

Oubliette

by Julian Bishop

I painted the light out of Christ
 now I've broken the night's code
guttled the Gospels at a stroke
 reduced to a single cell
I'm a swan carved in stone
 held fast by a lamp-black sea
flogging rocks in the throat
 of a world that gagged on me
mortal morsel restless corpse
 I engrave my own funeral
on the guts of the earth
 only intermittently alive
if ever I see a square of sky
 I'll be another Lazarus
waiting to rise

Note: In 1607 Caravaggio was imprisoned for a month in the notorious underground guva at Malta's Fort St Angelo for assaulting another Knight until he escaped with the help of an unknown accomplice.