

Charles Kell

Self-Portrait as Invisible Being

Climb three rails at once.
The way to cut fog with a silver
finger.
My key says stop. Says Descartes
the comedian laughed all the way
to the scaffold. His nose
got lost in the shadows. Here
I am ruffling the basket's wooden
stalks. Hidden under my own bed
all alone. This is a telephone, a flower
epistle, a passenger pigeon,
a cruise missile. This pencil pestle
& mortar.
My underside whistles when I walk
by. Or else you couldn't see me if
you tried. The way I sit still for days
is a reckless act.

Veil

Who I spoke to when
I said barely a word, half-
looking in the dim mirror
while a fire blazed
fast in the dark next room.
Sick smell of soft moss
scraped from a trunk, doused
with turpentine then set on fire.

The smoke hiding half of my face.