

Celan letter

My dear Heidegger,

Though we were planning our little tour down the Ister
In the footsteps of Holderlin, our divine,
You knew in your heart
I would be on another journey.

I have reached my absolute
New poems need new light

More questions, more claims!

An "act of betrayal" I hear them say,
It is the fulfilment of a promise
To those departed
Of course it was beyond an 18yr old then
But now.....given the prospect ahead.

The real reason you ask
I have lost confidence in my future
Why?
I hardly know myself
My meridian has faltered
The heart no longer a place made fast.

The messages will wash up onto many minds
I have signalled another way
Prefigured a new freedom
But when! where!

Hannah carries the king a little further
How fortunate you are,
May you be free of the past
And help the free society of tomorrow.

Let the automaton chatter
I will not turn to stone.

My dear Martin, poems as I said somewhere
Are often desperate conversations
And with another awkward bow
I cannot say god bless you

Paul Celan