

The Left-to-Me

Reading the deadfather's poem, flecked with black spots, erratics, marks, cross-outs,
unfinished gestures. Tongue displays. Pinched pocket dictionary.

And what the deadfather had not yet learned he had been told to do, his voice
percussed with mine, in spite of my defiance, that bustedness, that self-bluffing hicking
rhyme the most
authentic rime of him—a form I wished unlike me.

were a turd in the nest
were a childman drying on a clothesline
were a bird if were a fraud
were a say-nothing when an accident were avoidable

As the deadfather's only reader, I find the unwrit wants the arc of the moon, the peeled
bark of a beautifully-stripped tree handed into the firepit, crow crowning on the roof,
sabbath in the mailbox, the dimcrested local hills, star-spread without kinghood, the
candled want, balked at, the logic of a cursed mouth, all gist blowing out of it at once,
but minutely heard and
aboriginal. Barefaced and harshly represented.