

Charcoal Nude

JOHN SIBLEY WILLIAMS

Roughed-up: edges indistinct: body
softly black & blending with all this white
space. The paper:

less a canvas than a mirror. That she is displayed here at all
is a minor miracle, the kind the old folks call
assimilation.

Not pictured:

the artist: his intent: that half-moon smile
when the legs are complete & the infinite
opening between.

Weaponized beauty, that we are meant to touch
ourselves with suspicion. Or is it guilt? A sordid history erased
or on full display, depending on

the context. The framed notecard doesn't give us

her name.