***Mother and Lover on Visiting Day (Sandstone Federal Prison)***
i had never known the power of words
that one man could harbor such mastery
in simple language and robot signs,
"Okay, let's go you guys."

we hid behind each other's nakedness
as our weapons of nightly passion
inspected, checked, "Okay, bend over"
he pronounced like the magician with a wand
as prison Yard hardened sphincters parted
in salutes to the flag of his indifference

four short steps away from you
sequestered in a confessional of flesh
—*Regulation 19 (b) Examination Before Visits*—
we recanted the errors of our individuality,
awaited his blessing, "Okay, you guys,
get dressed."

as I sit beside you
his words rearrange the intentions of my gazes
his echo haunts my ears
"One embrace when you meet. Another when it's over.
Okay, you guys, let's go."

when he stole my mother's heart from me
with a word that made her curtsey
as if before the Archbishop
i knew that his blood would always
be stained upon my fingernails
that memory would never forgive
his "Okay, get your arm off her, guy."

in this cloistered room of the children of violence
i went to the coffee machine, often
just to feel the comfort of the coin of the realm
but it only taught me a hatred of freedom

mother left us during the last half hour
and i walked my fingers in musical display
on your knee, pounding out a tune
of yearning from my flesh which no longer bleeds

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your departing hugs
stuck to my ribs like lashes from a whip
I struggled to find a kiss
that would say "I'm fine. Don't worry. I love you."
but my message was aborted by the snap
of his jealousy, "Okay, guys, time's up!"

back just four short steps away from you
*—Regulation 19 (c) Examination After Visits—*
he boldly took me fervently to himself
purged me of the lingering desire I had for you,
"Okay, guys, get dressed.
It's over, *for now*.”

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