

Washed

by [Jill Alexander Essbaum](#) in the [September 7, 2004](#) issue

For Carl Trovall

His fingers kiss the crown of my distress,
my tresses gently lingering in his hold
while frankincense makes dizzy unto death.
Newly blanched, the black ewe joins the fold

and what is sin of me is gone, released.
Oh wetly, I am held to this. Delight,
shines the cruciform pose of the priest.
There's Jesus in his hands. The water's white.