

## Statues

by [Thomas Schmidt](#) in the [June 5, 2019](#) issue

What does justice look like?  
He asked, and I said, that's easy.  
A bronze statue of a woman  
In robes, blindfolded,  
Holding up scales. Precisely,  
He said, you can almost hear  
The correct little clicks of those  
Weights in the balance. Now,  
He said, what does mercy look like?  
That one stumped me.

Is there a lesson here, I asked, and  
He said, perhaps sculpt a woman  
In a bathrobe, making a sandwich,  
And her scowling boy, who prefers  
Peanut butter to ham. Or carve  
Bienvenu foisting his candlesticks  
On cringing Jean Valjean.  
Or fashion the brittle father  
Rushing down the clay path  
To embrace his prodigal, but—

I get the idea, I said,  
There would have to be two.  
Not quite, he said.  
There would also have to be  
Movement. Not easy with statues,  
With things that stay put, things done  
So right that they make little clicks.