

Mary Empty – my arms are empty.

Once they were filled with his being, with the size and shape and weight and feel of him, flesh from my flesh and bone from my bone.

He grew of course, as a boy should, but right away from the beginning his spirit soured away, above, beyond, outstripping his body, reaching out to the Lord our God, whom he called Father. To an extent I was pulled after him, but I could never catch up and his way did not allow the closeness of family ties. His love could not be confined and exclusive. Sometimes it could seem like rejection; 'Woman, what have I to do with you?'

But the underlying bond still held me secure. Until yesterday. Yesterday, when I held him in my arms again, his body torn and broken. And the bond was broken too – he was not there.

Now my arms are empty and my Son lies in the tomb.

Peter Empty – my pride is empty.

Always so sure I was right, so quick to be the foreman, the spokesman, to put my oar in. Of course, sometimes I was right: 'you are the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God'.

But he reminded me that it wasn't my own insight that had shown me the truth. And so often, so very often, I got it wrong - and then, with the gentleness that covered strength, the light touch that masked his power, he'd set me straight, bring me back into line with his way of thinking, with the values of the kingdom.

You'd think I'd have started to know better after 3 years, but no – 'Whatever the rest of you do, I'll never forsake you'.

Then that look, the one that saw right through you, to the core of you, as he said: 'Tonight before the cock crows, you will deny me – not once but 3 times'. He knew me too well. Now, how can I face all the mornings ahead with the cock crowing to greet every coming day?

Now my pride is empty – and my strength lies in the tomb.

Mary Magdalene **Empty – my heart is empty.**

Once it was full of darkness, of corruption and evil. But then he came – and light blazed, searing blinding light, sharp as the healing knife, a burning yet purifying fire.

The darkness fled, corruption was cut out, evil burned away. And into my heart, now clean and empty, came his life, surging and boundless and full of the joy of creation. I was made new by his love, a love that exists to give and give and give itself. I was recreated, a new woman, filled with his light and life and love.

But yesterday we wrapped his body, pierced and tortured, in white cloths. And tomorrow we shall anoint it with herbs and ointment of myrrh – and I am so afraid. What can now prevent the darkness returning?

Now my heart is empty – and my love lies in the tomb.

John **My life is empty**

When we first saw you beside the lake, you looked at us and said ‘Follow me’. And that was all I wanted – to follow you, to be with you, learning to be like you, sharing everything with you.

I was so glad, so proud, to be your friend, to be of use to you in any way whatever. But yesterday there was nothing I could do, nothing to ease the agony, the excruciating pain, the mockery and contempt. And worst of all, the horror of being forsaken by God, by your Father.

When you asked me to look after your mother and be a son to her, I think it was more for my sake – and hers – than for your own. I will try to do as you wanted.

Now my life is empty – and my friend lies in the tomb.