

The Loss Is Not So Great

It is better as it is: I have failed but I can sleep;
Though the pit I now am in is very dark and deep
I can walk to-morrow's streets and can meet to-morrow's men
Unashamed to face their gaze as I go to work again.

I have lost the hope I had; in the dust are all my dreams,
But my loss is not so great or so dreadful as it seems;
I made my fight and though I failed I need not slink away
For I do not have to fear what another man may say.

They may call me over-bold, they may say that I was frail;
They may tell I dared too much and was doomed at last to fail;
They may talk my battle o'er and discuss it as they choose,
But I did no brother wrong- I'm the only one to lose.

It is better as it is: I have kept my self-respect.
I can walk to-morrow's streets meeting all men head erect.
No man can charge his loss to a pledge I did not keep;
I have no shame to regret: I have failed, but I can sleep.

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)