

KATHLEEN M. McCANN

STITCH IN THE STOCKING

A wife never let her man go to sea
without threading her singular stitch
clear and clean as his name,
through the wool's burly blur.

A woman with her man gone to danger
lives in the crease of terror's hardened nights;
the bed, only a box for bee-hived nerves,
anxiety's metered melt serving time.

Fire low, the children asleep ...
A thousand pardons for the one who must come,
cupping the awful burden of wet wool
to firelight, a widow's face.