

Carolina Morales

The absence

Slumped beside the toilet,
head cooled against
the wall, I lean
into a respite between
heavings. Eyes close.
A chill from the window wipes
my face. Whine of traffic
through morning darkness
hums from the street below.

*drives me there—my torso
molding exactly into the sag
of the sofa. Tang of kitchen
aromas kneads my stomach.
Fingertips reach from behind,
press my eyes shut. But
when I peel the hands away,
turn to see,*

my face startles itself
in the bottom
of the full length mirror.
Light glares from the bathroom
ceiling. My knee aches
against the floor. The whiskey
thin of my stomach coughs
into my throat, and everything
is the absence of you.

*Carolina Morales's poems have appeared in Poems and
Plays, Spoon River Poetry Review, and elsewhere. She
lives in New Jersey.*