We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week: singer – and artist – Tony Bennett

The prized possession you value above all others... My sketchbook and pencil, which I keep on me always. One of my great passions in life is art and I draw and paint under my family name, Benedetto.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... That I don't have another 25 years to live! When you get to my age – 89 – you know 25 more is pretty unlike-ly, but I'm gonna try because I love life.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Pasta. I'm Italian-American and there's nothing better than a plate of spaghetti al pomodoro, but I keep the portions small now.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... The Art Spirit by the 19th-century American artist Robert Henri. In it he wrote, 'In every human there is an artist.' That concept inspired my whole philosophy.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I'd be locked in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence at night so I could look at the amazing paintings without the hassle of crowds.

The poem that touches your soul... I'm not crazy for poetry but love the Duke Ellington quote, 'There are two rules in life: number 1, never quit, and number 2, never forget rule number 1.'

The pet hate that makes your hackles rises... Racial prejudice. I've travelled the world and seen that people are the same, no mat-ter where they're from.

The film you can watch time and time again... The Best Years Of Our Lives from 1946, about World War II veterans coming back to smalltown America. It's very moving – I was drafted into the Army in 1944 and served in France and Germany, so I can relate to the sense of homecoming.

The person who has influenced you most... Frank Sinatra was a dear friend and an enormous influence. When I got my first shot at singing on television in the 50s I told Frank how nervous I was. He said, ‘Don’t be afraid of the butterflies. If you’re nervous, the audience will sense it and root for you because they appre-ciate that you care so much.’

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Charlie Chaplin, my favourite movie star.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... But I was never part of that scene.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... That magazine is astounding.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Number 1, never quit, number 2, never for-get rule number 1.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... That I didn't have another 25 years to live. I've lost my moth-er, father, sister and brother, but I'm inspired by memories of the great moments we shared.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... I was part of the Rat Pack in Las Vegas with Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr. I get asked about it all the time, but I was never part of that scene.

The unfor-tunate moment you can watch in a museum... That I don't have another 25 years to live. I've lost my moth-er, father, sister and brother, but I'm inspired by memories of the great moments we shared.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions... I'd go for dinner in my home city of New York. It’s a fantastic place in the evening for the people watching alone!

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... That I never got to sing with my friend Louis Armstrong. He taught us all how to sing.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Respect one another.

The order of service at your funeral... I’ll leave it to my family, ‘who’ll make it a positive celebration of my life.

The way you wish to be remembered... As a good person – it’s all that matters.

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The way you wish to die... I want to die happy, surrounded by my family and friends.

The smallest thing that ever made you laugh out loud as a kid... My shows have sold out ever since. My shows have sold out ever since.

The death of a loved one that has haunted you... My eldest daughter, Kelly, died in 1980 at the age of 21 from a brain tumour.

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Daniel Craig returns as James Bond in the eagerly awaited Spectre – in cinemas Monday. Dervla Kirwan stars in Mr Foote’s Other Leg at the Theatre Royal Haymarket from Wednesday. And Rod Stewart’s new album Another Country is released on Friday.