

Two Poems by John Abbott

Projectors

All I hear from the break room
Is the steady chug of the projectors:
Reels turning, machines sucking
In the film so fast it is as though
They have a thirst that cannot
Be satisfied, or perhaps
These mechanisms know the films
Are all second-run (nothing Oscar worthy
To be sure) and the patrons
Only buy tickets to lounge in
The air conditioned theatre
Until the July night cools

Sometimes the projectionist
Misses the cue
To switch over
To the second reel,
And I wait for
The first rustle
Of someone shifting
In their seat, the sudden
Halt of a theatre full
Of people crunching popcorn,
A listless army rising
From a trance.

Winter's Comfort

Traffic was good
out on the westbound,
light swarming
through new growth,
pine tree hills gently
bruised by runoff.

It'll be dark
soon but next week
a little later,
and then the next week
later still. I can finally see
myself settling into this season;

observing the various
shades of brown that make up
the tree trunks
is an exercise
in patience and denial,
a ritual we take comfort in

and try to forge
meaning out of,
or maybe just
get lost in the motion
of trees rushing by, waving me
on to the next destination.

John Abbott is a writer, musician, and English instructor who lives with his wife and daughter in Kalamazoo, Michigan. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in *The Potomac Review*, *Georgetown Review*, *Hawaii Pacific Review*, *Arcadia*, *Two Thirds North*, *upstreet*, *Midwestern Gothic*, *Bitter Oleander*, and many others. His first novel, *The Last Refrain*, is now available from Sweatshoppe Publications, and his poetry chapbook, *Near Harmony*, is available from Flutter Press. For more information about his writing, please visit www.johnabbottauthor.com