

MURIEL NELSON

Afterthought

When they stop making pennies

how will we know our thoughts?
If I tell you mine, will you want change?
Will you have buyer's remorse?
Some say there's inflation now. Do you want my two
cents plus a great pompositor for president?
The air's mightily heated, too, but so far no fist's
punched down rising clouds. Are you a fan
of *pianissimos*? Of floating cumulus, seeds, dust, s's?
Of the need to lean in close for whispered secrets?
One singer spins his voice out to a long, fine
thread, muscles working hard below like the wind
a spider rides to start a web. Another I know keeps her mouth nearly
closed, her big voice free and soft inside as if her secret's loose in
the room next to yours, and your ear's to the wall. What more do we need?
Well, maybe a cello for me, too, to play us out. And the letter A, that original
ah when a breakthrough's hushed and airy at first like wings
of large birds brushing leaves before the round vowel rolls out. And then—
here's your change—the privilege to hear and relive
bright moments again and again.