

The Race

Quit! Give up! You're beaten! They shout out and plead.
There's just too much against you, now, this time you can't succeed.
And as I start to hang my head in front of failures face
My downward fall is broken by the memory of a race.
And hope refills my weakened will as I recall that scene
For just the thought of that short race rejuvenates my being.
A children's race, young men, young boys. Oh, I remember it well.
Excitement, sure, but, also fear, it wasn't hard to tell.
They all lined up so full of hope, each through to win that race
Or tie for first or if not that at least take a second place.
And fathers watched from off the side, each cheering for his son.
And each boy hoped to show his Dad that he would be the one.

The whistle blew and off they went, young hearts and hopes afire
To win, to be the hero there was each young boy's desire.
And one boy in particular, his Dad was in the crowd,
Was running near the lead and thought, "Oh, my Dad will be so proud."
And as he speeded down the field, across a shallow dip
The little boy who thought to win, lost his step and slipped.

Trying hard to catch himself, his hands flew out to brace
And mid the laughter of the crowd, he fell flat on his face.
So down he fell and with him hope, he couldn't win it now,
Embarrassed, sad, he only wished to disappear, somehow.
But, as he fell his Dad stood up and showed his anxious face
That to the boy so clearly said, "get up and win that race."

He quickly rose, no damage done, behind a bit, that's all
And ran with all his mind and might to make up for his fall.
So anxious to restore himself, to catch up and to win
His mind went faster than his legs, he slipped and fell, again.
He wished that he had quit before with only one disgrace,
"I'm hopeless as a runner, now, I shouldn't try to race."

But, in the laughing crowd he searched and found his father's face
That steady look that said again, "Get up and win that race."
So he jumped up to try again, ten yards behind the last.
"If I'm going to gain those yards," he thought, "I've got to run real
fast." Exceeding everything he had, he regained eight or ten
But trying so hard to catch the lead, he slipped and fell, again.

The Race—Continued

**Defeat! He lay there silently, a tear dropped from his eye.
"There's no sense running, anymore, three strikes, I'm out --- why try?"
The will to rise had disappeared. All hope had fled away.
So far behind, so error prone, closer all the way.
"I've lost so what's the use?" he thought. "I'll live with my disgrace."
But, then he thought about his Dad, who soon he'd have to face.**

**"Get up!" An echo sounded low, "Get up and take your place."
"You were not meant for failure, here. Get up and win that race."
With borrowed will, "Get up!" it said, "You haven't lost at all."
"For winning is not more that this, to rise each time you fall."
And so he rose to win, one more. And with a new commit
He resolved that win or lose, at least he wouldn't quit.**

**So far behind the others, now, the most he'd ever been,
Still he gave it all he had and ran as though to win.
Three times he'd fallen, stumbling; three times he's rose, again.
Too far behind to hope to win, he still ran to the end.
They cheered the winning runner as he crossed first place
Head high and proud and happy - no falling, no disgrace.**

**But when the fallen youngster crossed the line in last place
The crowd gave him the greater cheer for finishing the race.
And even though he came in last with head bowed low, not proud,
You would have thought he'd won the race to listen to that crowd.
And to his Dad he sadly said, "I didn't do so well."
"To me you won" his father said, "you rose each time you fell."**

**And when things seem dark and hard and difficult to face
The memory of that little boy helps me in my race.
For all of life is like that race with ups and downs and all
And all you have to do to win is rise each time you fall.
"Quit! Give up! Defeat!" They still shout in my face.
But, another voice within me says, "get up and win that race!"**

.....AUTHOR UNKNOWN