Cinco de Mayo in Iowa

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Cinco de Mayo in Iowa
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To remember the day of Mexican conquest in May of 1862, the teachers ask all the children with surnames of Lopez, Gutierrez, Perez, Sanchez, and Catalan to supply the fourth grade class with Mexican comida:
40 tamales from Marisol, 40 gorditas from Miguel, 40 morelianes from Luis, frijoles and tacos and nachos and the richest of all tortes—tres leches—oozing the sweetness of three milks.

The Mexican mothers and fathers come as summoned, a few minutes after one o’clock, laden with the patient endeavors of a long morning shredding beef, pressing tomatoes and onions and jalapeños into fresh-baked tortillas and leaves of corn. They come to school, the padres of Luis and Miguel and Marisol, happy to comply.

But the children in fourth grade merely nibble the edges before they put down their Mexican treats, for they are already stuffed with the May 5 menu: “chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes, peas, and fruit.”

In wonder, the Mexican padres pack up 35 tamales, 35 morelianes, 35 gorditas--

and go home to a quiet Cinco de Mayo feast.