

CHARLES KELL

GENET AMONG THE CEMETERY

I let wax drip from the suspended
candle onto my shadow

covered hip, hold the struck match
a second from my lips to feel

the near blister rise. Think
about the week I spent in grey Paris,

wandering in a meth-machine
fever, stumbling into a half-open

mausoleum, where inside its web-strewn
walls I took off my clothes, clenched

a piece of chalk in my fist and traced
each crack onto a damp roll

of parchment. I was broke, running in the rain.
I didn't believe yet started to pray:

O Thief of Roses, let my scab-scraped
knees become reliquaries for the future

nights dreamt upon this altar, for one
day I will turn them into slippery

broken marble with my fist full of violins,
where time suspends, where skin vibrates.