The Fourth Gospel exhibits a wide array of perplexing literary features, generally termed "aporias". These include duplications, inconsistencies, and rough connections.¹ To account for these literary difficulties, scholars have proposed various source and redaction theories.² Bultmann, for example, detected three primary sources in the Gospel: a narrative "signs source" relating a number of miracles performed by Jesus, a discourse source, and a passion source.³ According to Bultmann, the combination and redaction of these sources brought inconsistent ideas together and


produced disruptions in the sequence of each original source. Since Bultmann, most researchers have favored the alternative theory that a single basic document (a Grundschrift or Grundevangelium) underwent successive revisions, which introduced disruptions and inconsistencies into its final form.4 Many such scholars identify this presumed Grundschrift as a narrative signs source or even a "signs Gospel", a complete Gospel centered around the signs performed by Jesus.5 For these scholars, the non-signs material represents a later redaction of the original signs source.

The present study agrees with the widespread view that a signs source or Gospel provided one source for the Fourth Gospel.6 It calls into question, however, the theory that the non-signs material represents a redaction of this source. It suggests instead that, at least in the Lazarus story, the non-signs material represents a distinct narrative source in its own right; i.e. the aporias in the present form of the Lazarus narrative resulted not from the redaction of a single source but from the combination of two distinct accounts of the story. Neither account has been preserved in its entirety; part of each was omitted when an editor combined them. Enough remains, however, to indicate that each was once a coherent whole. These two proposed accounts are set out below in parallel columns labeled "A" and "B".7 The reader may find it necessary to refer to these columns while reading the subsequent discussion that justifies their separation.

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5 Nicol speaks of a signs source; Wilkens, Fortna, and von Wahlde argue for a signs Gospel.

6 D. Moody Smith remarks that "the hypothesis of a semeia- (or miracle) source has gained rather wide acceptance". Smith himself grants the existence of such a source without trying to define it precisely (Johannine Christianity: Essays on its Setting, Sources, and Theology [Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1984] 63).

7 The translation is my own.