

Father Figures

In the outsized oaks the crows
Repeat their one word which means
I hate you and move your ass
To the hawk they've chased
From their trees where they must
Be nesting, though—my fault—
I can't imagine a crow as mother,
Though as father figure, perfect:
Very short on words, beyond laconic,
Kind of strong, or at least heavy-set,
And just about always angry, angry
At the sky or the leaves or the grass.
And at sunset, forget about it.
Get the fuck out of my way, they say,
As they drop little ponds of waste
On the tar and cement and bark,
Before they come home to recount
Nothing about their day. They love
Night best when they seem to disappear
Into the darkness, their oily black
Feathers just a layer of midnight,
Their beaks shut up, and they're always
So surprised when dawn comes again
And says, *You're still alive*. They rejoice
With their sounds for war and power,
But wonder what it would be like
To just vanish, evanesce, get it
Over with and get off
The grid, the oaks, the sky entirely.

