

## Two Poems · *Vuyelwa Carlin*

### SILVER

. . . *this poor youngling.*  
—*Coventry Carol*

1.

She is the tinyhead;  
she is silken with the hair from before birth;  
her blood slugs—unfruit,

eye-leaves  
of black velvet, she is griefless  
and has no mirth. In nunnery-shadows

she shadows, does not hear  
the supple foot, the white cotton  
softing by. Soundless

she is;—her tongue does not understand  
—milk-throttles  
unlissomly.

2.

The pale wet pours  
through no-time; somewhere a patch  
of pain—in the mist

some dolorous thing: —choke-  
eared, eye-  
sere, do not know where this ends, other

is beginning. —Seems, a shifting now, then  
—even into the dim  
presses a sharpness;

a warmth,  
insistent, this earth, this rind poor  
of nerve pierces, almost.

3.

She was born on the street; her mother,  
gleaner of dust,  
has put away for always her ash-

baby: but her father comes  
some evenings, walks with her in the courtyard  
under a lazuli,

a cornflower sky. —There are small dust-  
filmy sons,  
rustheads: —but for his girl, still, God-

filled, say the nuns,  
he has bought tiny silvers, fits them  
to the fragile bones.

## DEMETER'S LAMENT FOR HER CORÉ

### THE SEARCH

Still a young bulge-brow, a bundle of bone,  
with hare-velvets of eyes; sealed, a paleness: —  
and how it piped, field-singing, your thin voice! —  
blue tremoring thread blue-rending, infantine.

Moaner, a madwoman, grey thing straw-grown  
I am wandering: that pearl, your milk of face,  
where I light-touched, doted, seek, startle-eyes, —  
hope joyless, with each wind-riff; shadow-glean,