

Mary had a little lamb

(A meditation in Perthshire)

by [John Paul McKinney](#) in the [February 1, 2017](#) issue

This morning's mountains, windy, wet, all white
and brown, are bleating from the lambs first shorn,
whose gift of self removed, appear forlorn,
while Martha spins her wheel in dawning's light.

And Martha's yarn's a gift of self, as well,
infused with sweat, her skill, and love, and tear
so I can knit a scarf for you, my dear,
A scarf wherein my self, my love, will dwell.

If lamb is gift and giver, sealed since birth
and Martha's yarn is part of Martha, too,
as well my scarf contains my love for you,
then givers may be gifts throughout the earth.

But whence the primal giver-gift, so pure?
It's Mary's Lamb, it's Mary's Lamb, I'm sure.