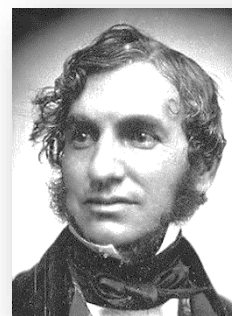


# HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

1807-1882



## A Psalm of Life

What the Heart of the Young Man Said to the Psalmist

*Life that shall send  
A challenge to its end,  
And when it comes, say, "Welcome, friend." \**

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,  
Life is but an empty dream!—  
For the soul is dead that slumbers,  
And things are not what they seem.

5 Life is real! Life is earnest!  
And the grave is not its goal;  
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,  
Was not spoken of the soul.

10 Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,  
Is our destined end or way;  
But to act, that each to-morrow  
Find us farther than to-day.

15 Art is long, and Time is fleeting,  
And our hearts, though stout and brave,  
Still, like muffled drums, are beating  
Funeral marches to the grave.

20 In the world's broad field of battle,  
In the bivouac of Life,  
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!  
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!  
Let the dead Past bury its dead!  
Act,—act in the living Present!

Heart within, and God o'erhead!

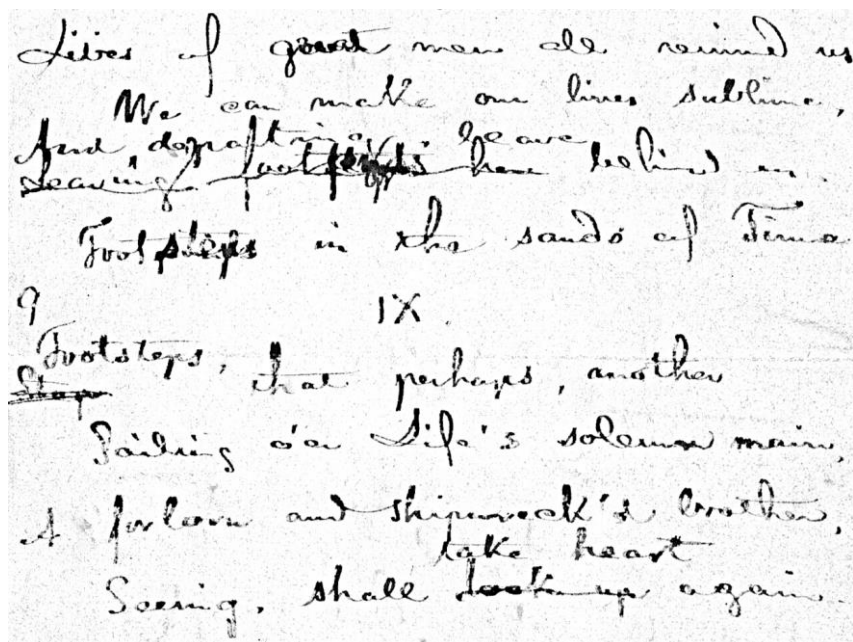
25 Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,  
30 Sailing o'er life's solemn main,  
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,  
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,  
With a heart for any fate;  
35 Still achieving, still pursuing,  
Learn to labor and to wait.

1838, 1839

\* Richard Crashaw (c. 1613-1649), "Wishes to His (Supposed) Mistress" (1646):  
"Life, that dares send / A challenge to his end, / And when it comes, say, *Welcome, friend!*"



Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints in the sands of time.  
Footsteps, that perhaps, another  
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,  
A forlorn and shipwreck'd brother,  
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