

Abishag on King David

by [Philip C. Kolin](#) in the [July 27, 2022](#) issue

1 Kings: 1:1-4

Now in the cold part of his life, he lies alone
with no one to warm his memory
of great deeds done for great blessings.

They called me from Shunem to sleep
next to the king, to touch but never
to share his anointed body.

I come with pomegranates and lilies
but not for dalliance, but only
to bring rest to his restlessness.

Readying his bones to go beyond
the temple veil, I help him meet Yahweh
in the deep sleep of my blanket.

As I lie near his ruddy-hewn frame,
I hear his dreams, the misery of Saul's
ghost, a giant's booming voice,

Uriah's mournful questions,
Absalom's thorny regrets,
the cries of the armies he routed.

In my silence his words speak
fleshing out what his spirit calls out.
I am a campfire before his final victory.