

Black Knight

Bruce Lawder

I must put on my armor, I can not put on my armor: thus the dilemma, right from the start. I who am to lead the army to recover the Holy Land can not even mount my own horse. How humiliating for a man of my stripe and stature to have to stand here, below the tree, dwarfed by a horse, waiting for others to hoist him into herodom. Greaves, breast-plate, helmet, shield emblazoned with stars – such are the appurtances of my life, my fate. Not to forget the plume, my feather, plucked from the egret's wing. Let it provide a signature, my signature, before I begin to write, in blood, the other story.

Variations On A Theme

Bruce Lawder

A boy whirled about in the parking lot of a shopping mall. Each time he completed his counter-clockwise circle he bowed to the blackness of the lot and snapped the fingers of his right hand, first to the left, in front of him, then to the right, before straightening his lithe little body and continuing his circular dance. "What are you doing?" asked an old man who had stopped to watch the boy. "What does it look like I'm doing?" the boy replied, impatiently. "I'm dancing to keep the country free of Indians." "But there are no Indians," the old man said, sadly, and smiled, or tried to smile. "You see," the boy said, proudly, as if he were an element in the local defense, and no small element at that.

The Absconditen

Bruce Lawder

At the creation of the universe God appeared to make His one and only mistake, so say the Absconditen, and in the Big Bang the Author of all things blew Himself up: thus the world as it is, even to this day, thus the world as it will be, to the end of time. Among the Absconditen, however, the disappearance of God from the story is said to be no reason for despair; on the contrary, it is claimed to be the necessary and indeed the only ground for human freedom, and thus the apparent mistake is no mistake at all; for at the moment of the creation the Godhead was multiplied into each and every being in the universe, from the beginning to the end of time, and thus even into those who refuse to believe, and who, so say the Absconditen, by the force of their refusal make belief as belief possible.