

Joseph Ross
On *The Annunciation* by Henry O. Tanner

Mary sat on the edge
of the bed, sleeplessness

her only lover. She waited,
draped in morning, hunched

under the weight of questions:
“How can this be?” visible

through her transparent skin.
“I do not know” wells up

in her eyes, waiting. Her
hands grasp one another

to still the trembling always
found near a cross.

She thought you came
a few days ago but she

busied herself, not wanting
any part of this calvary.

She had no magnificat
to sing, no “Be it done to

me” in her breath yet.
Still, she stares now, her eyes

fixed, not on faith, but on
a light she can barely believe

is light.