

Handwriting

ACE BOGCESS

In the Fourth Grade, my teacher—
the aptly named Mrs. Johnson,
an old & inconspicuous name
for a woman bearing her adjectives
well—branded my report card with a D
in *handwriting*. I was one letter
beyond not being able to write at all.
You ought to be a doctor, she scribbled
in the margin, implying I think that doctors,
too, have hands meant for other things.
They hold hearts in steady fingers,
so one must understand if their digits
should tremble marking digits &
directions on a chart. Besides,
the tongue depressor is mightier
than the sword, & an X-Ray is worth
a thousand words. However,
I didn't like the blood & guts of it,
chose instead a similar path well-suited
for my sloppy script. It's why
I became a poet, really. I can make
the ugliest marks on paper, draw stick-
figure portraits & blurred genitalia,

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distort every serif retained from some
archaic alphabet, & it doesn't matter
any more than the secret lines of a cobweb's
shadow because, often, my readers
can't make sense of the words.