

Peter Hammill, Gone Ahead

We bite off our tongues
while chewing the fat;
though the fire in our lungs is celestial
our delivery falls flat.
Would a time come to be silent?
Oh, we never spoke of that.

We talked out of turn
in the school of hard knocks;
although willing to learn from experience
it still comes as a shock
when the time comes to be silent...
one by one the jaws all drop.

The voice is still clear in my head;
it's the last word in monologue...
close-up, interior, night.

Mmm...

The voices alive in my head
are all tongue-tied to silence now.

It's the darkest of moods,
it's the cruellest of jokes
that this facility I used, once so fluent,
is cut out at a stroke.
And the time came to be silent
as the core connection broke...
absurd ineloquence,
my own words on which I choke.

Swallowing deep on the thread,
so much I'm losing now,
so many things left unsaid
and the voice I've been using is
gone ahead.