

## *Pietà by Michelangelo: Marble, 1499*

by Darrel Alejandro Holnes

Even the Son of God's body must go cold when it dies  
shivering, chicken skinned, and chilled to its core of cuero en cuero  
saved for a rough, frayed, modesty cloth he wears  
as his flesh lay fading across his  
Earthly mother's lap of robes that hang as  
haggard and agonious as hangs her folded face of grief.  
Her mourning and his mortality are forever  
immortalized in Michelangelo's marble statue.  
If it were painted, perhaps the many reds of man's red blood would  
run on the river of Mary's robe's many blue hues; perhaps  
the statue's grief would be brought to life by a mix of  
cerulean and indigo swirling in crimson and scarlet.  
But there is no scarlet for the woman who watches the  
breath she gave her godly child float away from his body in a  
last exhale. There is no scarlet for the man who  
knew the world would betray him and still let it take his life.  
There is no scarlet for the world who kills its young or for  
the god who lets his son die. There is little color to this icon,  
little paint to its face, only austerity's shadows, only divine's light  
in the gray, in the marble, in the sorrow, in the white.