

THE CHILD JESUS, 6 YEARS OLD, SUDDENLY AWAKENED

Silent night.

Then

my bedroom door bangs open
filled with fulmination,

the air gone vinegary,
Papa piss drunk, roaring,

reeking of retsina and ozone,
behind him, Mother weeping.

They're at it again as usual this
extreme time of year, winter solstice,

the question of my legitimacy,
and I'll have to endure another

hammering cross-examination
by candlelight. The angel

posted to guard my bed looks
sheepish, apologetic.

as he folds his wings,
shrinks back into the dark.

I know it will go better for me
if I don't say a word.

It's hard not to know what's yours
As usual my earthly father's pretending

to be asleep, crafting dreams out of wood
to secure his misery,

while my Heavenly Father twists my ears and growls
"Pipsqueak! Why do you smile knowing

you're going to be beaten blue?"
He can't see what I see behind him, all the faces:

the smirking goat, the grinning serpent, the burping dog, the cross-eyed unicorn,
all laughing so hard their mouths are bleeding.

- Adam LeFevre