THE BLACK LAMB

BY ELISABETH MACINTYRE
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Once upon a time there was a small flock of sheep who lived in a quiet shady paddock.
There were some little lambs amongst them.

Mrs. Southdown had a son who was called "Edward."

Mrs. Merino had twins who were called "Amy and Mollie."

And Mrs. Crossbred had a son who was called . . .
The Black Sheep of the Family!
His name was Leicester and he was pitch black.

His mother did not mind, she loved him dearly and said she liked lambs that colour. But..
TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED
everyone expects a black sheep to be naughty and lead others astray.

And Leicester happened to be remarkably good.

Whenever Amy, Mollie and Edward ran off and got into mischief Leicester stayed at home and made daisy chains!
Whenever Amy, Mollie and Edward squeezed through the fence and played with the lambs in the next paddock (although they were told not to).

Leicester stayed at home and helped Mother!
As you see he was a very good little lamb. Besides, he was very shy.

All the other lambs would tease him, and their Mothers would say: “Now come here children, don’t let the Black Lamb lead you astray!”

One day Leicester went for a walk all by himself,
and he came across two Dingoes walking along. One was carrying a big bag.
Leicester was terrified. He hid behind a tree until they had passed, and then he hurried home as fast as he could.

That is the best place for a lamb to be when Dingoes are about!
He got home just in time to have afternoon tea with his Mother.
Suddenly there was a great to-do in the paddock! Amy and Edward said something TERRIBLE had happened.
Mollie had been taken off by the Dingoes!
Everyone was very upset. Poor Mrs. Merino was heart-broken.

All the sheep in the other paddocks were gloomy—“You’ll never get her back alive,” they said.

Then Leicester spoke “Just leave it to me, I will go and bring her back.” Everyone scoffed at him.
But, late that night, when everyone was fast asleep, Leicester crept off to rescue Mollie. Because he was black, it was very hard to see him in the dark.
When he reached the Dingoes' camp his heart sank.

Mollie was shut in a little yard quite near the two Dingoes who were sitting in front of a fire.

They were licking their lips and talking about a lovely meal they were going to have.
He tip-toed up to the yard, unlocked the gate and walked in.

Poor Mollie was terrified. He whispered to her to hide behind him and they crept out without a sound.

When they were past the camp they raced home.
Mrs. Merino was overjoyed, and everyone was delighted to see Mollie again. They all thought Leicester was a hero!

All the sheep in the paddocks near by gathered round to say how wonderful he was.
Mrs. Merino gave a lovely party for him and all the little lambs for miles round were invited.

They all danced round Leicester and sang “For He’s a Jolly Good Fellow,” played games and had a wonderful time.

The only trouble was...
They all wanted to sit next to Leicester at tea!