For this poem, I decided to make my lines fairly even, and I wanted the first line to be different, but the next three lines to start with the same word.

It seemed to break into natural stanzas—when I started a new idea, I started a new stanza (like a paragraph).

“My Father’s Hands”

Stained permanently brown

Line

like the earth you like to turn,

like the wood you like to work,

Stanza

like the eyes of your children.

Perpetually cracked and worn

from exposure to the wind,

from the cold and from the sun,

from the constant work you do.

Years of dust and dirt embedded

so far deep into the cracks,

so far beneath the surface,

so far from describing you.

With an iron vise-like grip

just right for pounding nails,

just right for fixing pipes,

just right for pinching bad kids.

And yet surprisingly soft

for cleansing and tending cuts,

for cutting and combing hair,

for loving your family.