

Kim Addonizio

GOD ODE

Praise having a body to be unhappy in,
suffering the slings and staring unbelieving at the arrows

bristling from your chest as the Indians creep closer.
Praise the oil slick of your loneliness,

the suffocated little shorebirds of your longing.
Here's to the scribbles of alcohol

seeping into the cell walls, the reeling
mitochondria, the deceased brain cells carried out

in coffinettes of sweat. Gratitude, gratitude
to whoever knelt down and shat upon the floor

of the Port-o-Let at the children's playground
where I had to pee last Sunday after pushing my young friend

on the tire swing, after whumping down the curving tube slide
again and again upside down on my back.

Small happiness, followed by nausea—
thank You, thank You! You demented, You disapproving

or possibly AWOL Higher Power.
How high is that anyway? Higher than me

and my grown-up friend doing Ecstasy in the desert,
getting cut up by cactus, floating back to the house

finding water for once more delicious than wine?
Praise You in your aerie, Your maybe-not-there-crag.

Down here on the darkling, fattening plain
we root and toil, and sometimes, mercifully, we spin.

