

For the funeral lunch ladies

by [Maryann Corbett](#) in the [March 9, 2022](#) issue

Already they have begun to fade away,

having resigned themselves to the nearness of death  
and its bad habit of haunting parish halls.

Praise their unshakable faith in the coffee line,  
the laden buffet, the table of baked desserts,

the power of food to gentle back into living  
all those who mourn, and all their awkward neighbors.

Some bit of the universe is made less wobbly  
by these, and by this school-lunchroom agape—

these, with their thinning, over-permed white hair.  
May they go to eternal rest in flowered aprons.