

Thermodynamics · *Marilyn Krysl*

We sit, holding hands. The brightness of things
hurts. Metal's ineffectual. A bus shimmers
and breaks down. All available children are out
working the swimming pools. A bike melts in the street.

Conversation is out of the question. The heat
is a soft force (yes, take off my dress)
one by one lifting the lids of the molecules.
So that you can hear them tick. Listen:

the table. Plates in a stack. The black
phone. That brass bowl has petals unfolding.
Now the far off, flowering peal of a bell.
Even the dog's becoming flora. And we will

too. Because of the molecules. Because of
your teeth, your teeth want to talk to my shoulder.
Because the core of the earth's liquid nickel
and iron. I did not come here to be alone

and the Mayor's declared the afternoon off. Lie
down. Celebrate. Think of my belly, a celebration.
Think of the fact that we're made mostly of water.
Think of your tongue as a song to a lake in the sun.

Now think of the ocean, the remains of those shellfish
over the centuries becoming the oil we burn
for heat. And you and I a field of corn getting taller,
oats, soybeans, sugarbeets, rye grass, wheat.