

Tim Applegate

The Comfort Suites

December in Yakima.

The Comfort Suites off Powerhouse Road.

I have seven days to refinish the wood trim
in fifty-nine guestrooms, then a single weekend
to touch up the chairs and tables
in the lounge.

One evening as I soak my aching bones
in the motel's hot tub
it occurs to me that I could have
taught literature, or raised llamas.
I could, I suppose, have stayed in Florida
and remained in sales,

but then who would have recorded
this winter mist rising off the White Salmon River
on my way home from Yakima today?