

1824

**ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE
MY THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR**

George Gordon Byron

Byron, Lord (George Gordon) (1788-1824) - An English poet whose characters, usually swashbuckling brigands known as “Byronic heroes,” are obsessed with past sins. Byron’s reputedly wild personal life is as renowned as his work. *On This Day I Complete My Thirty-Sixth Year* (1824) - Written on his last birthday; Byron reportedly presented this work to his friends who had been complaining that he never wrote poetry anymore. Opening lines: ‘T is time this heart should be unmoved, / Since others it hath ceased to move; ...

ON THIS DAY I COKPLETE MY THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR

'T IS time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it hath ceased to move;
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze-
A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
But wear the chain.

But 't is not thus- and 't is not here-
Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor now,
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece- she is awake!)
Awake, my spirit! Think through whom
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,
Unworthy manhood!- unto thee
Indifferent should the smile or frown
Of beauty be.

If thou regret'st thy youth, why live?
The land of honourable death

Is here:- up to the field, and give
Away thy breath!

Seek out- less often sought than found-
A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest.

MISSOLONGHI, January 22, 1824.

THE END