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A Riddle for Didymus

Ellen Gregory

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A Riddle for Didymus

They chiseled rock to rounded squares,
& lay the stiffened corpses there—
wrapped in linen, smoothed with myrrh,
drying in the desert air—
stone on stone, stone on stone,
until Christ rose again.

What feeds inside, what ruptures skin,
what smothers organs, burns again
& again when dreams can't route the pain
that wears the body's breathing thin?
Stone on stone, stone on stone
until Christ rose again.

Could Adam see the terror ranging?
Children's bloodied throats not singing,
morbid "wood" not meant for burning
stacked in pits too deep for standing:
stone on stone, stone on stone . . .

and yet Christ rose again.

—Ellen Gregory

This poem won first place in the *BYU Studies*
poetry contest for 2000.