The Hill we Climb by Amanda Gorman

Amanda Gorman became the [youngest person](https://thehill.com/homenews/news/535037-amanda-gorman-becomes-youngest-inaugural-poet-in-us-history) to deliver a poem at a U.S. presidential inauguration, with the 22-year-old reciting her poem “The Hill We Climb” after Joe Biden and Kamala Harris were sworn in as president and vice president.

*When day comes we ask ourselves,*
*where can we find light in this never-ending shade?*
*The loss we carry,*
*a sea we must wade*
*We’ve braved the belly of the beast*
*We’ve learned that quiet isn’t always peace*
*And the norms and notions*
*of what just is*
*Isn’t always just-ice*
*And yet the dawn is ours*
*before we knew it*
*Somehow we do it*
*Somehow we’ve weathered and witnessed*
*a nation that isn’t broken*
*but simply unfinished*
*We the successors of a country and a time*
*Where a skinny Black girl*
*descended from slaves and raised by a single mother*
*can dream of becoming president*
*only to find herself reciting for one*
*And yes we are far from polished*
*far from pristine*
*but that doesn’t mean we are*
*striving to form a union that is perfect*
*We are striving to forge a union with purpose*
*To compose a country committed to all cultures, colors, characters and*
*conditions of man*
*And so we lift our gazes not to what stands between us*
*but what stands before us*
*We close the divide because we know, to put our future first,*
*we must first put our differences aside*
*We lay down our arms*
*so we can reach out our arms*
*to one another*
*We seek harm to none and harmony for all*
*Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true:*
*That even as we grieved, we grew*
*That even as we hurt, we hoped*
*That even as we tired, we tried*
*That we’ll forever be tied together, victorious*
*Not because we will never again know defeat*
*but because we will never again sow division*
*Scripture tells us to envision*
*that everyone shall sit under their own vine and fig tree*
*And no one shall make them afraid*
*If we’re to live up to our own time*
*Then victory won’t lie in the blade*
*But in all the bridges we’ve made*
*That is the promised glade*
*The hill we climb*
*If only we dare*
*It’s because being American is more than a pride we inherit,*
*it’s the past we step into*
*and how we repair it*
*We’ve seen a force that would shatter our nation*
*rather than share it*
*Would destroy our country if it meant delaying democracy*
*And this effort very nearly succeeded*
*But while democracy can be periodically delayed*
*it can never be permanently defeated*
*In this truth*
*in this faith we trust*
*For while we have our eyes on the future*
*history has its eyes on us*
*This is the era of just redemption*
*We feared at its inception*
*We did not feel prepared to be the heirs*
*of such a terrifying hour*
*but within it we found the power*
*to author a new chapter*
*To offer hope and laughter to ourselves*
*So while once we asked,*
*how could we possibly prevail over catastrophe?*
*Now we assert*
*How could catastrophe possibly prevail over us?*
*We will not march back to what was*
*but move to what shall be*
*A country that is bruised but whole,*
*benevolent but bold,*
*fierce and free*
*We will not be turned around*
*or interrupted by intimidation*
*because we know our inaction and inertia*
*will be the inheritance of the next generation*
*Our blunders become their burdens*
*But one thing is certain:*
*If we merge mercy with might,*
*and might with right,*
*then love becomes our legacy*
*and change our children’s birthright*
*So let us leave behind a country*
*better than the one we were left with*
*Every breath from my bronze-pounded chest,*
*we will raise this wounded world into a wondrous one*
*We will rise from the gold-limbed hills of the west,*
*we will rise from the windswept northeast*
*where our forefathers first realized revolution*
*We will rise from the lake-rimmed cities of the midwestern states,*
*we will rise from the sunbaked south*
*We will rebuild, reconcile and recover*
*and every known nook of our nation and*
*every corner called our country,*
*our people diverse and beautiful will emerge,*
*battered and beautiful*
*When day comes we step out of the shade,*
*aflame and unafraid*
*The new dawn blooms as we free it*
*For there is always light,*
*if only we’re brave enough to see it*
*If only we’re brave enough to be it*

From: <https://thehill.com/homenews/news/535052-read-transcript-of-amanda-gormans-inaugural-poem/>