

CARRIE PIEPER

By a Dead Girl

In my arms I hold
a child
pried loose from the
stiff cold fingers of a
dead girl.

I cradle the tender
spine
caressing it
gently with my
fingertips.

Its mother is gone
but the child remains,
a permanent heir
of her unfulfilled
longings.

Motionless it lies,
forever calling
out for
its mother. Words that
a child should
never know.

I sit, constantly waiting
for the words to stop
and the child to
end,
but my mind keeps it
living,
breathing life into
its paper thin body.

In my arms
I hold the dead girl's
last hope.
A fearful weight added
to my body.

Clinging to the
edges of my mind,
a fear grows in me
as it nestles in my
thoughts.
Knowing that
one day this
motherless child
could belong
to me.

HANNAH GOLDSMITH



Emotionally Emaciated
oil on canvas