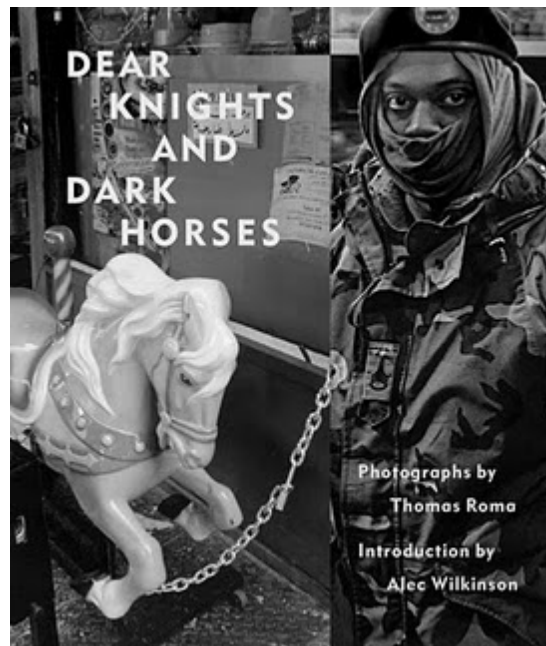


# Searching for the Light

Edited by Carl Gunhouse

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Dear Knights and Dark Horses, Photographs by Thomas Roma, Introduction by Alec Wilkinson



Combining the subjects of coin-operated pony rides and members of the National Guard deploying to Iraq make for the kind of juxtaposition that is only favored by photographers and bad rock lyricists. But to Tom Roma's credit, there is something very heroic and tragic about the ponies' unrelenting gallop, oblivious that they are forever stuck in front of laundromats and supermarkets, an almost forgotten childhood pleasure that now stands only to remind people that they aren't in the best part of town.

This tragic heroism of the innocent ponies leads seamlessly into the heaviness that is hovering on the cold dark morning inside an Armory as the National Guard prepare for deployment to Iraq. The men and women of the National Guard, looking to serve the greater good while paying for college or improving their chances of finding a job, seemed devoid of the tragic bravado of the beginning of movies like *Full Metal Jacket*. It seems that unlike the ponies they are all too aware of their uncertain fate.