

# Gardener's Song

*Max Michael Freeman*

The tomb was a mouth  
that knew one note: grief.  
The rock lips opened,  
closed: tight as a safe.

The slab of stone where he lay:  
the cave's heavy tongue. His pale  
skin reflected the pale walls  
where candlelight shone cool,

like the moon rising on a quiet  
world. Apostles and women  
battered skin with minty lotion,  
wrapped him in cold linen.

This all feels like night,  
the way the shadows play  
on a flickering wall. Outside,  
the world recycles another day.

It's morning when I see  
stone rolled away, and drop  
my shears, abandon roses.  
I run to the lip, stop,

hear a rustle within. Angels  
are waking the man with song-  
with voices like birds and words  
not words at all, but the tongue

of fire and wind. Voices so clear  
I almost understand them,  
can't turn and run. A call to me,  
to enter the deafening tomb

bold as lightning. When I finally  
peek in, angels have fled  
and the dead man sits there  
with a bottle of wine, some bread.

I sit beside him, who wrestles  
the bottle open, never flags.  
He pours me the wine liberally  
and himself drinks the dregs.