

I Do These Things With You

by [Cortney Davis](#) in the [August 2026](#) issue
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for my daughter

When I sit on my deck, I'm sitting with you,
as we used to rest afternoons on your porch,
surveying your Kansas acres, the gardens
and white lattice arch we walked through
to see wildflowers, thorn trees, and to watch
your neighbor's horses grazing.

When I cook dinner and the kitchen is a mess,
I remember how, after your four kids were asleep,
you washed the dishes, tidied the living room,
settled the cats and dog, made the whole house shine
so when morning came all was calm and ordered.

When I walk in the morning, I walk with you
as you did when the cancer invaded
your spine and, too young, you needed a cane,
your gait halting, fist curled at your side—
still you watered the plants, the violet
in the ceramic pot in the sun by the sliding door.

When I sing, I sing with you
as you did going about your day as mother,
keeper of a welcoming home, tender of gardens,
lover of birds, antique trunks and thrift shops—
fierce protector of all you cared for.

When I order flowers for your grave I choose yellow
and fuchsia, purples in a gathering of green,
colors you picked from the wildflowers growing
near your barn, and I remember watching
as you arranged them into vases of abundance,
your quiet desire for the presence of beauty.

Now near summer's end, when I wander my garden,
I see what must be done, and so find
the runners, the weedy tangles, and with you
snip the *stolen*, those blooms that find their own path
away from the mother plant. You've taught me
that only with such pruning can we open our hearts
to the expectation of new growth, of love everlasting.