Annunciation in Lyon

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ANNUNCIATION IN LYON

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A bureaucratic angel with gilded curls emphasizes with missing finger his message. His ivory tunic, olive cloak are decorated with golden flowers like celestial paw prints. He has mislaid his wings, but the hooks on his shoulders remain.

Mary's right arm, hinged at elbow and shoulder, is raised to guard her virgin womb. The left, in her bewilderment, has fallen off. She leans away from the news as when she was a tree she would curve from unexpected wind. Then she wore bark; now her brown dress is covered with white four-petalled flowers. Her hair, close bobbed against her head, suggests more years than her budding breasts reveal, but fewer than the five hundred she has stood listening. Her face is wary, mouth straight, eyes turned askance. She doesn't understand all this, but it sounds a lot like things she's been warned against.