

Silence; Creative or Destructive?

Creation at The Bottom of the Sea - Abraham Sutzkever

Creation on the bottom of the sea, without sun, without rays of light,
walking vegetation in an other-worldly landscape,
coral Towers of Babel, birth of death and life,
divine whims, it's high time we got acquainted.
It's high time we hurried out of the circus with its clowns, trapezes,
to here, where the pearl still rules in its glory.
It's high time we snatched the secrets out of the darkness
where sweet little hearts of slime beat in the sea's laboratory.
It's high time we drank wine with long drowned sailors
in the water-tavern on the bottom of the sea, in a ship's cabin,
and heard them tell of pirates, albatrosses, and loves that have gone on
for longer than a thousand years and still have not grown calm.
Every sound of brass and wood and string wants to be made free,
the human language is imprisoned in heavy cages.
It's high time we paid attention and glimpsed through a cranny
how mute stillness learns the alphabet of silence.

"Silence" - Shūsaku Endō

"I cannot bear the monotonous sound of the dark sea gnawing at the shore. Behind the depressing silence of this sea, the silence of God . . . the feeling that while men raise their voice in anguish God remains with folded arms, silent."

Speak, You Too - Paul Celan

Speak, You Too

Speak, you too,
speak last,
have your say.

Speak —
But do not split the No from the Yes.
Give your saying also meaning:
give it its shadow.

Give it enough shadow,
give it as much
as you know to be parceled out between your
midnight and midday and midnight.

Look around:
see how it all comes alive—
At death! Alive!
Speaks true, who speaks shadows.

But now the place you stand on shrinks:
Where to now, shadow-stripped one, where to?
Climb. Grope your way up.
You'll grow thinner, more unrecognizable, finer!
Finer: a thread
along which it wants to alight, the star:
so as to swim further down, down
where it sees itself gleam: in the swell
of wandering words.