

CLASSIC LIVING BOOK

THE SONG  
OF HIAWATHA

---

Henry Wadsworth  
Longfellow

COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED



# THE SONG OF HIAWATHA



# The Song of Hiawatha

---

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY  
HARRISON FISHER



This edition published 2020  
by Living Book Press

ISBN: 978-1-922348-15-9

First published in 1855

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any other form or means – electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner and the publisher or as provided by Australian law.



A catalogue record for this  
book is available from the  
National Library of Australia

# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	I
THE PEACE-PIPE	5
THE FOUR WINDS	9
HIAWATHA'S CHILDHOOD	15
HIAWATHA AND MUDJEKEEWIS	21
HIAWATHA'S FASTING	26
HIAWATHA'S FRIENDS	33
HIAWATHA'S SAILING	37
HIAWATHA'S FISHING	41
HIAWATHA AND THE PEARL-FEATHER	47
HIAWATHA'S WOOING	53
HIAWATHA'S WEDDING-FEAST	59
THE SON OF THE EVENING STAR	65
BLESSING THE CORNFIELDS	73
PICTURE-WRITING	79
HIAWATHA'S LAMENTATION	83
PAU-PUK-KEEWIS	87
THE HUNTING OF PAU-PUK-KEEWIS	93
THE DEATH OF KWASIND	101
THE GHOSTS	105
THE FAMINE	111
THE WHITE MAN'S FOOT	115
HIAWATHA'S DEPARTURE	121
VOCABULARY	125







## INTRODUCTION

Should you ask me, whence these  
stories?

Whence these legends and traditions,  
With the odors of the forest  
With the dew and damp of meadows,  
With the curling smoke of wigwams,  
With the rushing of great rivers,  
With their frequent repetitions,  
And their wild reverberations  
As of thunder in the mountains?

I should answer, I should tell you,  
“From the forests and the prairies,  
From the great lakes of the Northland,  
From the land of the Ojibways,  
From the land of the Dacotahs,  
From the mountains, moors, and fen-  
lands  
Where the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
Feeds among the reeds and rushes.  
I repeat them as I heard them  
From the lips of Nawadaha,  
The musician, the sweet singer.”

Should you ask where Nawadaha  
Found these songs so wild and wayward,  
Found these legends and traditions,  
I should answer, I should tell you,  
“In the bird’s-nests of the forest,  
In the lodges of the beaver,  
In the hoofprint of the bison,  
In the eyry of the eagle!

“All the wild-fowl sang them to him,  
In the moorlands and the fen-lands,  
In the melancholy marshes;  
Chetowaik, the plover, sang them,  
Mahng, the loon, the wild-goose, Wawa,  
The blue heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
And the grouse, the Mushkodasa!”

If still further you should ask me,  
Saying, “Who was Nawadaha?  
Tell us of this Nawadaha,”  
I should answer your inquiries  
Straightway in such words as follow.

“In the vale of Tawasentha,  
In the green and silent valley,

By the pleasant water-courses,  
 Dwelt the singer Nawadaha.  
 Round about the Indian village  
 Spread the meadows and the corn-fields,  
 And beyond them stood the forest,  
 Stood the groves of singing pine-trees,  
 Green in Summer, white in Winter,  
 Ever sighing, ever singing.

“And the pleasant water-courses,  
 You could trace them through the valley,  
 By the rushing in the Spring-time,  
 By the alders in the Summer,  
 By the white fog in the Autumn,  
 By the black line in the Winter;  
 And beside them dwelt the singer,  
 In the vale of Tawasentha,  
 In the green and silent valley.

“There he sang of Hiawatha,  
 Sang the Song of Hiawatha,  
 Sang his wondrous birth and being,  
 How he prayed and how he fasted,  
 How he lived, and toiled, and suffered,  
 That the tribes of men might prosper,  
 That he might advance his people!”

Ye who love the haunts of Nature,  
 Love the sunshine of the meadow,  
 Love the shadow of the forest,  
 Love the wind among the branches,  
 And the rain-shower and the snow-  
 storm,  
 And the rushing of great rivers  
 Through their palisades of pine-trees,  
 And the thunder in the mountains,  
 Whose innumerable echoes  
 Flap like eagles in their eyries;--  
 Listen to these wild traditions,  
 To this Song of Hiawatha!

Ye who love a nation's legends,  
 Love the ballads of a people,  
 That like voices from afar off  
 Call to us to pause and listen,  
 Speak in tones so plain and childlike,  
 Scarcely can the ear distinguish  
 Whether they are sung or spoken;--  
 Listen to this Indian Legend,  
 To this Song of Hiawatha!

Ye whose hearts are fresh and simple,  
 Who have faith in God and Nature,  
 Who believe that in all ages  
 Every human heart is human,  
 That in even savage bosoms  
 There are longings, yearnings, strivings  
 For the good they comprehend not,  
 That the feeble hands and helpless,  
 Groping blindly in the darkness,  
 Touch God's right hand in that darkness  
 And are lifted up and strengthened;--  
 Listen to this simple story,  
 To this Song of Hiawatha!

Ye, who sometimes, in your rambles  
 Through the green lanes of the country,  
 Where the tangled barberry-bushes  
 Hang their tufts of crimson berries  
 Over stone walls gray with mosses,  
 Pause by some neglected graveyard,  
 For a while to muse, and ponder  
 On a half-effaced inscription,  
 Written with little skill of song-craft,  
 Homely phrases, but each letter  
 Full of hope and yet of heart-break,  
 Full of all the tender pathos  
 Of the Here and the Hereafter;  
 Stay and read this rude inscription,  
 Read this Song of Hiawatha!







## THE PEACE-PIPE

On the Mountains of the Prairie,  
On the great Red Pipe-stone Quarry,  
Gitche Manito, the mighty,  
He the Master of Life, descending,  
On the red crags of the quarry  
Stood erect, and called the nations,  
Called the tribes of men together.

From his footprints flowed a river,  
Leaped into the light of morning,  
O'er the precipice plunging downward  
Gleamed like Ishkoodah, the comet.  
And the Spirit, stooping earthward,  
With his finger on the meadow  
Traced a winding pathway for it,  
Saying to it, "Run in this way!"

From the red stone of the quarry  
With his hand he broke a fragment,  
Moulded it into a pipe-head,  
Shaped and fashioned it with figures;  
From the margin of the river

Took a long reed for a pipe-stem,  
With its dark green leaves upon it;  
Filled the pipe with bark of willow,  
With the bark of the red willow;  
Breathed upon the neighboring forest,  
Made its great boughs chafe together,  
Till in flame they burst and kindled;  
And erect upon the mountains,  
Gitche Manito, the mighty,  
Smoked the calumet, the Peace-Pipe,  
As a signal to the nations.

And the smoke rose slowly, slowly,  
Through the tranquil air of morning,  
First a single line of darkness,  
Then a denser, bluer vapor,  
Then a snow-white cloud unfolding,  
Like the tree-tops of the forest,  
Ever rising, rising, rising,  
Till it touched the top of heaven,  
Till it broke against the heaven,

And rolled outward all around it.

From the Vale of Tawasentha,  
 From the Valley of Wyoming,  
 From the groves of Tuscaloosa,  
 From the far-off Rocky Mountains,  
 From the Northern lakes and rivers  
 All the tribes beheld the signal,  
 Saw the distant smoke ascending,  
 The Pukwana of the Peace-Pipe.

And the Prophets of the nations  
 Said: "Behold it, the Pukwana!  
 By the signal of the Peace-Pipe,  
 Bending like a wand of willow,  
 Waving like a hand that beckons,  
 Gitche Manito, the mighty,  
 Calls the tribes of men together,  
 Calls the warriors to his council!"

Down the rivers, o'er the prairies,  
 Came the warriors of the nations,  
 Came the Delawares and Mohawks,  
 Came the Choctaws and Camanches,  
 Came the Shoshonies and Blackfeet,  
 Came the Pawnees and Omahas,

Came the Mandans and Dacotahs,  
 Came the Hurons and Ojibways,  
 All the warriors drawn together  
 By the signal of the Peace-Pipe,  
 To the Mountains of the Prairie,  
 To the great Red Pipe-stone Quarry,

And they stood there on the meadow,  
 With their weapons and their war-gear,  
 Painted like the leaves of Autumn,  
 Painted like the sky of morning,  
 Wildly glaring at each other;  
 In their faces stern defiance,  
 In their hearts the feuds of ages,  
 The hereditary hatred,  
 The ancestral thirst of vengeance.

Gitche Manito, the mighty,  
 The creator of the nations,  
 Looked upon them with compassion,  
 With paternal love and pity;  
 Looked upon their wrath and wrangling

But as quarrels among children,  
 But as feuds and fights of children!

Over them he stretched his right  
 hand,

To subdue their stubborn natures,  
 To allay their thirst and fever,  
 By the shadow of his right hand;  
 Spake to them with voice majestic  
 As the sound of far-off waters,  
 Falling into deep abysses,  
 Warning, chiding, spake in this wise:  
 "O my children! my poor children!  
 Listen to the words of wisdom,  
 Listen to the words of warning,  
 From the lips of the Great Spirit,  
 From the Master of Life, who made you!

"I have given you lands to hunt in,  
 I have given you streams to fish in,  
 I have given you bear and bison,  
 I have given you roe and reindeer,  
 I have given you brant and beaver,  
 Filled the marshes full of wild-fowl,  
 Filled the rivers full of fishes:  
 Why then are you not contented?  
 Why then will you hunt each other?"

"I am weary of your quarrels,  
 Weary of your wars and bloodshed,  
 Weary of your prayers for vengeance,  
 Of your wranglings and dissensions;  
 All your strength is in your union,  
 All your danger is in discord;  
 Therefore be at peace henceforward,  
 And as brothers live together.

"I will send a Prophet to you,  
 A Deliverer of the nations,  
 Who shall guide you and shall teach you,  
 Who shall toil and suffer with you.  
 If you listen to his counsels,  
 You will multiply and prosper;  
 If his warnings pass unheeded,  
 You will fade away and perish!

"Bathe now in the stream before you,  
 Wash the war-paint from your faces,

Wash the blood-stains from your fingers,  
 Bury your war-clubs and your weapons,  
 Break the red stone from this quarry,  
 Mould and make it into Peace-Pipes,  
 Take the reeds that grow beside you,  
 Deck them with your brightest feathers,  
 Smoke the calumet together,  
 And as brothers live henceforward!"

Then upon the ground the warriors  
 Threw their cloaks and shirts of deer-  
 skin,

Threw their weapons and their war-gear,  
 Leaped into the rushing river,  
 Washed the war-paint from their faces.  
 Clear above them flowed the water,  
 Clear and limpid from the footprints  
 Of the Master of Life descending;  
 Dark below them flowed the water,  
 Soiled and stained with streaks of  
 crimson,

As if blood were mingled with it!

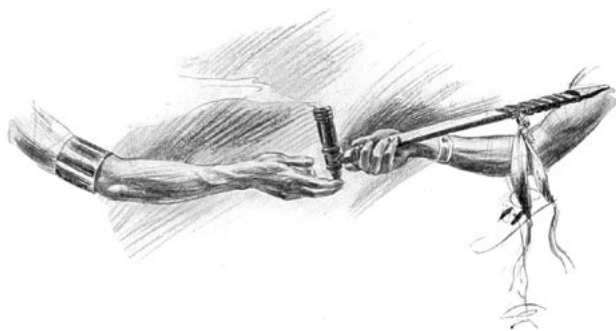
From the river came the warriors,

Clean and washed from all their war-  
 paint;  
 On the banks their clubs they buried,  
 Buried all their warlike weapons.  
 Gitche Manito, the mighty,  
 The Great Spirit, the creator,  
 Smiled upon his helpless children!

And in silence all the warriors  
 Broke the red stone of the quarry,  
 Smoothed and formed it into Peace-  
 Pipes,

Broke the long reeds by the river,  
 Decked them with their brightest  
 feathers,

And departed each one homeward,  
 While the Master of Life, ascending,  
 Through the opening of cloud-curtains,  
 Through the doorways of the heaven,  
 Vanished from before their faces,  
 In the smoke that rolled around him,  
 The Pukwana of the Peace-Pipe!









## THE FOUR WINDS

“Honor be to Mudjekeewis!”  
Cried the warriors, cried the old men,  
When he came in triumph homeward  
With the sacred Belt of Wampum,  
From the regions of the North-Wind,  
From the kingdom of Wabasso,  
From the land of the White Rabbit.

He had stolen the Belt of Wampum  
From the neck of Mishe-Mokwa,  
From the Great Bear of the mountains,  
From the terror of the nations,  
As he lay asleep and cumbrous  
On the summit of the mountains,  
Like a rock with mosses on it,  
Spotted brown and gray with mosses.

Silently he stole upon him  
Till the red nails of the monster  
Almost touched him, almost scared him,  
Till the hot breath of his nostrils  
Warmed the hands of Mudjekeewis,

As he drew the Belt of Wampum  
Over the round ears, that heard not,  
Over the small eyes, that saw not,  
Over the long nose and nostrils,  
The black muffle of the nostrils,  
Out of which the heavy breathing  
Warmed the hands of Mudjekeewis.

Then he swung aloft his war-club,  
Shouted loud and long his war-cry,  
Smote the mighty Mishe-Mokwa  
In the middle of the forehead,  
Right between the eyes he smote him.

With the heavy blow bewildered,  
Rose the Great Bear of the mountains;  
But his knees beneath him trembled,  
And he whimpered like a woman,  
As he reeled and staggered forward,  
As he sat upon his haunches;  
And the mighty Mudjekeewis,  
Standing fearlessly before him,

Taunted him in loud derision,  
 Spake disdainfully in this wise:  
 "Hark you, Bear! you are a coward;  
 And no Brave, as you pretended;  
 Else you would not cry and whimper  
 Like a miserable woman!  
 Bear! you know our tribes are hostile,  
 Long have been at war together;  
 Now you find that we are strongest,  
 You go sneaking in the forest,  
 You go hiding in the mountains!  
 Had you conquered me in battle  
 Not a groan would I have uttered;  
 But you, Bear! sit here and whimper,  
 And disgrace your tribe by crying,  
 Like a wretched Shaugodaya,  
 Like a cowardly old woman!"

Then again he raised his war-club,  
 Smote again the Mishe-Mokwa  
 In the middle of his forehead,  
 Broke his skull, as ice is broken  
 When one goes to fish in Winter.  
 Thus was slain the Mishe-Mokwa,  
 He the Great Bear of the mountains,  
 He the terror of the nations.

"Honor be to Mudjekeewis!"  
 With a shout exclaimed the people,  
 "Honor be to Mudjekeewis!  
 Henceforth he shall be the West-Wind,  
 And hereafter and forever  
 Shall he hold supreme dominion  
 Over all the winds of heaven.  
 Call him no more Mudjekeewis,  
 Call him Kabeyun, the West-Wind!"

Thus was Mudjekeewis chosen  
 Father of the Winds of Heaven.  
 For himself he kept the West-Wind,  
 Gave the others to his children;  
 Unto Wabun gave the East-Wind,  
 Gave the South to Shawondasee,  
 And the North-Wind, wild and cruel,  
 To the fierce Kabibonokka.

Young and beautiful was Wabun;

He it was who brought the morning,  
 He it was whose silver arrows  
 Chased the dark o'er hill and valley;  
 He it was whose cheeks were painted  
 With the brightest streaks of crimson,  
 And whose voice awoke the village,  
 Called the deer, and called the hunter.

Lonely in the sky was Wabun;  
 Though the birds sang gayly to him,  
 Though the wild-flowers of the meadow  
 Filled the air with odors for him;  
 Though the forests and the rivers  
 Sang and shouted at his coming,  
 Still his heart was sad within him,  
 For he was alone in heaven.

But one morning, gazing earthward,  
 While the village still was sleeping,  
 And the fog lay on the river,  
 Like a ghost, that goes at sunrise,  
 He beheld a maiden walking  
 All alone upon a meadow,  
 Gathering water-flags and rushes  
 By a river in the meadow.

Every morning, gazing earthward,  
 Still the first thing he beheld there  
 Was her blue eyes looking at him,  
 Two blue lakes among the rushes.  
 And he loved the lonely maiden,  
 Who thus waited for his coming;  
 For they both were solitary,  
 She on earth and he in heaven.

And he wooed her with caresses,  
 Wooed her with his smile of sunshine,  
 With his flattering words he wooed her,  
 With his sighing and his singing,  
 Gentlest whispers in the branches,  
 Softest music, sweetest odors,  
 Till he drew her to his bosom,  
 Folded in his robes of crimson,  
 Till into a star he changed her,  
 Trembling still upon his bosom;  
 And forever in the heavens  
 They are seen together walking,

Wabun and the Wabun-Annung,  
Wabun and the Star of Morning.

But the fierce Kabibonokka  
Had his dwelling among icebergs,  
In the everlasting snow-drifts,  
In the kingdom of Wabasso,  
In the land of the White Rabbit.  
He it was whose hand in Autumn  
Painted all the trees with scarlet,  
Stained the leaves with red and yellow;  
He it was who sent the snow-flake,  
Sifting, hissing through the forest,  
Froze the ponds, the lakes, the rivers,  
Drove the loon and sea-gull southward,  
Drove the cormorant and curlew  
To their nests of sedge and sea-tang  
In the realms of Shawondasee.

Once the fierce Kabibonokka  
Issued from his lodge of snow-drifts  
From his home among the icebergs,  
And his hair, with snow besprinkled,  
Streamed behind him like a river,  
Like a black and wintry river,  
As he howled and hurried southward,  
Over frozen lakes and moorlands.

There among the reeds and rushes  
Found he Shingebis, the diver,  
Trailing strings of fish behind him,  
O'er the frozen fens and moorlands,  
Lingering still among the moorlands,  
Though his tribe had long departed  
To the land of Shawondasee.

Cried the fierce Kabibonokka,  
"Who is this that dares to brave me?  
Dares to stay in my dominions,  
When the Wawa has departed,  
When the wild-goose has gone  
southward,  
And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
Long ago departed southward?  
I will go into his wigwam,  
I will put his smouldering fire out!"  
And at night Kabibonokka,

To the lodge came wild and wailing,  
Heaped the snow in drifts about it,  
Shouted down into the smoke-flue,  
Shook the lodge-poles in his fury,  
Flapped the curtain of the door-way.  
Shingebis, the diver, feared not,  
Shingebis, the diver, cared not;  
Four great logs had he for firewood,  
One for each moon of the winter,  
And for food the fishes served him.  
By his blazing fire he sat there,  
Warm and merry, eating, laughing,  
Singing, "O Kabibonokka,  
You are but my fellow-mortal!"

Then Kabibonokka entered,  
And though Shingebis, the diver,  
Felt his presence by the coldness,  
Felt his icy breath upon him,  
Still he did not cease his singing,  
Still he did not leave his laughing,  
Only turned the log a little,  
Only made the fire burn brighter,  
Made the sparks fly up the smoke-flue.

From Kabibonokka's forehead,  
From his snow-besprinkled tresses,  
Drops of sweat fell fast and heavy,  
Making dints upon the ashes,  
As along the eaves of lodges,  
As from drooping boughs of hemlock,  
Drips the melting snow in spring-time,  
Making hollows in the snow-drifts.

Till at last he rose defeated,  
Could not bear the heat and laughter,  
Could not bear the merry singing,  
But rushed headlong through the door-  
way,  
Stamped upon the crusted snow-drifts,  
Stamped upon the lakes and rivers,  
Made the snow upon them harder,  
Made the ice upon them thicker,  
Challenged Shingebis, the diver,  
To come forth and wrestle with him,  
To come forth and wrestle naked

On the frozen fens and moorlands.

Forth went Shingebis, the diver,  
 Wrestled all night with the North-Wind,  
 Wrestled naked on the moorlands  
 With the fierce Kabibonokka,  
 Till his panting breath grew fainter,  
 Till his frozen grasp grew feebler,  
 Till he reeled and staggered backward,  
 And retreated, baffled, beaten,  
 To the kingdom of Wabasso,  
 To the land of the White Rabbit,  
 Hearing still the gusty laughter,  
 Hearing Shingebis, the diver,  
 Singing, "O Kabibonokka,  
 You are but my fellow-mortal!"

Shawondasee, fat and lazy,  
 Had his dwelling far to southward,  
 In the drowsy, dreamy sunshine,  
 In the never-ending Summer.  
 He it was who sent the wood-birds,  
 Sent the robin, the Opechee,  
 Sent the bluebird, the Owaissa,  
 Sent the Shawshaw, sent the swallow,  
 Sent the wild-goose, Wawa, northward,  
 Sent the melons and tobacco,  
 And the grapes in purple clusters.

From his pipe the smoke ascending  
 Filled the sky with haze and vapor,  
 Filled the air with dreamy softness,  
 Gave a twinkle to the water,  
 Touched the rugged hills with  
     smoothness,  
 Brought the tender Indian Summer  
 To the melancholy north-land,  
 In the dreary Moon of Snow-shoes.

Listless, careless Shawondasee!  
 In his life he had one shadow,  
 In his heart one sorrow had he.  
 Once, as he was gazing northward,  
 Far away upon a prairie  
 He beheld a maiden standing,  
 Saw a tall and slender maiden  
 All alone upon a prairie;

Brightest green were all her garments,  
 And her hair was like the sunshine.

Day by day he gazed upon her,  
 Day by day he sighed with passion,  
 Day by day his heart within him  
 Grew more hot with love and longing  
 For the maid with yellow tresses.  
 But he was too fat and lazy  
 To bestir himself and woo her.  
 Yes, too indolent and easy  
 To pursue her and persuade her;  
 So he only gazed upon her,  
 Only sat and sighed with passion  
 For the maiden of the prairie.

Till one morning, looking northward,  
 He beheld her yellow tresses  
 Changed and covered o'er with  
     whiteness,

Covered as with whitest snow-flakes.  
 "Ah! my brother from the North-land,  
 From the kingdom of Wabasso,  
 From the land of the White Rabbit!  
 You have stolen the maiden from me,  
 You have laid your hand upon her,  
 You have wooed and won my maiden,  
 With your stories of the North-land!"

Thus the wretched Shawondasee  
 Breathed into the air his sorrow;  
 And the South-Wind o'er the prairie  
 Wandered warm with sighs of passion,  
 With the sighs of Shawondasee,  
 Till the air seemed full of snow-flakes,  
 Full of thistle-down the prairie,  
 And the maid with hair like sunshine  
 Vanished from his sight forever;  
 Never more did Shawondasee  
 See the maid with yellow tresses!

Poor, deluded Shawondasee!  
 "T was no woman that you gazed at,  
 "T was no maiden that you sighed for,  
 "T was the prairie dandelion  
 That through all the dreamy Summer  
 You had gazed at with such longing,

THE FOUR WINDS

You had sighed for with such passion,  
And had puffed away forever,  
Blown into the air with sighing.  
Ah! deluded Shawondasee!

Thus the Four Winds were divided  
Thus the sons of Mudjekeewis

Had their stations in the heavens,  
At the corners of the heavens;  
For himself the West-Wind only  
Kept the mighty Mudjekeewis.



