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Literary Explorations II

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Writing Analysis of "New Day's Lyric"

In late December 2021, as people were making resolutions and preparing for the new year, Amanda Gorman published her latest poem titled "New Day's Lyric". Amanda Gorman is the young poet's laureate, and she spoke at Joe Biden's inauguration. Gorman's poem has four stanzas and a changing rhyme scheme throughout. This poem talked about promises and hopes for the new year, as not just the United States but the entire world finishes up living the year 2021 amid a pandemic. Gorman's poem advocates the importance of coming together as a people for a better year in 2022, despite the pandemic, while simultaneously acknowledging the hardships of 2021. Gorman uses vocabulary and a pattern of changing negative words to positive ones in multiple stanzas to convey this message to her audience.

Gorman never explicitly states her message in her poem. However, her vocabulary use throughout the poem is a major reason for her message being conveyed. Readers of New Day's Lyric can understand that by the use of,

"Even if we never get back to normal,...

What was cursed, we will cure. What was plagued, we will prove pure....

Those moments we missed, Are now these moments we make,"

In these lines of her poem, Gorman can imply through her word choice that she is talking about the pandemic to her audience. Gorman utilizes the words "plague" and "cure," which are common words used to describe the pandemic and any disease. Her writing and publishing of this in December of 2021 allows the readers to know that her intended audience is the people of today. Therefore, the audience of today can understand the implication of the words used to describe a disease as signals to the reader that this message is about how in the new year we will have to live even with COVID-19. Gorman also uses the phrase "get back to normal," which in current times is always talked about as getting back to life before the pandemic. Therefore, when Gorman says "the moments we missed," her use of the word "missed" can be understood as the events and gatherings people had to cancel due to the new restrictions imposed by the pandemic. Gorman, later in the poem, writes,

"Where we tend to argue, we will try to agree,...

And our hearts, once all together beaten, Now all together beat....

It defines us, binds us as one, Come over, join this day just begun.

For wherever we come together, We will forever overcome."

Gorman only uses the pronoun "we" to address the readers and her repeated use of "we" added to the idea that every single person reading this poem is considered part of one group. This helped convey her message of unity to everyone reading her poem.

Gorman throughout the poem uses a negative to positive pattern in stanzas one, two, and three and this use in her poem to show how for the new year coming together as a community

makes people stronger. This quality culminates in her tone conveying to the reader that people should come together and they will be stronger because of it. Gorman wrote in her first stanza,

“Mourning, we come to mend,

Withered, we come to weather,

Torn, we come to tend,

Battered, we come to better.

Tethered by this year of yearning,

We are learning

That though we weren’t ready for this,

We have been readied by it.”.

This style of writing that is incorporated in Gorman’s writing is an example of her describing to the audience that they once were beaten down or weaker with the use of words with negative connotations like “weathered”, “torn”, and “beaten” but then directly following one negative adverb Gorman added a positive description with the words “tend”, “better”, “learning”, and “weather”. This style of writing throughout the poem has every line and rhyme end on a positive note, which relates directly to Gorman’s message that even though bad things happened before coming together brings strength and unity. Therefore, not just the actual words of the poem convey her poem but her layout of the words and her deliberate choices made in pattern of

how she writes her words gives readers the idea that when going into the new year coming together and trying understand other people as a country can change things for the better, like how her lines would all start with negative connoted words but end with ideas of strength and growth.

Through her vocabulary and her writing style of changing negative words and descriptions to positive one Gorman in her Poem New Day's Lyric advocates that for the New Year people should focus on coming together and unity because people coming together make the community as a whole stronger. Gorman is able to imply that even though in 2022 the pandemic still continues and many people have been hurt rather than giving people that New year can still be full of hope and positive change only if people are willing to come together and work for it. Amanda Gorman inspires change and often her poems have messages that she wants to share with her audience, and New Day's Lyric is no different.