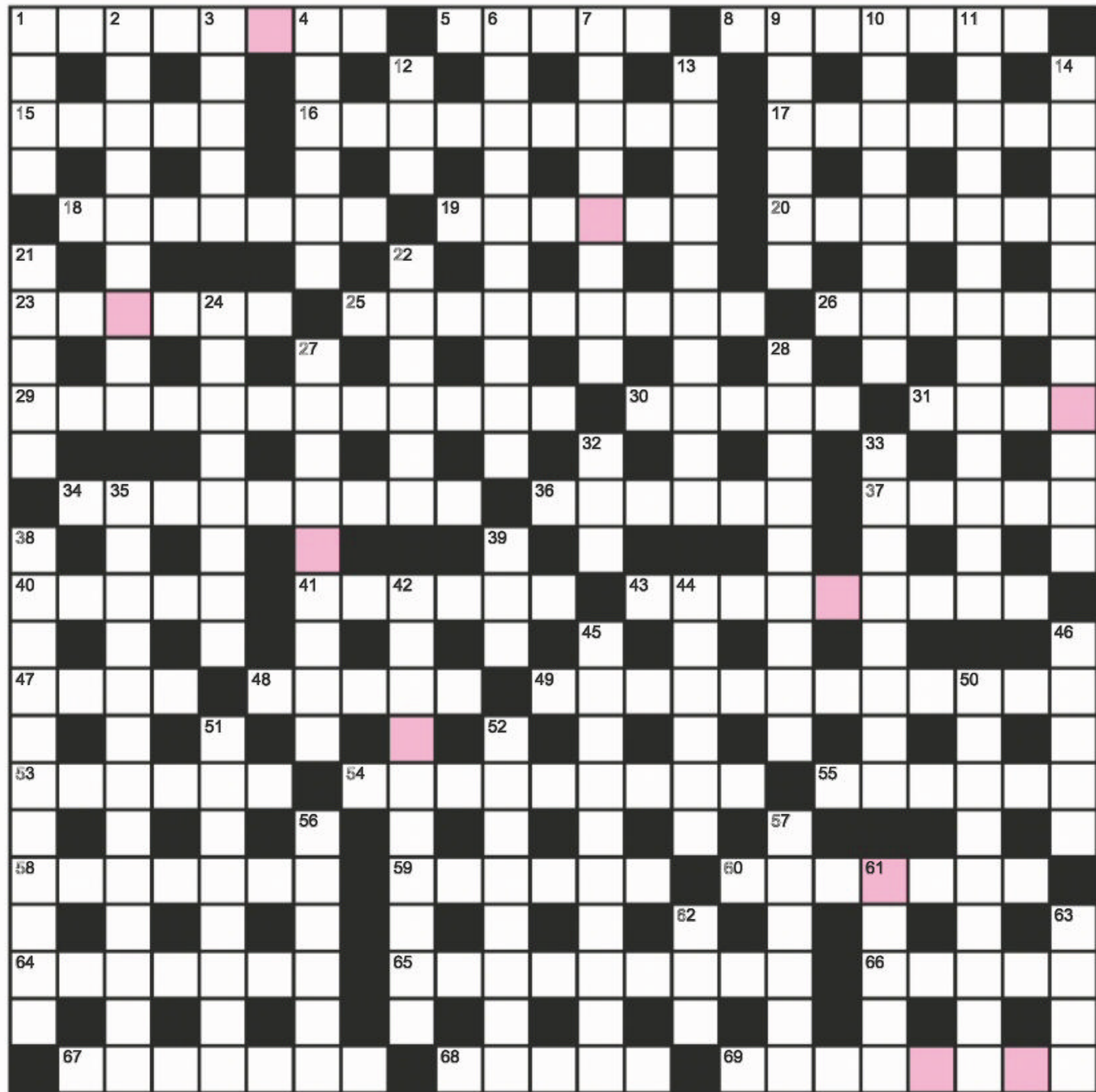
Read down the letters in
the shaded squares to
spell out a **TV presenter**.

ACROSS

- 1** Mighty, intense (8)
5 Pies with a fruit filling (5)
8 A country's principal city (7)
15 _ _ _ bear, Arctic animal (5)
16 Bring in something new (9)
17 Bother or difficulty (7)
18 Capable, expert (7)
19 Duplicated, not
the original (6)
20 Unprofessional (7)
23 Soldiers (6)
25 Small bottle of alcohol (9)
26 Starts (6)
29 Outcomes (12)
30 Group of musical notes (5)
31 Knock senseless (4)
34 The study of wealth and
money (9)
36 Briefly immersed in water (6)
37 At a higher point (5)
40 Cloth woven from flax (5)
41 Stay (6)
43 Found, set up (9)
47 Grind food in the mouth (4)
48 Rap sharply (5)
49 Information from spies (12)
53 Hold on to (6)
54 Accomplished, finished (9)
55 Begins (6)
58 Book division (7)
59 Wax stick with a wick (6)
60 Concept, idea (7)
64 Lavatories (7)
65 Finger of land
surrounded by sea (9)
66 _ _ _ tune, music over
the credits (5)
67 Type of coffee (7)
68 Stage whisper (5)
69 Turned down, discarded (8)

DOWN

- 1** Bursts (4)
2 Notorious, famous (4-5)
3 Relating to country life (5)
4 One of a kind (6)
6 Says 'sorry' (10)
7 Guests, sightseers (8)
9 Real, genuine (6)
10 Apart from others, remote (8)
11 Shortened words (13)
12 Cash machine (inits) (3)
13 Act of being in charge (10)
14 Acted for, portrayed (11)
21 Keep goods for sale (5)
22 Outdoor meal (6)
24 Expecting a baby (8)
27 U-boat, long bread roll (9)
28 Little by little (9)
32 A drawn match (3)
33 Dawn to dusk period (8)
35 Close attention (13)
38 One form of
domestic energy (11)
39 Batsman's big hit (3)
42 Laboratory
instrument (10)
44 Scandinavian country (6)
45 Highlighted, stressed (10)
46 Thick (5)
50 Kim Kardashian's
daughter (5,4)
51 Least clean (8)
52 Gaps or
opportunities (8)
56 Jail (6)
57 Saying or expression (6)
61 Unfasten (5)
62 Pistachio, eg (3)
63 Susanna _ _ _ ,
TV presenter (4)



YOU CAN WORK IT OUT...

❖ The answers for 25 February
puzzles are on page 55.
The answers to all this
week's puzzles will appear
in two issues' time.

What's on

Top entertainment for going out or staying in

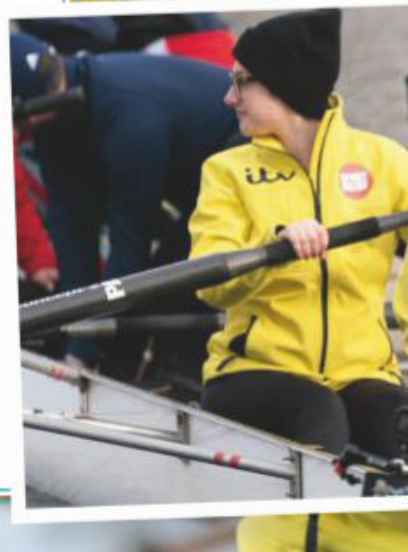


Sport Relief

TV

BBC1

The biennial fundraiser is back with another star-studded evening of entertainment, hosted by a line-up of famous faces, including Gary Lineker. As well as the usual mix of music and comedy, there's also a 'Clash of the Channels' rowing race featuring stars from BBC, ITV, C4 and Sky shows, including *BBC Breakfast's* Louise Minchin, *Loose Women's* Andrea McLean (right) and *Dancing on Ice* pro Matt Evers (above right).



Pretty Woman the Musical

Show

Starring former *Strictly* finalist and actor Danny Mac (above, far right), *Pretty Woman the Musical* will be at London's Piccadilly Theatre throughout 2020, bringing all the magic of the hit film to the West End stage. Featuring original music from Bryan Adams and Jim Vallance, for more information and to book tickets, visit prettywomanthemusical.com



TV

Film

Military Wives

Out 6 March

Kristin Scott Thomas and Sharon Horgan are gloriously on song in this funny, feel-good film inspired by Gareth Malone's choir of army wives. With their soldier husbands away facing peril in Afghanistan, Scott Thomas' posh Kate and Horgan's earthy Lisa form an awkward partnership as the leaders of the morale-boosting choir of army spouses. It's hard to remain dry-eyed watching this film as these women discover confidence, camaraderie and the joy of singing.



Mister Winner

BBC1

This new six-part comedy stars *Upstart Crow's* Spencer Jones as the ironically named Leslie Winner, who's forever finding himself in disastrous situations. He is, however, winning at love and is preparing to marry his fiancé Jemma (Lucy Pearman), but with a job to find, a honeymoon to pay for and family members to keep happy, will he hang onto his beloved long enough for them to make it up the aisle?

Book club

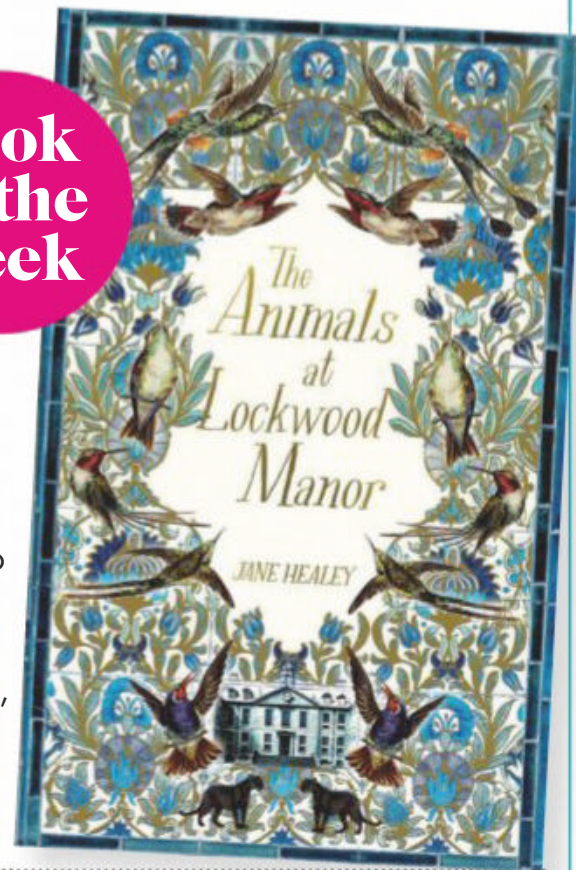
Our pick of the best reads around

The Animals at Lockwood Manor

by Jane Healey (£14.99, HB, Pan Macmillan)

It's the beginning of World War Two, when Hetty, a young museum curator and evacuee, arrives at the manor, bringing with her part of the Natural History Museum's collection of mammals, to keep them safe. She's soon distracted by strange goings-on at the manor. When Hetty thinks she's being stalked, this tale takes a more gothic turn. Part love story and part mystery, this story will keep you captivated.

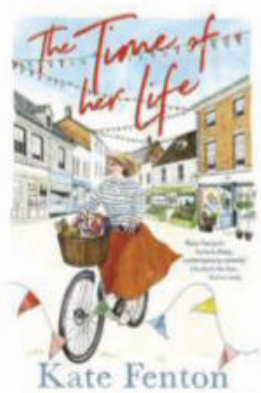
Book of the week



The Time of Her Life

by Kate Fenton (£20, HB, Hodder)

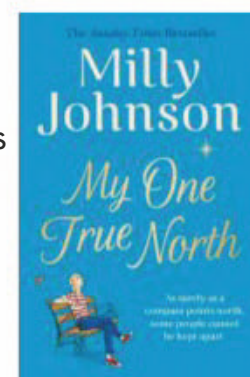
With her flair for characterisation, Kate Fenton's latest read brings sensible 60-year-old Annie to life in style. The no-nonsense Yorkshirewoman encourages her friends to pursue their romantic endeavours and stop wasting time, but when it comes to herself, perhaps Annie should be following her own advice... A delightful read sure to put a smile on your face.



My One True North

by Milly Johnson (£14.99, HB, Simon & Schuster)

Laurie and Pete were brought together by fate – the loss of their partners on the same night, and their grief led them to join the same counselling group. They meet, and together find happiness again. But the more they learn about each other, the more similar their stories sound. Then Pete makes a discovery that changes everything... A heart-warming and engaging read.



Event



The Art of Advertising

On from 5 March until 31 August, Oxford's Bodleian Library is showcasing The Art of Advertising, and admission is free. This exhibition charts the history of British advertising from the mid-18th century, right to the 1930s. With a collection of handbills, trade cards, novelties, posters and much more, there's plenty to inspire you in this display of wonderful commercial art and advertising illustration. On 28 March, there's a drop-in day based around the exhibition, which gives you a chance to meet the curators, researchers and printing experts involved. To find out more, go to visit.bodleian.ox.ac.uk

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MRS D IS on the case

The charity shop Miss Marple finds a clue

“Make yourself a nice cup of coffee, sink into a comfy sofa, keep a large tub of diet-busting Celebrations within easy reach, and prepare yourself for episode two of *The Mysterious Case of the Missing Handbag* (incorporating the second part of *The Baffling Conundrum of the Mobile Phone and Car Keys That We Can't Seem to Put Our Hands on at the Moment*).

You might remember from episode one that Mrs Beasley, the manager of our charity shop, thinks that somebody has stolen her handbag. She is not accusing anybody in the shop, you understand: after all, most of us have worked here for so long that you could probably get us valued at £750 on *Antiques Roadshow*.

However, there is one of us who hasn't been here very long. Which is why Grace, feeling that the finger of suspicion is pointing in her direction, has decided to turn herself into Miss Marple and investigate.

That's where we left events last week. What you will have missed was the conversation that followed.

'I'm not sure that's a good idea,' I said. 'It makes you seem defensive, as if you're trying to cover up something.'

'You might be right, Rosie,' she sighed. (Now there's a phrase you don't hear often.)

'Leave it with me,' I said. 'I'll soon clear your name.'

As soon as the words came out of my mouth, I wish they hadn't. I could already hear Mr Dear, looking over his varifocals and saying, 'Why must you always get yourself mixed up in these extraordinary scrapes?'

However, I do have some previous experience in this field. Who, just two years ago, solved *The Mysterious Case of the Vanishing Victoria Sponge, Which Was on the Table in the Stockroom Not Five Minutes Ago?*

Not that this was particularly difficult – the dog who had taken advantage of an open door was still in the back alley, licking the packaging.

You'll understand, of course, that I only took on the job to stop Grace falling out with Mrs B, and vice versa. There must, I thought, be some explanation that did not involve my friends and colleagues, possibly dressed in a fashionable striped top and a black mask, sneaking away with somebody else's handbag.

But before the investigation begins, we must report to headquarters, where the part of the police chief who says 'You've got 48 hours or you're off the case' will be played by Mr Thos. Dear.

'What on earth were you thinking, love?' he said. 'Why do you always get yourself into these madcap schemes? Especially things that are none of your business.'

'What do mean, none of my business. I'm a suspect, aren't I?'

'Come on, Rosie. What are you going to do? Put everybody under

surveillance to see if they are passing stolen handbags to a mysterious Mrs Big?'

Mr Dear, I could not help thinking, was not taking this matter entirely seriously.

'I'll think of something,' I said. 'Just you see.'

I was still thinking of something the following day as I rearranged our display of books. As it happened, and very appropriately you might think, I was finding room for half a dozen Agatha Christies when I stumbled on my first clue.

Tucked behind a copy of *Delia Smith's Complete Illustrated Cookery Course*



and *Nigella's Christmas* was a familiar mobile phone.

'Hah!' said Grace. 'Stolen indeed. She must have left it there when she was rearranging the shelves last week.' If Mrs Beasley has a fault, other than absent-mindedness in the matter of phones, it is that she has an obsession with our bookshelves. 'I suppose you've checked to see that her handbag isn't stuffed behind *War and Peace*?'

'We don't have *War and Peace*.'

'Don't be difficult, Rosie. You know what I mean.'

Mobile phones are easily lost down, say, the backs of sofas. Handbags are not the sort of thing you can easily hide in a bookshelf.

'Well if the mobile phone is anything to go by,' said Grace, 'then nobody has pinched her ruddy handbag.'

The question now for Inspector Dear is this – if nobody has pinched that handbag, where the hell is it?

Right on cue, a formidable-looking lady – looking like Boadicea in her Sunday best – made a spectacular entrance.

She was carrying, very reverently, a large bag.

Rosie x

