Purling at the Heartstrings   **Camden Whitlock**

Yarn is a man-made material with no clear origin date. Dating
back to earlier prehistory than the Stone Age (3.3 million years ago),
these Homo erectus entrepreneurs used sticks and stones to
fashion fiber materials from animal hides and reeds.

E-wrap cast-on, 2 purls.

"Oh, not too much, just working on a new project."

My pink tool works mechanically at the rows of lush, cornflower
blue yarn. The plastic wheel, rough with 2-gauge switches (a shade of
apple green) and red Sharpie marks, takes the beating gladly.

4 purls, 1 knit, 4 purls.

The spinning of cotton yarn and weaving of cotton cloth is said
to have originated in India, although Egyptian historical artifacts beg to
differ. Somehow, Peru (located across the globe) also developed
similar techniques for textiles around the same time.

2 knits, 1 purl, 2 knits.

I ask my yarn if it knows what love is.
I tell it that I don't.
I tell it that I thought I did.

1 purl, double-wrap, 1 purl.

Some ancient European antiquities have been carbon dated
to roughly 20,000 years ago. At this time, the world was enthralled
with the idea of material-making. Early innovations included hand spindles
(made from bones and rocks), which predated the wheel by 1,000 years.

1 purl, 3 knits, 1 purl.

I spend my days, now, winding this blue yarn around
the tight corners of my broken heart.
But the sharp shards just cut up all my hard work.

3 knits, 2 purls, 3 knits.

Between 500 and 1,000 BCE, the spinning wheel was invented in India.

This new mechanical proxy enchanted weavers everywhere, as it gave a steady
spinning rate and made it easier to manage fibers (by freeing both hands).
Its design was also easily adapted to mesh with the unique localities.

3 knits, 2 purls, 3 knits.

I spend my days, now, trying to make something beautiful
and worthwhile out of these scraps of yarn you
left me with. But none of the pieces are long enough.

1 purl, 3 knits, 1 purl.

Leonardo da Vinci created artful masterpieces that were later
used to inspire the Saxony wheel (circa 1555 by Johann Jurgan).
Amidst the great Industrial Revolution, this new spinning wheel featured
a foot treadle that allowed the spindle to revolve about a cranked axis.

1 purl, double-wrap, 1 purl.

I ask my yarn if it knows what love is.
I tell it that I don't.
It tells me that it doesn't either.

2 knits, 1 purl, 2 knits.

Up until the 18th century, making things with yarn was a much more
popular pastime than it is today. 1733 marked the beginning of changes that sent
manufacturing and distribution to mechanization, with the invention of the flying
shuttle and the spinning jenny. Steam power ultimately automated production.

4 purls, 1 knit, 4 purls.

My hands fumble with the same blue yarn as I attempt to
end this stupid, repetitive bullshit. I have that distinct, pit-of-stomach
feeling that everything I do is counterproductive nowadays.

"My love! Look what I made for you."

2 purls, e-wrap cast-off.