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## In the Woods

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My spirit goes out from me tonight—  
climbs Jack's Knob, following coonhounds  
like my body would, to think alone in the dark  
in a not so distant past.

My mind brings my spirit back to write  
that climb into form & sounds  
that echo like old Buck's unmistakable locating tree bark,  
a long howl before he sings his own self-praise, fast,

beckoning the man to come to that tree.

Alone, sitting on the point of the mt.,  
the man reads the stars like poetry,  
savors the wind walking thru brown leaves  
like a poet in search of his voice.

That spirit comes back down the mt.,  
leading the memory of a black-and-tan no one can see.  
The outward & the inward unite. No one grieves.  
The soul has no other choice.

It clings to the swaying top of a winter bare tree.

—Rudy Thomas