

# The empty tomb

by [Tania Runyan](#) in the [April 21, 2009](#) issue

*John 20*

That *woman* was the first word spoken  
must have taken even the angels by surprise,

who were used to bringing their fiery glory  
down to the clanging swords of battlefields,

to priests tugging at their beards  
in lamentation, to voices thundering in temples

and muscles hefting stones from mountaintops,  
not to a trembling woman whose hair clung

to her neck with tears, who for a moment  
held the souls of the nations like a basket of figs.