The Light of Stars

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The night is come, but not too soon;
   And sinking silently,
All silently, the little moon
   Drops down behind the sky.

There is no light in earth or heaven
   But the cold light of stars;
And the first watch of night is given
   To the red planet Mars.

Is it the tender star of love?
   The star of love and dreams?
O no! from that blue tent above,
   A hero’s armor gleams.

And earnest thoughts within me rise,
   When I behold afar,
Suspended in the evening skies,
   The shield of that red star.

O star of strength! I see thee stand
   And smile upon my pain;
Thou beckonest with thy mailèd hand,
   And I am strong again.

Within my breast there is no light
   But the cold light of stars;
I give the first watch of the night
   To the red planet Mars.

The star of the unconquered will,
   He rises in my breast,
Serene, and resolute, and still,
   And calm, and self-possessed.

And thou, too, whoso’er thou art,
   That readest this brief psalm,
As one by one thy hopes depart,
   Be resolute and calm.

O fear not in a world like this,
   And thou shalt know ere long,
Know how sublime a thing it is
   To suffer and be strong.