

Eliab's complaint

by [Philip C. Kolin](#) in the [December 24, 2014](#) issue

I had all the qualifications:
the prerogatives of the firstborn,
the stature of a man of authority, a Goliath,
an aquiline nose, an Octavian head,
a heart flaming with anger, Saul's
good looks and regal gait. I had splendor
and grace. I prayed loudly, devoutly.
I came from good roots
and was born in the right place.
Who could be holier from Bethlehem?

How could my kid brother be anointed,
the one with rosacea, looks like carpenter's
shavings, the smell of sheep dung on his hands,
who roamed the fields looking for a lost lamb.
He wasn't even invited to the sacrificial banquet.

That old stickler Samuel knew I should be king.
I coveted the horn that was strapped
over his shoulders leaning toward me.
Why wasn't that good enough for God?
My name alone should have given me
the edge in the kingdom.

Any fool could see that.