

POEMS

Figurine Man

Jacob Bride sets his mug of coffee down on the side table, and sits himself down in the rocking chair on his back porch. He looks out at the open desert. Takes a big smell of the fine dirt in the air. From the side table, he picks up his sharpened knife and a block of basswood. He looks down at his hands as he works, though his mind's eye is jumping ahead. He whittles off the corners, molding the basswood block into a shape that is curved, organic, reminiscent of something living.

From out of the wood, Bride uncovers a mound. The figure is thick to begin with, and is coiled thicker. He carves out her muscular legs, muscular sides curved under her hunched muscular back, her short tail. Her face is turned down between all of her legs, licking herself. He carves out her short ears and the ridges of her wrinkled face. He carves her tongue, and leaves protruding the thin lines underneath. He carves her eyes closed in concentration.

With the rough shapes done, Bride retrieves his glasses from the side table. In doing so, he also remembers his coffee, and has a long drink of it now that it has gone from piping hot to warm.

Glasses on, Bride holds the wood closer to his eye level, and leans in and around the work as necessary. He touches up the detail of her nose buried in her vulva and her tongue pressing it further, pushing the soft sex. He carves out the toes on each of

the paws, some of the toes fanned out as she licks, splaying her little claws. He trims the claws each to a healthy length. Under her tail he carves her muscular rump and the pit of her anus, and carves out the details of the joints of the back legs, all just-so.

Bride sets the figurine on the side table. She sits licking without a wobble.

All The Happy Little Animals

Splashing around in a water park; running with high stomps through the shallow water until it's deep enough to swim and then splashing down and swimming; seeing your friend across the busy pool waving you over, and swimming around everybody to go meet them; putting your heads under together, each of you holding your breath, opening your eyes to look; your friend resurfaces and you follow, and they reach up to the poolside and show you they brought pool toys to dive for, and the two of you drop them and watch them all dart down to the bottom of the pool, and the two of you go down after them, seeing who can grab more; you go to the water slide, wait in line in the warm sun, which feels nice after the cold pool; you fly down the slide and make a huge splash when you hit the water at the bottom, and then swim out of the way to make way for the next person. The ducks get to have this as their life; they are nourished and livened by swimming around, shouting, diving and splashing, taking off and splashing, putting their heads under, play. When the seasons become too warm or too cold, they make a long trip over beautiful landscapes to a place that is more right for them; eat bread; lay an egg; stretch your wings; float and bob on a gentle wave for an hour, taking in all the goings on around your pond.

Awakening

Waking up,
sluggish surrealness,
I don't know
the time,
where I am,
who the president is,
what my name is,
or whether I am facing east.
I do know the warmth,
cozy heat,
of someone
in the blankets with me.
Eyes unopened,
I know nothing of
the world outside of
my sense of smell, and touch:
I am touching fur
which is ever slowly rising,
falling,
and rising,
and falling;
I am smelling dog,
his breath—
I breathe in when he breathes out
to take in the fullness of his breath,
and I breathe out when he breathes in
so that he can have mine.
We both stretch, and inch our nuzzling way
closer into one another's reacclimating bodies.
I breathe in the smell of his fur on his chest.
I know of the world I have woken into
that I am loved and love.