

Chorus of the Captains by Amanda Gorman

Today we honor our three captains
For their actions and impact in
A time of uncertainty and need.
They've taken the lead,
Exceeding all expectations and limitations,
Uplifting their communities and neighbors
As leaders, healers, and educators.

James has felt the wounds of warfare,
But this warrior still shares
His home with at-risk kids.
During Covid, he's even lent a hand
Love-streaming football for family and fans.

Trimaine is an educator who works nonstop,
Providing his community with hotspots,
Laptops, and tech workshops
So his students have all the tools
They need to succeed in life and in school.

Suzie is the ICU nurse manager at a Tampa Hospital.
Her chronicles prove that even in tragedy, hope is possible.
She lost her grandmothers to the pandemic,
And fights to save other lives in the ICU battle zone,
Defining the frontline heroes risking their lives for our own.

Let us walk with these warriors,
Charge on with these champions,
And carry forth the call of our captains!
We celebrate them by acting with courage and compassion,
By doing what is right and just.
For while we honor them today
It is they who every day honor us.

To One Coming North

By [Claude McKay](#)

At first you'll joy to see the playful snow,
Like white moths trembling on the tropic air,
Or waters of the hills that softly flow
Gracefully falling down a shining stair.

And when the fields and streets are covered white
And the wind-worried void is chilly, raw,
Or underneath a spell of heat and light
The cheerless frozen spots begin to thaw,

Like me you'll long for home, where birds' glad song
Means flowering lanes and leas and spaces dry,
And tender thoughts and feelings fine and strong,
Beneath a vivid silver-flecked blue sky.

But oh! more than the changeless southern isles,
When Spring has shed upon the earth her charm,
You'll love the Northland wreathed in golden smiles
By the miraculous sun turned glad and warm.

Harlem

By Langston Hughes

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over—
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

Dreams – Langston Hughes

Hold fast to dreams

For if dreams die

Life is a broken-winged bird

That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams

For when dreams go

Life is a barren field

Frozen with snow

If We Must Die

BY CLAUDE MCKAY

If we must die, let it not be like hogs
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,
While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,
Making their mock at our accursèd lot.
If we must die, O let us nobly die,
So that our precious blood may not be shed
In vain; then even the monsters we defy
Shall be constrained to honor us though dead!
O kinsmen! we must meet the common foe!
Though far outnumbered let us show us brave,
And for their thousand blows deal one death-blow!
What though before us lies the open grave?
Like men we'll face the murderous, cowardly pack,
Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!