Y.C. Murphy

Late at Night, Knitting

In response to a poem by Philippe Jaccottet, where he writes:
It's easy to talk, and writing words on the page doesn't involve much risk as a general rule; you might as well be knitting late at night.

I am doing something useful with my hands, 
in this room of full Odyssean light, knotting

cables with a fine point pen, words and feathers, 
ink blobs, sequined stitches to make literary

outfits, articulations of what I am unable to say. 
This is my work, plaiting together a vernacular 

from dissonant strands, interlocking words 
and passions, adding myself to the tarantara 

of the world. A tired motif, I'm a Penelope 
buying time, twined in a long series of purple loops 

that sew and mesh my grief into an inconsolable silence. Someday I believe that what I think 

will rise out of this apartment, these days of threading metaphor through the needle's static eye. 

In the meantime, I won't unravel my handiwork—rather, 
save it to files in the crannies of a computer. 

All these booties, alliterative bunting, scarves, 
sweaters of indignation and longing, poems 

that honor life, written to speak, which is, to connect.