

Automaton with Flute

William Kelley Woolfitt

I am still a man of parts, fractions, halves,
a copper weathercock that wavers, dips
in the smallest wind. I am still Vaucanson's

fluteur automate, imitation of a living man,
cannot compress my lungs, open my lips
or sound a note, unless other hands work my bars,

levers, and bellows. My soul stays timorous,
cold, a flint that gives no sparks; my prayers
spill like gears from my unfastened mouth.