A Caravaggio

Light slices
down the room from above, right, across
with lunar intensity
as if an interrogator
were necessary
and yet everything
about the question has already been decided;
all that was ever needed was the confession;
the truth is something extra.

Here, then, is the scene:
one dead Christ
in the way
in the arms
of an apostle
held lovingly,
tenderly
expressing the love
that does not speak its name
uninformed
unrevealed
spent, and yet
the artist knows
this god will re-arise
Resurrection will be hard
and phallic
It eliminates, illuminates
Allan Johnston

saints, poses, the dead god
the light, the paint
a platonic complaint
against the dramatic artist
the actor
who feels
gods are more real
in the artifice of slicing light.
In the near monochromaticity
complicity
leeches or oozes in the mannered style
of passion; Raphael
could not accept these orgies of extremes
yet we get dreams
themselves weighed with light, with sex, with power
and the brief flower
and long decay of piety that might stem from this:
A last kiss given to the posed, dead god, whose life
cuts like a knife
across the centuries in all its height
to die in this dissection: the science of light.