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Immortal Last Words: History's Most Memorable Dying Remarks, Deathbed Statements and Final Farewells

Terry Breverton

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Immortal Last Words is a fascinating, diverse collection of history's most uplifting, entertaining and thought-provoking dying remarks and final farewells.

The 370 entries in this book have been drawn from some of history's greatest statesmen, poets, scientists, novelists and warriors – the eminent men and women who have shaped events over the last four and a half millennia and whose final recorded words have often inspired great deeds or shed light on the nature of the human condition. There are also entries from less well- known individuals who did not make such an impact on history but whose dying words are equally noteworthy as they encapsulate the spirit of the times or simply reflect the character of the speaker. And finally, the pages of this book contain the last words of some of the most ignoble personalities in history – the monsters and maniacs whose final defiant utterances prompt us to reflect on the nature of evil and man's inhumanity to man.

Arranged chronologically from antiquity to the present day, each entry is accompanied by contextual information giving a brief biography of the author and an explanation of the circumstances that gave rise to the quotation. Some of the sentiments expressed are unbelievably sad while others are optimistic; some final words have become famous while others have remained obscure, but all reflect the follies and greatness of mankind – its heroes and villains, war and peace and the absolute power of language to change our feelings and challenge our minds.

Sample entries include:
Buddha - 'Strive for your own liberation with diligence'
Vespasian - 'Dear me, I believe I am becoming a god'
Thomas Hobbes - 'I am about to take my last voyage, a great leap in the dark'
Robespierre - 'Death is the commencement of immortality!'
George Washington -'Tis well'
John Keats - 'Here lies one whose name was writ in water'
John Maynard Keynes -'I should have drunk more champagne'
Salvador Dalí - 'I do not believe in my death'
Keith Floyd - 'I've not felt this well for ages'

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