

[Slang for Long-Term Relationship](#) [1]

June 5, 2023 [Poems](#) [2]

[Relationships](#) [3]

[Truth-telling](#) [4]

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?

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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].

Source URL: <https://talkingwriting.com/slang-long-term-relationship>

Links:

- [1] <https://talkingwriting.com/slang-long-term-relationship>
- [2] <https://talkingwriting.com/tw-channels-and-categories/poems>
- [3] <https://talkingwriting.com/tw-channels-and-categories/relationships>
- [4] <https://talkingwriting.com/tw-channels-and-categories/truth-telling>
- [5] <https://www.coppercanyonpress.org/authors/kelli-russell-agodon/>
- [6] <https://www.twosylviaspress.com/index.html>