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/>