

CAROL CAVALLARO

The White-Armed Daughter

I bring the sun, and my hands drip
white.

Emerging from the darkness of the lake unformed, barely
warmed by the morning trees behind me, darker
than lit wood upon the marriage ship,
I come.

The Cornish men don't know they've brought away
a green girl, joined to shadow yet. Cold powers
from the Island of the dead-returning
strain against the land to rise again and possess
me. The holy king himself
has died before us. This love, filling

every net in air, will be as mortal
as our lives.

I can nearly feel my body and the white centers
that will draw you,
love, to the murder in the cup.

Our gods care nothing for virtues, men,
the roots of grass, or the blood-
relationships of kings.
You are nephew to many men. Enchantment simple
as mother's milk
spawned you in your mother, fatherless,
blue bones forming in your chest.

My face is cleansed by wind, my hair drawn coldly
back.

Soon again we are one flesh.

The shadow between my thighs begins to part for you,
as this ocean spreads my dark bones, back
to the bones. For all our lives
the cup will be
the centered sun.