cinema streets:

every
time
I
blink
some
rat
in
the
garbage

chitters
A circle in a triangle is a tent roasting marshmallows
   But a gun is a gun is a gun
      And bullets, fly.

The sky is an irregular circle
   But a gun, a gun is a line
   and a bullet, a bullet
      is a bird.
      And power.

Power is a toy, in his game room, in his play room,
Power is a love is a death is a life

A brain (a brain
   naked
   spikes
   tendrils
   ragged
   raw
   red: too red too red
      too big too big
      driving
down. around. through. out of. into.
a road or a room
   too small

on motor cycle wheels

a brain) and a boy
lying naked prone
   his body.
   his penis.
locked: stock and barrel
rolling.
   past lost
like unscrewed bolts

bolted.

and bullets fly
Geography of a Relationship or, Position is All

I will draw you a picture, an ideograph
    if you like,
of a velvet cape.
throne over
    let us say,
throne over your shoulder.

the gold is in the stitching
of a plant, leaf over branch
harboring
thread of lightning, like
lining of veins.

and the purple
on the leaf
    let us pronounce
again:
the purple lies upon the fuzz of your
tongue.

for we mustn't forget: the manicure

we mustn't forget: the ancient bindings

we mustn't forget: the cape is purple

if so
if so

if we have given our consent
if we have always been
every echo
gathered fold on fold
resonates, hollow and ripe
in this cave

on this bed
    let us say
with precision
this time
on this map
the waves are yours

the waves line
your lips
imprinting mine
with purple drink
on these early pages
indelible.

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The Wolf Howled at the Moon

The wolf is waiting in the cave.
She is wounded.
Her mate is dead.
Her children are eaten.
The wolf is waiting.
    I give her a poem.
She says, I want food.
I want water.
Where is my mate.
Where are my children.
    I understand, I say
    Here is a poem.
Answer me, she says, answer me.
I cannot see you.
The cave is bare.
The rocks are cold.
    Yes, I say
    Here is a poem.
I am not a moral issue
you open and flip through
periodically
when the whim of your mouth moves downward
to dab
the frayed edges of handkerchiefs
I made for you as a child,

when you feel flashes of your
own, experienced, loss
I am not a right or wrong remnant of yourself.
the pleat and curl
placed
just so
against the pattern.

mama, once upon a page
I saw a snapshot of your hair
loose along your waist
frizzled
with concern for wind and rain
and nothing else
but the hush of trees moving
a snap: you in a beret
walking gallantly
arm in arm with two men
towards whatever it is you saw wandering
in windows

now your photographs
lacquered
aligned
amid souvenirs on gilded tables
framed coyly on brocaded walls
their breath stifled in moral issues
I skim, periodically.

mama, the bent pages are broken
they have kept their place so long
the edges are yellowed
like the snapshots you gave me as a child

I want to tell you I miss you
I want to tell you that I know
you are not a moral issue, either

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to Pamela

'just words,' remember?
for your clown and your broken toys

when 12 was an important number
and Rilke taught us about silences and Orpheus

that day we found your name meant gift of the elves
and mine goddess of darkness and death

we walked past the Three Cubes and met Ouspensky's disciple
and drank milk with ice cubes

and one day dressed perversely in heels and masks on some side
street of eighth street you asked, casually, "How do you
kiss a man? What do you do?"
"look, a cat on the doorstep," I said

so you smiled.
and bought a rose for your pointed ears
and that first gingham dress
and when you cut your hair

I laughed.
and touched your neck.

that only time.

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I am not a moral issue
you open and flip through
periodically
when the whim of your mouth moves downward
to dab
the frayed edges of handkerchiefs
I made for you as a child.

when you feel flashes of your
own experienced loss
I am not a right or wrong remnant of yourself.
the pleat and curl
placed
just so
to the pattern.

mama, once upon a page
I saw a snapshot of you
alight
in a clearing, your hair
fans out over your arms and back
ripples
with concern for wind and rain
and nothing else
but the hush of trees moving

another: you in a beret
walking gallantly
arm in arm with two men
three of you
broad shouldered, strong
you wear white socks rolled
in style and a coat, deep gray
that flaps against your legs
like a flag in a summer storm

now your photographs
lacquered
aligned
amid souvenirs on gilded tables
framed coyly on brocaded walls
their breath stifled in moral issues
I scan, periodically.

mama, the bent pages are broken
they have kept their place so long
the edges are yellowed
like the snapshots you gave me as a child

I want to tell you I miss you
I want to tell you that I know
you are not a moral issue, either
words are incomplete
they are not buttons or zippers or teeth
they are not eyes
or ivory scrapers, or jaws bared of flesh
to ravage a leaf
I desire the leaf
I do not understand the shadows cast