

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.