

THOMAS R. MOORE

## CLIMBING MT. BATTIE AUTO ROAD IN FOG

“I live with bread like you, feel want,  
Taste grief, need friends . . .”

—William Shakespeare, *Richard II* (1597)

My eighty-year-old lungs urge  
frequent stops. I avoid a curled  
snake flattened by a tire, then muse  
on self-accounting: forking silage,  
loss, 2x8s. Jersey heifers cook  
a ruckus at first milking, the thwop  
of teats, the hiss of milk an ancient  
rite. I purge loss by spiking joists,  
but it's inadequate. I once watched  
a vulture circling, circling, to reach  
a dead porcupine in a hemlock.  
He could not penetrate the branches  
with his six-foot span. I too want  
to enter, to hammer out my linkage  
to the world, to connect. A man—older  
than I by his stoop—emerges. *No sun*  
*on top*, he warns. *No bugs. No birds. No*  
*view*. The mist erases him.