

Reach hither thy finger

by [William Jolliff](#) in the [April 20, 2004](#) issue

Maybe the wound still oozed, or maybe
it had healed over with scars like golden coins.
Thomas might have noticed, but I doubt it.

True, he placed his finger in the Lord's hand,
and his hand in the Lord's side,
and then, we presume, he held his heart

in the bleeding heart. I like to think that.
And I like to think that years later he was still
radiant with holy light. My unholy hunch, though,

is that within a week he learned to doubt
his eyes or his touch, maybe both, maybe
whether he'd really been in the room or not,

or if again the elders had sent him out
for bread or fish, anything to keep his mouth
out of earshot. He wasn't the type to suffer

his loss in silence, and the more he wondered,
the more they doubted, too. That's my guess.
And that may be why only John, the youngest

of the bunch, the mystic, the beloved, the mad,
recalled the very day, and cared enough
about belief to recall the shame of doubt.