

Astray

Come by!
Lie down!
Good girl!
Now away!
A single lamb left
On the hill
Astray

Like an arrow
She flies
Over fences
And gates
At the shrill whistle blast
She drops
And she waits

Then crouched like a lion
She creeps Inch by inch
A dot on the hillside
And the lamb does not flinch
But lost in the flurries
Of late April snow
It cries for its mother
In the valley below

Too far from the shepherd
Now the dog works alone
Her solitary thought
To bring the lamb home
So she darts
And she drops
And she starts
And she stops
Till the lamb
At long last
Descends
Over most-covered rocks
And icy-cold streams
To the pen
Where the story will end

And so to the shepherd
The sheepdog returns
Her work
All done for the day
For a pat and a hug and a final 'good girl!'
And dreams of lost lambs
In the hay