

Anne Colwell

WHAT YOU WANT

You didn't want them—  
Even my smallest compliments  
Pressed like dimes into your palm  
Burned a red circle. You didn't want  
Words. You didn't want time.  
You didn't want anything I  
could find, trashing my stockroom,  
pulling out old trophies  
and ribbons, new furniture  
and friends. Yours, I said.  
And waited. My body,  
My warm animal, my sweet  
Cage, even that you couldn't take.  
I gave up, put it away, pulled  
The light's chain, then I discovered  
what you love,  
What you'd always come back for:  
Scorched silence  
Empty rooms  
Dark  
Anything I have that smells  
Like anger.