

This day by the sea

by [Jean Janzen](#) in the [April 12, 2017](#) issue

—*March 25, 2016*

Annunciation Day and Good Friday,  
a rare convergence, not to happen again  
for over a century. “This doubtful day  
of feast or fast,” wrote Donne.  
“Christ came and went away.”

Dawn opened like the rose in Mary’s hand,  
ignited the surf for one brief hour  
before the cloud bank fell, heavy and gray.  
Crash and sigh, thrust and withdrawal  
over and over. The cries of gulls,

as though there are no words for such  
compression, only the vowels of a young  
girl’s “yes” crammed against abandonment—  
groan and hiss becoming night,  
her son’s raw cry into emptiness.