

**The Calling and Response
or The Thomas Wolf Blues**

The leaf, the stone, the wall of light –
O Lost!

Appalachian lullaby bends
its melody, whisper-tongued youth
with a mountain accent, slow
dissonance of Carolina rain
the gutter's heart beats
leaf

rock

light

unfounded resolution
these chords built on damp air and red clay,
the long crawl of verdant centuries,
a whippoorwill song of leaving,
mist falling, sun falling –
O Lost!

Babbling brook beckons,
creek seeps and saunters over roots,
streams over sand and sad
round rocks, sun on ripples
dances to the bubbling,
clear clean lick on meadow cheeks
shimmering, shimmying
meanders forever,
far-near the voice of light –
O Lost!

Dew soaks into old white socks
through holes never mended –
the leaves, the clay,
the wall of light dimming,
the falling mist
O Lost!
and yet,
the cello's stirring
still calling my response.