

## *one for me*

### **Arienne Zak**

spring is settling in.

it's time for a project. i think about cleaning, organizing  
the 600 or so square feet i call my own.

my ambition is not so high

i instead go to the alley. find a table. a solid, worn block of wood  
pull out the saw. you know the one. the reciprocating one  
carve out shapes. this spring i will carve a figure for each week.

week 1, i carve a silhouette. it is deep in thought, standing

i think this to represent planning. the joy of starting a project

week 2, i do a fourth wall break. carve a figure holding a saw.

it is misshapen, barely recognizable. but i own it.

week 3, i carve my love. i cannot describe the shape. it is soft, tender  
but i put it in my pocket. when second winter strikes, i will  
hold it in my palms to keep me warm.

week 4 strikes. this is the bad week. the figure is hunched,

i place sawdust underneath it. hoping it to resemble tears

my friends ask why the figure is bleeding

week 5, i am energized. this figure is standing proud, of what,

i have no way to illustrate

week 6 is a diversion. i carve 2 cats, place them together as if

they are in love. my love, he remarks how it looks like ours.

i tell him i meant it to be us.

week 7, the feeling is indescribable. i carve a misshapen, stupid blob

i love it so. the way it defies expectations. i take a finishing nail,

pound through it into the wall. it sits there, uncentered.

i resolve to find meaning later.

week 8, i am feeling sentimental. i carve a flower, a rose.

my love asks if it is for him, and i softly reply "not this one"

it goes in a glass case. he nods, knows the meaning.

week 9 comes with a vengeance. i am overworked,

feeling deserted by any love i'd give myself.

i carve myself. for the first time, it is truly me.

i carve a figure of a child. standing in ruin of their own design

"what have i done", i hear echoing. this makes me grin

20 years on, i have learned not to destroy what i love.

week 10, i am adapting, i am coping. i carve a schooner, a boat

this takes almost all the remaining wood. i use a tiny bit to

carve a captain. i place it in the bath. it sinks.

i smile. a real smile. spend hours researching how to get it in a bottle

go to the brewery. get a large one. share it with the ones i love

put the boat inside. carve another figure. my love asks "is that us?"

without thinking. of course it is. i think on it. realize it means  
everything.

the bottle is buoyant. i let it float for awhile. it spins in the water  
thrashing and flailing. but we are safe. unsinkable.

week 11, the wood is almost spent. i carve a heart that sits

somewhere on the spectrum between stylized

and anatomically accurate. i present it to my love.

he has not a clue what it is. i don't need him to.

i hand it to him and watch the puzzlement. tell him nothing

week 12, i have just specks left. i make a semicolon.

no specific meaning in mind. i like semicolons. maybe

my favourite piece of punctuation. i show my dad,

and he remarks on a thought left unfinished.

i tell him, its nothing like that. i just like semicolons.

think on the project, never finding meaning for week 7

think it to be for me alone. reflections of the self.

journaling. my own little form of spring cleaning,

letting meaning flow from alley wood.

