

Tystie and the Primrose
by Frances M Lynch
A song about botanist Elaine Bullard and ecologist Elizabeth Masden

Tystie flies low over Stroma
Pacing the flow of the water
Streaking the skies with red
And taking a bird's eye view
Of a rare Scottish Primrose

She dives sharply through the tidal flow
Targeting prey with deadly precision
Rising again to a bird's eye view
Of a rare Scottish Primrose

She spies the flower in cliff-top turf,
On machair and on heathland
Just as Elaine once searched through Caithness
Reliant on a Robin, not a Black Guillemot
Three wheels and a tent for her wild flower discoveries
And a bird's eye view
Of a rare Scottish Primrose

Elizabeth waits with patient attention
For Tystie to fly home to Stroma
She catches and tags the red leg
Then releases her back
To a bird's eye view
Of a rare Scottish Primrose

The questions they ask of the bird and the flower
Look forward in time and link them together
Tidal streams run with clean energy we need
And the flower lives still
As our world clings onto itself.

Black guillemot whirl in the air above Stroma
Show off your deep diving, bill-dip-ping style
Keep out of the way of the tidal machines
And keep your eyes open in case we should need
A bird's eye view
Of a rare Scottish Primrose