



Famous Last Words, Fond Farewells, Deathbed Diatribes, and Exclamations Upon Expiration

By Ray Robinson

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A collection of the notable last recorded words of the dying, *Famous Last Words* is, unexpectedly, bursting with life, hope, wisdom, and often laughter. Here are writers, philosophers, athletes, gangsters, kings, queens, movie stars, and politicians, in all sorts of moods and states of preparedness. Some merely want to say goodbye to loved ones, others want to create a legacy. And some are caught completely off guard, like Civil War general John Sedgwick, answering his troops' urgings to take cover: They couldn't hit an elephant at this dist-

There's the droll: It's the wallpaper or me. One of us has to go (Oscar Wilde); the blasé: How are the Mets doing today? (Moe Berg); the cranky: It wasn't worth it (Louis B. Mayer); the wistful: That was the best ice cream soda I ever tasted (Lou Costello); the optimistic: I shall hear in heaven! (Beethoven); and the overly optimistic: I've never felt better (Douglas Fairbanks).

Ultimately, every one of these parting statements is a reflection of the person behind it. Each is accompanied by a mini-biography of the speaker, including the context of death, from the golf course (That was a great game of golf, fellers Bing Crosby) to a favorite armchair (Go on, get out. Last words are for fools who haven't said enough-Karl Marx).

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Ray Robinson is a former magazine editor, journalist, and author of many books, including *Iron Horse: Lou Gehrig and His Times*; and *Yankee Stadium: 75 Years of Drama, Glamour, and Glory*. He lives in New York City with his wife, Phyllis, and his Norwich Terrier, Penelope

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