

SEVEN STANZAS AT EASTER

Make no mistake: [when] Jesus rose ... it was as His **body**;
If the cell's dissolution did not reverse, the molecules reknit,
the Amino acids rekindle, the Church will fall.

It was not as the flowers, each soft Spring recurrent;
It was not as His Spirit in the mouths and fuddled eyes of the
eleven apostles; It was as His **flesh: ours**.

The same hinged thumbs and toes, the same valved heart
that—pierced—died, withered, paused, and then
regathered out of enduring might
New strength to endure.

**Let us not mock God with metaphor, analogy,
sidestepping transcendence;** Making of the event
a parable, a sign painted in the faded credulity of
earlier ages; Let us walk through the door.

The stone is rolled back, not papier-mache, not a
stone in a story, But the vast rock of **materiality**
that in the slow grinding of time will eclipse
For each of us the wide light of day.

And if we will have an angel at the tomb,
make it a real angel, Weighty with Max
Planck's quanta, vivid with hair, opaque in
the dawn light, Robed in real linen spun on
a definite loom.

Let us not seek to make it less monstrous,
for our own convenience, Our own sense of
beauty, lest, awakened in one unthinkable
hour, we are Embarrassed by the miracle, and
crushed by the remonstrance.

John Updike; *Telephone Poles and Other Poems*
(New York: Random House, 1961. *Emphasis
added*)

