

After the Voices, by W.S. Merwin

Youth is gone from the place where I was young
even the language that I heard here once
its cadences that went on echoing
a youth forgotten and the great singing
of the beginning have fallen silent
with the voices that were the spirit of them
and their absences were no more noticed
than were those of the unreturning birds
each spring until there were no words at all
for what was gone but it was always so
I have no way of telling what I miss
I am only the one who misses it