



From top: skiing in Chamonix, a bottle of La Tâche by Romanée-Conti, Michel de Montaigne's Book Of Essays, Bertil Guve in Fanny And Alexander, a 1935 Bentley, Venice, malt whisky, Giuseppe Verdi, and Sepp Blatter

The prized possession you value above all others... My 1935 Bentley. It is a two-tone 3.5 litre standard saloon in green and cream. I have had it a few years and it goes beautifully. It's docile but fast enough to keep up with traffic.

The unending quest that drives you on... To keep on learning about all manner of things.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions...

I'd spend all day skiing alone in the French Alps. I would helicopter to the top of La Vallée Blanche and ski the incredible off-piste descent to Chamonix. I would have dinner there with a bottle of great Burgundy, preferably a La Tâche by Romanée-Conti.

The temptation you wish you could resist... I love a good whisky, like a 25-year-old Macallan single malt. It makes me pleasantly sleepy.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... Michel de Montaigne's Book Of Essays. The essays are gems that encapsulate important philosophy. I urge people to read them.

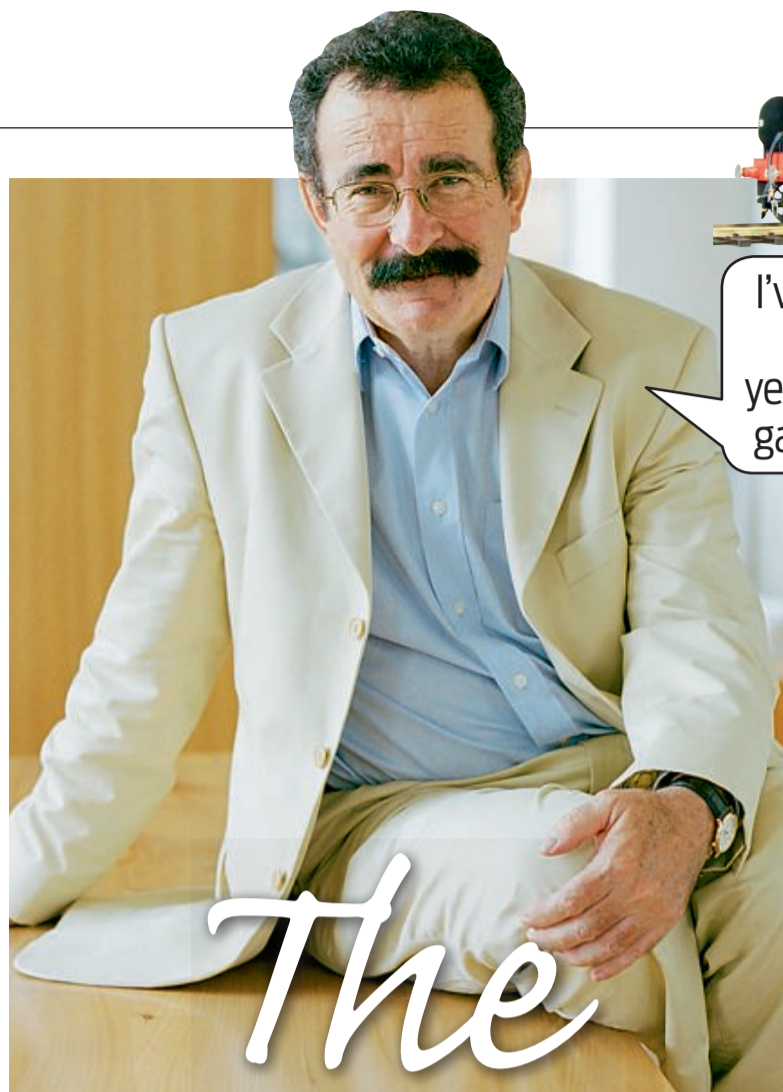
The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I would understand Farsi so I could eavesdrop on the Iranian government. It seems to threaten so much we hold dear in the West, so I'd be riveted to understand what its leaders really think about us.

The way fame and fortune has changed you, for better and worse... I don't think I'm famous, but I do get recognised. Being well known has enabled me to support more charitable activities, but I am probably more materialistic than I should be.

The film you can watch time and time again... Fanny And Alexander, directed by Ingmar Bergman. It is about the world seen through a child's eyes and is a very human film. It is five hours long, but is absolutely enchanting and one of the greatest films ever made.

The person who has influenced you most... Professor John McClure Browne. He was important in promoting my research into reproductive biology at Hammersmith Hospital in the 1970s. He died in 1978.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... I don't like pies or pints, but I'd have a glass of wine with the Austrian composer Franz Schubert. I'd ask him who he really respected musically. He was gregarious so he'd be good company.



I've been building model steam engines for 30 years. They go around my garden on a 45mm track

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week: TV scientist Lord Robert Winston

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Think the best of everyone and you'll get the best out of them.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... I have been into building Gauge One-sized model steam engines for 30 years. They go around my garden on a 45mm track.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... I don't become too attached to things. If I lose something, I simply move on.

The unqualified regret you wish you could amend... Not keeping in touch with old friends and nurturing those human contacts. I miss not knowing what they are doing with their lives.

The poem that touches your soul... To His Coy Mistress by Andrew Marvell. It is a beautiful poem about love and the brevity of human life.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... I don't know what misapprehensions there

are of me. People are nice and I don't get negative reactions. Maybe they think I am nicer than I really am, but I wouldn't want to erase that!

The event that altered the course of your life and character... Marrying my wife Lira in 1973.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd shoot Sepp Blatter, preferably painfully, with several shots. It is shocking how he has managed FIFA and brought a very important game into disrepute.

The song that means most to you... Come In Quest'ora Bruna from Verdi's opera Simon Boccanegra. It is Verdi at his absolute refined best. It is a wilting, evocative song that captures the spectacular light of Venice.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... Leaving St Paul's School in London when I was 18. I enjoyed it there but leaving was an extraordinarily interesting moment. I suddenly felt grown-up and, above all, free.

The saddest time that shook your world... My father's death when I was nine in 1949. He was a polymath. He played the violin, was a championship chess player and was larger than life. He died of a brain abscess at only 42, having lived a life that most would not achieve by 62.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To build a model steam engine that is big enough to pull me around the garden.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Value what you have and do not strive for things you cannot obtain. That is a sure way to unhappiness.

The order of service at your funeral... Jewish funerals are fairly unshowy affairs. I don't really think about mine.

The way you want to be remembered... As somebody who valued humanity, children and our society.

The Plug... Lord Winston is at the Harrogate Summer Festival on 7 July, the first leg of his Clive Conway Productions UK tour. Visit www.harrogate-festival.org.uk. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon

PS...

See Tom Hanks and Julia Roberts team up in Larry Crowne.

Book to see Yes, Prime Minister in London's West End, with

Richard McCabe starring as the PM. And for soulful sounds,

get Beverley Knight's new album, Soul UK, out Monday



NEXT WEEK

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