

# Back to the Fold

The sheep graze in the field  
one of them departs and goes astray  
on a trek to find what's revealed  
beyond the rife and usual way.

The shepherd watches, and stays  
as the animal explores what's beyond.  
That roamer keeps the shepherd's tender gaze  
and doesn't lose the love that forms their bond.

But when stray approaches the cliff,  
in danger of falling to his death,  
shepherd's run for him is swift  
his pursuit takes his pep and breath.

Shepherd trusts that the lone stray has learned  
the needed lessons in his trek so bold  
smiles and speaks the name of the trekker he's turned,  
that single fervent seeker joyfully welcomed - back to the fold.

*Dedicated to my wonderful pastor, Kevin Williford, for his dedication to and love of his flock, including those of us who ventured long and far on their spiritual journeys.*

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