

MICHELLE LEWIS

# DISASTER ODE

To praise what knows only dark  
is to praise the seed before its soil-ceiling  
canopies. The belly, too,  
moon that parallels the moon,

tooth of a new bud that  
curls from its green casing.  
Quaint, too playful, word

I hated until you said  
you loved my belly & so  
I came to love it, then  
the thing it meant, a laden curvature  
that centered me.

Now when I praise the  
belly, I praise the place you trace that  
dips toward parts  
we don't call by decent  
names, praise the cave  
that held its blood too long  
until it fell from its own weight in  
ruby strands. I praise my courage, too,

that knew enough to  
take your hand and place it there.

Husk of sky that parallels the sky,  
gray chaos mothering our  
streets. *Disaster*  
we hear someone say. So we  
praise *jolly & bless & kiss*,

praise the rise & fall that  
keeps the time we will return to.  
Praise the belly,

thing that knows only dark. It's how we praise  
the dead we will become.