

SHAKESPEARE'S FIRST AND LAST WORDS

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Editor's Note: Shakespeare uses a total of 65 different words to begin and end the actors' dialogue in his 38 plays. In addition, he uses 5 other words to start the six prologues, and 7 more to end the seven epilogues. These words, and none other, are employed in the soliloquy below.

NIGHT. A WOOD IN ILLYRIA. MIST. ALARUMS & EXCURSIONS.
ENTER SHAKESPEARE.

SHAKESPEARE: O Good Ford, Noble Gregory--
Shoot Another Boatswain:

I Know You, Young Romeo! Clap!
Assist In Happiness' Delights
Nay, To Be True Open Joy!

(Looks To Right)

Tush, Old Queen--
Queen Long Hung
In Solemnity ... Cease! Hence!
You Ruinate Another Holiday!

(Comes Forward)

Call My Good Pipers Near!
Let My Realm Ring Free
As I Now Take Good Escalus' Bier
Proceed Away to Scone
Before New Diseases, Ending Heart's Peace
Befall!

(Whispers)

So Now I'll Relate True Ending
Who's Way Amends When In Time--

(Staggers)

If ... If ... I, Who Won Two Roses--

(Reels)

So ... Night? Farewell, Sweet Day!

(Stumbles)

Amen!! *(Falls. DIES.)*