

2008

Absence

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Recommended Citation

deNiord, Chard. "Absence." *The Iowa Review* 38.1 (2008): 61-61. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.6409>

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CHARD deNIORD

Absence

Absence is a face that hangs
in the air, as if the air
were a screen and your heart
the machine that casts the image.

Absence is the shadow
that has broken free of its forms
and wanders the earth.

Absence is a stone, of course.

Absence is the name
the man of faith repeats
in his sleep, and also *the woman*,
until they too are gone.

Absence is the body the soul creates
from air that masquerades as nothing
throughout the house.