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Lazarus

Jeanne Finley

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LAZARUS

She gives me no bag for my bread
so I have to ask. Says for day-old
I don't get, sets her chin
and shrugs, so I take. Too bad
about the shirt, my breath, ratty cap, the crap-
stained shoes; all lies, but all
I have is here. Fifty-five again
blinks from the shoplifter's mirror
but I have paid in silver
for this breakfast, I am no thief. My cane
catches on the counter and she
wants me to be gone. The patrons
shift impatiently. Not one of them
is thinking about death.

At the door the door
opens from my shoulder,
morning multiplies, spills over,
that old easy miracle. All I need
is here: I am Lazarus, reliable
as yeast, proof of the risen recipe. Now
I say the hard part—
matins, kaddish, grace—
thank her, this time,
for the sack of anonymity.