

back in the day

by [Carl Winderl](#) in the [December 2023](#) issue

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when the shepherds who  
tended their flocks  
by night  
took that night off whence

to visit My Newborn Son  
and me, I was put in

the mind of how they hand

-led their birthing  
process, especially when

a newborn lamb who  
just dropped just died.

to comfort  
the bereaved & grieving  
ewe  
they'd strip the

dead lamb's skin  
to make  
a *vellum* shirt for  
some other lamb, a  
twin or a triplet  
to wear

to replace  
the dead one for the

childless mom

to nuzzle  
in place of her  
dear departed one.

in a perfect world  
the mother'd accept the  
substitute offspring.

but My Son and I  
lived in an

imperfect one