

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.