

Paschal Brunch

The waitress placed each plate on the patio table one by one—ladies first, then the boys—until everyone had their order before them. On your left you took your sister's hand; on your right, your dad's. You closed your eyes as he said grace:

Bless us, O Lord,

Just then, a fly landed to take suck from a cut of green honeydew. It clasped its foremost feet together on the fruit's wet face.

For these, Thy gifts,

Maple syrup seeped thick through a slice of French toast, stretching about to harbor wilted dribblings of once-whipped cream.

Which we are about to receive,

Soft bubbles clung to the orange vesicles suspended in a coarse mimosa. The fizz raised the pulp to the surface in a quiet, continuous exhale.

From Thy bounty,

Warmth radiated outward from a coffee carafe, thinning to the infinite, forever, absolutely.

Through Christ,

Corners of an over-easy yolk set in pale chalky pockets beneath sweating slivers of lox.

Our Lord,

Hash browns simply lost their sizzle.

Amen.

You tightened your fingers around hers and his and echoed back, *amen*. Taking what was left, you dragged your knife across a fried egg's thin skin. Some still-runny yolk flowed out. You used it to dress a slice of bacon and took a bite. Then you took another. And everybody passed plates around for tiny tastes of this and that until, at last, the waitress cleared it all away. Only then did you turn to me and ask, entirely earnest, *could you even imagine a more magnificent brunch?*