Even Stephen's Patches
Graham Duggins

Knitting two gloves
to bind his faded, threadbare fingers,
Or two socks for that matter
to contain his fraying, tattered toes,
A sweater (rough gray wool is cheap)
for the heart.
And a hat for the head-
both are tearing at the seams.
Always knitting,
Forever weaving,
Constantly mending
lies to hold together his frail fabric.

The Unfolding
Melissa Kalinowski

Sometimes I feel heavy, laden,
waterlogged.
I'm trying to swim.
Everything is black and white
and shades of gray.
In the sky are screens that show
flashes, pictures of my life, his life,
the tired woman at the corner store
who knew I stole the gum but
didn't say anything, the boy from
English class who ran away from home,
twice.

Those were places we were then...
gathered in a stranger's woods
around a bonfire
lying on the ground talking
with unsteady smiles.
We aren't there now.
That doesn't mean I can't still
see the shine on my aunt's curls
on a Sunday morning.

I sense Sean's body, lean, toned
as he walks down hallways,
feline, on the prowl like a tiger,
only, a tiger in a high school hallway-
tail bumping against lockers.

I know now that at those moments
I was on fire and didn't even know it,
not until I found the cinders
inside my pockets.

That voice, his laugh,
it takes me through years of
myself - as a girl unfolding.
I will never return to those days,
those smiles, my fevers on
October nights when Mom