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Poetry by Kelli Russell Agodon



Slang for Long-Term Relationship

Because we were watching another sitcom
I said, *mossy mossy*, which is slang for *what the fox*,
life is boring. This is when you said,
I'll hold your petticoat, slang for *I'm here for you, babe*.

If we could, we'd predict the world would end
with a confetti bomb and someone parking
their car in the accessible space
without a visible sign. It's all sparkle and annoyance.

Slang for Long-Term Relationship

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It's too much white space and not enough
hot sauce on the popcorn. After a long weekend
you say, *Your tongue is cramping my snow globe*,
slang for *maybe we're spending too much time together*.

Some days I toss my life ring to a seal
because I like to watch a mammal
who can balance things on its nose. You say,
What does a poet need to be rescued from? I'm not sure,

but sometimes I use stanzas to keep me afloat
for a day or a daybreak, a year or a yearbook.
Later when we get in a fight over Jeff Bezos'
tax return, the percentage of coffee stain

on the counter, not our tax bracket, not the breakfast
blend we bought on sale, I ask what you could live
without—a marsh or a marshmallow
or me? Life is boring, and then we diet.

Your hollyhocks are wilted and on fire is slang for
How often do you rebel against all you love?

Art Information

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Kelli Russell Agodon's newest book is *Dialogues With Rising Tides* (Copper Canyon

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Press, 2021). She co-founded Two Sylvias Press and works as an editor and book cover designer. Her other books include *Letters From the Emily Dickinson Room*, *Hourglass Museum*, and *The Daily Poet: Day-by-Day Prompts for Your Writing Practice* (with Martha Silano). She lives in Washington state on traditional lands of the Chimacum, Coast Salish, S'Klallam, and Suquamish people. She teaches at Pacific Lutheran University's low-residency MFA program, the Rainier Writing Workshop. Kelli is part of a project called Writing the Land, between local land trusts and artists.

For more information, visit [Kelli Russell Agodon's website](#) [5] and the [Two Sylvias' Press website](#) [6].

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