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Silver

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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
unissomly.

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,