

On Botticelli's Annunciation

by [Angela Alaimo O'Donnell](#) in the [March 19, 2014](#) issue

I have met them in the Uffizi
the angel hunched on bended knee—
his thigh thick beneath his satin robe—
the virgin's urgent contrapposto
her sudden arm extended long
beyond the border of her cape
halting his rehearsed song
as if his theme weren't love but rape.

Her face impossibly serene
does not betray her body's fear.
His deathless eyes have never seen
a mortal woman quite so near.
The space between their outstretched hands
salvation in a single glance.