

Silence

By Thomas Hood

There is a silence where hath been no sound,
 There is a silence where no sound may be,
 In the cold grave—under the deep deep sea,
Or in the wide desert where no life is found,
Which hath been mute, and still must sleep profound;
 No voice is hush'd—no life treads silently,
 But clouds and cloudy shadows wander free,
That never spoke, over the idle ground:
But in green ruins, in the desolate walls
 Of antique palaces, where Man hath been,
Though the dun fox, or wild hyena, calls,
 And owls, that flit continually between,
Shriek to the echo, and the low winds moan,
There the true Silence is, self-conscious and alone.

Source: Poets of the English Language
(Viking Press, 1950)