

The suicide of dolphins

No one, not even the scientists who study you, knows why you beach yourselves whole family groups, communities on our beige sand to gasp and die

unless the volunteers, called phone to phone quickly in a spider web of summoning, can keep you wet and push you into deep water again

like shoving a huge wet sofa. Some think it's disease or following your leader into danger or chasing fish into water too shallow so you run

aground. An old fisherman said to me, *they remember how they used to live on the land, they remember.* We know nothing but still we grieve.

Is your act any more opaque than a friend who drinks himself into a fiery crash? Another who burnt his brain to a crisp on crack; the woman who could not

walk out on her husband even after the fifth trip to the emergency ward, leaving only feet first when he shot her? Or my friend's daughter who hung herself at fifteen

because of names she was called, because of words on a computer screen, because of a boy. We cannot stop each other but still we grieve.

Marge Piercy