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The Sheep Have to Be Fed

In the Carpathian Mountains
In western Ukraine
The Hutsul people say
They are not going anywhere,
Period. Putin be damned.

The Hutsul people wake every morning
As they have for centuries
To feed the sheep their people have fed
With the grasses that grow around them
In the Carpathian Mountains
Where they have withstood invasions
From Poles, Lithuanians,
Magyars, and Mongols
For centuries.

The sheep have to be fed.
So you get up, you feed them.
When summer comes,
You shear them.
When autumn comes,
You spin their wool into yarn.
At winter, you weave the blankets
That tell your ancient story,
And you sing while you weave.
The fibers of the blanket vibrate
With your voice.

When you wash the blanket in the river,
The river's voice adds itself to the story,
And the sheep stand in silent witness.
That's how it goes.
The story is the main thing
Along with the fiber of every being.

(continued)

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You offer the story from your land
On Etsy, and the world wants it.
Blanket after blanket, you tell the story
From your high ground,
Weaving diamonds
That symbolize the sun,
The all-seeing eye of truth,
The art of being who you are,
Of staying put.