

Lambing Season

by

Jeannie Donohoe

jeanniedonohoe@gmail.com

OVER BLACK: Language tutorial audio recording of translated Irish (Gaelic). A car shifts gears.

AUDIO TAPE VOICE (V.O.)
Go raibh maith agat.

AMERICAN MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
(struggling)
Guh rave methaggat.

TITLE: Lambing Season

1 EXT. SKY ROAD, CLIFDEN -- DAY 1

A compact, boxy car drives along a high road. The view below: rocky green hills flecked with sheep and jagged cliffs that drop to the ocean.

AUDIO TAPE VOICE (V.O.)
Go raibh maith agat.
(pause)
Thank you.

2 EXT. CORNAMONA/CLONBUR ROAD -- DAY 2

The car ascends a winding bucolic road lined with yellow flowers. Green farmland is partitioned by stone walls.

As the car passes, two legs up on the dashboard of the left-hand side of the car indicate we're driving on the left.

AUDIO TAPE VOICE (V.O.)
Nil a bhuíochas rot.

3 INT./EXT. CAR -- DAY 3

From inside the moving car, a view of a yellow warning sign with children crossing and text in Irish: "AIRE."

Stone walls and farms behind. Sheep with blue spraypaint down their backs.

Just as a black hand reaches for the white hand on the stickshift, the white hand shifts a jerky gear.

AMERICAN MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Come on, just do one... Nil a boishas
or.

SCREECHING BRAKES. A mangy sheep in the middle of the road stares through the windshield.

AUDIO TAPE VOICE (V.O.)
You're welcome.

4 INT./EXT. CAR ON NARROW RURAL ROAD -- DAY

4

BRIDGET, (early-30's) Irish-American, sharp and high-strung, clutches the steering wheel. She gives the sheep a look of death.

The sheep scampers away.

Bridget attacks the car radio, turning off the voice. She inhales deeply, with her hand on her belly.

PATRICK, (30's) black, calm but permanently skeptical, studies her contorted face. He wears an off-white woolen fisherman's sweater.

PATRICK

That coulda been the mother of my sweater. You gotta slow down.

He gauges Bridget's response. She's stiff, staring at the sheep.

A tall SHEPHERD walks into the road, tapping the sheep with a thin wooden stick. Bridget glares at him.

BRIDGET

You should watch out for that.

The shepherd indicates he couldn't hear. Bridget shakes her head. He continues walking down the road, in the opposite direction of the car. Bridget is overcome by a wave of nausea.

PATRICK

You gonna throw up again?

Bridget shakes her head. Patrick reaches over and rubs Bridget's belly.

Bridget turns the key to start the stalled car. She looks ahead.

BRIDGET

Wait a second, I think that's it.

Patrick looks ahead.

Bridget squints at a farmhouse ahead. She pulls a weathered photograph from between the seats and compares it to the view ahead. It's a match.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

This is crazy!

Bridget's giddiness makes Patrick stern.

PATRICK
Yeah, Bridget. It *is* crazy.

BRIDGET
Jennifer. Say it.

Patrick shrugs it off.

PATRICK
Can we just tell him who you are.

BRIDGET
I'm not gonna beg this guy to be my father. I just wanna see him, end the mystery.

PATRICK
What if Bridget Junior showed up on your doorstep like this? Wouldn't you be like so happy she came?

BRIDGET
I would never leave Bridget Junior, a month before she's born? Whose side are you on?

Patrick shakes his head.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
Where's your nametag?

5 INT. FARMHOUSE LIVING ROOM -- DAY

5

COLIN, a short, spritely man in his late 50's, watches through the curtains as Bridget and Patrick gather their things from the car. He speaks on a landline phone.

COLIN
She's here. Yes, I know. I know!

6 EXT. FARMHOUSE FRONT DOORWAY -- DAY

6

Bridget adjusts the National Geographic ID badge around Patrick's neck. She gives Patrick a once-over, and takes a deep, nervous breath.

BRIDGET
Just follow my lead, ok?

She knocks on the door.

Colin answers with a big smile.

Bridget is startled.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
We're looking for a... Colin Murphy?

COLIN

Yes, yes, that's me. That is *I*.
And you must be Miss, ah, Kramer?

Bridget stands still, taking him in. She towers over him. He's not what she expected, but it's still affecting. She pulls it together.

BRIDGET

Yes. Jennifer Kramer.

She hesitates, then offers her hand.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

And this is my colleague Patrick.
He'll be shooting the video.

COLIN

Patrick?

Colin tries to connect the name with the face and the afro.

PATRICK

Yes sir.

COLIN

Well, welcome. Come on in, I'll
give you the grand tour.

Bridget and Patrick follow Colin inside.

7 INT. FARMHOUSE HALLWAY TO KITCHEN -- DAY

7

Colin guides Bridget and Patrick through the house. Bridget clutches a steno pad, examining the decor: spare and tidy, nothing revealing.

COLIN

How do you take your tea?

Colin prepares the mugs by the sink.

BRIDGET

Oh, no thanks.

PATRICK

Ah, milk and sugar?

Bridget watches Colin's every move. She gets down to business.

BRIDGET

So how did you get into this line of
work? Were you always a sheep farmer?

COLIN

Oh, you know... tradition. My father kept sheep and his father before that. Hard to escape.

Colin serves Patrick his tea.

PATRICK

Go rave methagat.

Colin looks at him like he doesn't understand.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Thank you?

Colin nods, still confused.

BRIDGET

And how many sheep do you have?

COLIN

Well let's see, about two hundred, two-twenty, I'd say. We get another one or two every few days, it's lambing season, like you know.

BRIDGET

Wow, that's exciting. Did you say "we"?

COLIN

Oh it's not nearly as exciting as New York City, I'm sure.

BRIDGET

Well, it's all relative, I guess.

COLIN

Why don't we head out back. I'm sure the sheep are dyin' to meet you.

Colin gestures to the back door.

8 EXT. FARMLAND -- DAY

8

The sloping land behind the house is sectioned off by stone walls. A hundred sheep graze.

BRIDGET

I noticed driving in that a lot of the sheep have spraypaint markings.

COLIN

Yes, a lot of the farmers mark their sheep, to keep track of the ones that belong to them, like you know.

BRIDGET

But you don't.

COLIN

No, no need. I know mine without
all that.

Bridget stares at him.

BRIDGET

Why don't we get a little of you
working out here. Just be yourself,
whatever you'd normally do.

She gestures to Patrick to record this.

Colin looks around.

COLIN

Maybe filling a bucket or something?

Colin reaches down for a muddy hose. He covers how ill-at-
ease he is with this.

BRIDGET

You're getting this, Patrick?

Patrick fumbles with his video camera, slinging his nametag
over his shoulder.

PATRICK

Yes, Jennifer.

BRIDGET

(to Colin)

He's new. Just getting the hang of
it.

Patrick is mildly offended.

9 INT. FARMHOUSE ENTRYWAY, HALLWAY, KITCHEN -- DAY

9

The SHEPHERD from the road slips into the house. He tiptoes
toward the back windows, and observes Colin, Bridget and
Patrick out in the field.

10 EXT. FARMLAND -- DAY

10

BRIDGET

So this land's been in the family
for generations?

COLIN

Um-hm.

PATRICK

And what about *your* family? Are you married?

Jennifer glances at Patrick.

COLIN

Oh no... Got my hands full here.

Patrick laughs.

BRIDGET

So tell me about all the products you can make out of a sheep.

COLIN

Well, there's the wool, like you know. And then the meat. I sell the sheep locally, but then the meat's frozen and exported, mostly to France, some to America.

PATRICK

Did I hear you spent a little time in the U.S.?

Jennifer clears her throat at Patrick.

COLIN

Oh, did you hear that?

PATRICK

I think our producer mentioned it. From something he'd read.

COLIN

Yes, it was a long time ago though. Lovely. Lovely country.

PATRICK

Do you have any kids?

Silence. Bridget recoils.

COLIN

No, no. Not for me.

A beat.

Out of the corner of his eye, Colin notices the SHEPHERD inside the house, peering out at them beyond the curtain.

COLIN (CONT'D)

How long is the interview, did you say love?

BRIDGET

You know what?

(to Patrick)

Let's walk around and get some footage
of the sheep grazing, all right?

Excuse us.

Bridget grabs Patrick's arm and leads him into the field.

Colin heads toward the house.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

I said: follow. my. lead. Why did
you do that?

PATRICK

We really flew all the way over here
for him to fill up a bucket on camera?

BRIDGET

This isn't what I was expecting, ok?
I want to go.

PATRICK

What were you expecting?! If you're
not gonna tell him who you are.

BRIDGET

He said no kids. This was a mistake.
The whole thing feels off. Will you
go? Put the stuff in the car. I
need a second.

11 INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN -- DAY

11

Colin enters the house and encounters the SHEPHERD, who's
much taller than him. Colin is agitated.

COLIN

What are you doing here? I thought
you were gonna stay across the way?

Colin turns back to make sure Bridget and Patrick are out of
sight.

SHEPHERD

What's she asking? And what've you
told her?

COLIN

Nothing! She's kept it up. It's
all about the sheep, the spraypaint...
But the cameraman asked if I was
married, and kids.

SHEPHERD

What did you tell her?

COLIN

I said no.

SHEPHERD

How could you tell her you don't
have a kid?

COLIN

I don't! And don't yell at me. I'm
doin the best I can.

After a beat, the Shepherd reaches out to touch Colin's ear
softly.

Colin steps toward the Shepherd, intimately.

COLIN (CONT'D)

You should go on and talk to her.

The Shepherd shakes his head.

SHEPHERD

But what's she like?

Colin shakes his head, exasperated.

The door opens abruptly. The Shepherd rips his hand from
Colin. Patrick enters, surprised by seeing another person
in the house and the erratic gesture.

COLIN

And ten Hail Mary's, yes Father,
will do.

Patrick stares at the Shepherd.

COLIN (CONT'D)

Ah, this is... Father Patrick.

Patrick nods, unconvinced.

YOUNG PATRICK

Uh-huh, I'm Patrick also. Nice to
meet you.

Young Patrick extends his hand.

Old Patrick looks Young Patrick up and down.

OLDER PATRICK

Patrick? Like Patrick Ewing?

YOUNG PATRICK

Like Saint Patrick.

12 EXT. FARMLAND BY SIDE PEN -- DAY 12

Bridget stands by a sheep on its side. It moans in discomfort. She stares at it, then at the house. She leaves the sheep and walks toward the house.

13 INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN TO LIVING ROOM -- DAY 13

Just as Bridget enters, the front door closes and Old Patrick exits.

Young Patrick returns to the living room, wiping his wet hands together.

BRIDGET

Who was that?

COLIN

Oh that was... the village priest.

He nods, convincing himself.

Bridget nods. Odd.

COLIN (CONT'D)

Well that's it then?

BRIDGET

That's pretty much all we need.

A moment of silence.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

So thanks for your time. I can't be sure if National Geographic will air it. I'm not in charge of that part, like you know.

It's awkward. The couple starts to leave.

COLIN

Goodbye now.

Bridget turns to face Colin at the door.

BRIDGET

I'm pregnant, by the way.

COLIN

(surprised)

Oh... that's grand. Grand.

Bridget waits for something more. Colin stands paralyzed.

Bridget leaves the house quickly.

14 EXT. FRONT YARD/DRIVEWAY -- DAY 14

Bridget and Young Patrick walk to the car in silence.

YOUNG PATRICK
Want me to drive?

Bridget nods, visibly upset.

15 INT./EXT. CAR ON NARROW RURAL ROAD -- DAY 15

Young Patrick drives on the right side of the road.

BRIDGET
Hon, you're on the wrong side.

Young Patrick swerves.

The car drives past "Father Patrick," who turns at the swerving car. Bridget cranes her neck and locks eyes with him. He recedes through the rear-view window.

YOUNG PATRICK
Was it left or right up here?

Bridget ignores the question through a hundred-yard stare.

16 EXT. CONG VILLAGE -- DAY 16

The car drives up a town hill lined by colorful buildings with hand-painted signs.

17 INT. LYDON'S PUB -- DAY 17

A trio of musicians plays in a corner booth. A few men sit at the bar and a couple talks at a table.

Bridget walks in, sees the musicians, rolls her eyes. Young Patrick takes interest in them.

The couple approaches the bar. Bridget pulls out a map.

The BARTENDER, a young man who seems to know everyone in the place, dries glasses behind the bar. He notices Young Patrick's name badge.

BARTENDER
National Geographic, huh?

YOUNG PATRICK
Oh, yeah. We're filming a--

Bridget glares at Patrick.

BRIDGET
We're looking for N18 back to Shannon.

BARTENDER

Sure, you gotta go up to the roundabout and take the Headford Road toward Galway.

Bridget examines the map, turning it upside down.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

What did you say you were filmin' now?

YOUNG PATRICK

This guy Colin Murphy. Sheep farmer.

Bridget scowls at Young Patrick.

The bartender smiles. Bridget catches this.

BARTENDER

Mmm-hmm. That'll be interesting.

YOUNG PATRICK

You know him?

BARTENDER

Sure. Everyone knows Colin Murphy, normally he'd be playin in here on a Saturday.

The bartender points out a picture of the Shepherd playing with the trio in the corner.

BRIDGET

No that's not--

Bridget squints at the photo.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

That's--

Bridget's mind spins. She looks to Patrick.

PATRICK

Father Patrick?

The bartender looks confused.

BARTENDER

Oh, Little Patrick Doyle? His "husband?"

BRIDGET

You mean like animal husbandry?

The bartender smirks, shaking his head.

BARTENDER

Are you gonna film that gay goalkeeper
down in Cork as well?

Bridget and Patrick piece things together.

18 EXT. FARMLAND BY SIDE PEN -- DAY 18

Real Colin/Fake Father Patrick squats outside in the pen.
He stares ahead, concerned.

REAL COLIN

There we go.

The ailing sheep Bridget encountered earlier is heaving
against a stone wall. Real Colin studies it.

The sound of a car door slamming.

Real Colin turns.

Colin peeks around the corner, seeing Bridget and Patrick at
the car. He scurries out of sight.

19 EXT. FARMHOUSE FRONT DOORWAY -- DAY 19

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK. Bridget pounds on the door.

20 INT. FARMHOUSE BEDROOM -- DAY 20

Real Colin enters the bedroom, scrambling. He looks around,
talking to the closed bathroom door.

REAL COLIN/FAKE FATHER PATRICK

(whisper-yelling)

Patrick!

FAKE COLIN/REAL OLDER PATRICK (O.S.)

What?

REAL COLIN

She's back! You gotta go talk to
her.

FAKE COLIN

I'm in the tub! I got covered in
mud out there.

REAL COLIN

Hurry up!

21 EXT. FARMHOUSE FRONT DOORWAY -- DAY 21

BRIDGET

Now he hides.

YOUNG PATRICK

This is fucked up, Bridge. If you're not gonna come clean, we should--

Fake Colin finally opens the door in a monogrammed bathrobe.

Bridget is surprised to see him.

FAKE COLIN

Jennifer. Patrick.

BRIDGET

Where is--Father Patrick?

FAKE COLIN

Well, I'm--I'm not quite sure where the Father would be now. I could give a call down to the parish office--

Bridget storms past Fake Colin and walks through the house on a mission.

22 INT. FARMHOUSE BEDROOM -- DAY 22

Real Colin sits on the corner of a bed, shaken. He stands, but freezes at the creak of the floorboards. He peers out the window at the sheep, who continues to look in distress.

23 EXT. FARMLAND AND FARMLAND BY SIDE PEN -- DAY 23

Bridget walks out back. Fake Colin follows with Young Patrick.

Bridget investigates the shed behind the house. No Father Patrick. She walks into the field.

BRIDGET

(yelling)

Cooollllliiiiiinnnn!

The only answer is a moaning sheep. Bridget walks toward the sheep on its side once again.

Young Patrick and Fake Colin approach.

The sheep groans. It's in bad shape.

Fake Colin squints to see about this sheep. He looks back at the house. They all take a look at it.

YOUNG PATRICK

What's the matter with him?

FAKE COLIN

He's... givin birth. She, probably. But ah, I think there's a bit of a problem.

It writhes on the ground in discomfort and makes increasingly disturbing sounds.

Fake Colin attempts to tend to the sheep but it bucks and groans louder. He ties the belt tighter on his bathrobe.

BRIDGET

What's going on? Is it ok?

FAKE COLIN

You know, I might just see if Father Patrick *is* still in the area. He's awfully good with the sheep.

Fake Colin scurries back to the house.

FAKE COLIN (CONT'D)

You know, the blessing of the animals and whatnot.

Young Patrick starts videotaping the sheep.

Bridget squats to sheep level. Startled by a sharp moan, she backs off.

Fake Colin walks back out. Real Colin appears just inside the house behind the screen door.

FAKE COLIN (CONT'D)

So we're just gonna steady her by the legs.

Fake Colin tentatively approaches the sheep.

REAL COLIN

(calling from a distance)

No, the hind legs.

Bridget looks up and sees Real Colin in the distance, semi-obscured by the door. She can't take her eyes off him.

Bridget and Fake Colin are hopeless with the sheep.

Real Colin hesitates, alarmed. Finally, he leaves the house and approaches the group. He turns from Bridget as much as possible.

Bridget scrutinizes Real Colin. This is him.

REAL COLIN (CONT'D)

And now you just want to hold her head.

He talks Fake Colin through this. Fake Colin is tentative and seems to make matters worse.

REAL COLIN (CONT'D)

No, like this.

(to Young Patrick)

Hold onto the back of her neck, one of you.

Bridget looks to Young Patrick, who holds up the video camera as his excuse.

Bridget crouches down and holds onto the sheep.

BRIDGET

Ok, ok. Shhhh.

FAKE COLIN

Very common.

BRIDGET

So you've done this before?

FAKE COLIN

Oh, plenty, plenty.

The sheep bucks. Fake Colin is startled.

REAL COLIN

I got you. I got you.

Real Colin steps in and takes charge. He has a firm grasp of the sheep and commands the situation.

Young Patrick's video camera focuses on Bridget and Real Colin.

REAL COLIN (CONT'D)

Hold her here.

BRIDGET

So is this part of the seminary training?

Real Colin is silent. It's clear Bridget's onto him.

Real Colin rubs his hand down the side of the sheep's belly.

Bridget watches this, studying Real Colin.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Why don't you just leave her alone to figure it out?

Real Colin says nothing.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

I mean, it's nature right? They can fend for themselves.

This lands on Real Colin. He doesn't respond.

Bridget watches as Real Colin slowly reaches his hand inside the sheep.

Everyone looks on. This is too much for Bridget. She stands and looks into the distance, hand on her stomach.

The sheep fades into a comparatively still state.

Bridget returns to watch.

Some maneuvering. Suddenly, a little baby lamb emerges in Real Colin's gloved hand. Real Colin holds the lamb upside down, by the feet. The mother sheep jumps back to standing.

Young Patrick looks like he might faint.

Colin places the sheep down. The mother begins licking it.

Bridget observes Real Colin's ease with the process.

Young Patrick is quiet. He looks to Bridget.

Real Colin squats by the tiny lamb, and encourages it to latch on to the mother's udder. The new lamb latches on.

Bridget and Real Colin look at each other for a long silence.

Real Colin smiles timidly at Bridget, then looks away.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

How did you know?

REAL COLIN

I called the National Geographic.
Jennifer Kramer. She's deceased.

FAKE COLIN

May she rest in peace.

Fake Colin crosses himself.

BRIDGET

(increasingly angry)

So you hid? You had someone pretend to be you? And I know who he is, by the way. If you think being gay is like, some kind of an excuse?

REAL COLIN

What about you and this filming business? You think you're the only one who can be clever?

BRIDGET

Clever? I came all the way here to see you. You knew I was coming and you didn't even want to meet me!

Real Colin has no response. A long silence.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

You've missed everything.

Bridget shakes her head and walks away.

The lamb struggles to stand up. Finally, it stands on all four legs and walks underneath the mother.

REAL COLIN

Bridget!

Bridget stops.

REAL COLIN (CONT'D)

It's Bridget, right?

Bridget turns to Real Colin.

REAL COLIN (CONT'D)

I can't believe your mother stuck with that. It was the name I picked.

BRIDGET

I hate it.

REAL COLIN

I'm sorry.

Silence.

BRIDGET

You weren't even curious about me.

REAL COLIN

That's not true. I've thought about you. Every day.

Bridget is speechless.

REAL COLIN (CONT'D)

I see you on the youtube. That vegetarian cooking program out of your kitchen.

Young Patrick looks to Bridget.

REAL COLIN (CONT'D)

Patrick and I tried that tofu scramble, didn't we?

Real Patrick nods, enthusiastically.

REAL PATRICK

A little salty for my taste, but...

Bridget won't give.

REAL COLIN

I was afraid to meet you. And I got the hint that you didn't really want to... But I'm-- I'm very-- I'm very glad you're here.

Bridget fights tears.

REAL COLIN (CONT'D)

Will you stay?

Bridget shakes her head.

REAL COLIN (CONT'D)

Just for a cup of tea?

Bridget stops shaking her head. A long pause.

REAL COLIN (CONT'D)

I may have missed everything, but we're here now.

Bridget stands still.

REAL COLIN (CONT'D)

Patrick?

Both Young Patrick and Fake Colin/Real Old Patrick turn to him.

REAL COLIN (CONT'D)

Will you put the kettle on?

Young Patrick and Real Patrick walk toward the house.

Bridget and her father linger in the field.

The BAAAAA of a sheep.

CUT TO BLACK.