

Masthead Logo

**The Iowa Review**

---

Volume 34  
Issue 2 *Fall*

Article 5

---

2004

# White Room

Elizabeth Spires

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview>

Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Spires, Elizabeth. "White Room." *The Iowa Review* 34.2 (2004): 20-20. Web.  
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.5788>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by Iowa Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Review by an authorized administrator of Iowa Research Online. For more information, please contact [lib-ir@uiowa.edu](mailto:lib-ir@uiowa.edu).

## *White Room*

White room, you've seen me as no one has seen me.  
You've listened and said nothing  
when I've come to you asking, *Why?*  
But still I wonder, should I speak to you like this,  
as I never speak to others, or should all be left unsaid?  
For too long I've avoided your implications.

Did I create you? The blank white walls,  
the warped floorboards that waver and run in all directions,  
the high windows through which the world shines,  
through which I peer helplessly like a child, the scene  
pulling at me the way the moon tugs at water, makes tides?

Do you exist when I'm gone?  
Does the lover exist?  
Does the view from the window change  
when no one is there to look out of it?  
Do dust motes whirl and spin in the light,  
or is stasis the only rule?

I had a dream that won't leave me:  
I stood on a ship in a timeless northern twilight,  
the passage ahead narrow and icebound,  
the world *gone*, fallen away,  
one frozen thought remembered upon waking:  
*Now I am alone for the first time in my life.*

After such a night, I open the door.  
Again I ask, Who speaks and who listens?  
Is your silence an answer? A mirror?  
Is the interior in which I move yours or my own?