

Ann Townsend

Love's Elegy

Last night you said
 that movie made me cry.

I wanted to say
 I doubted everything

I ever knew. But I lied.
 I said *me too.*

I lied for all
 the lover's breaths, petals

stained with dew,
 for the comical naked times

I said I loved you —
 lies that were the dollars

I used to pay my way,
 like bills I stole

from your pockets
 or beneath the sleeping

metal frog you kept
 on your desk, from places

you knew were safe,
 or thought you knew.

There I sat
counting out the vivid hatreds

in our past, a row
of pennies from a jar —

too small alone,
but placed in a line,

they stretched through the house
and out the door.