

# SOUTH- WEST REVIEW

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY AT  
SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

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Bruce Berger: "Extreme Concertizing"

Jim Tilley: "The Judge"

Matthew Spellberg: "The Chimeric Element In Perception: A  
First Exploration"

Chris Arthur: "Tracks"

Fiction by Ellen Adams, Rita Welty Bourke, Colin Fleming, and  
Danny Lorberbaum,

Poetry by Jeanne Marie Beaumont, Sigman Byrd, Mary-  
ann Corbett, Hope Coulter, Judith Hall, Joseph  
Heithaus, Roald Hoffmann, Robert B. Jackson,  
A. M. Juster, Michael Shewmaker

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 For John Graves

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The books still lie sideways  
on the books standing on the shelves,  
but the chairs have dust-free silhouettes  
where the hardbacks once were stacked,  
and the dressers and tables are finally clear,  
revealing letters from past years,  
rusted snuffboxes, and a compass for drawing circles,  
its rough-hewn pencil sharpened with a penknife.

Straightening them was easier than deciding  
what to do with them all:  
Lee's first edition *Mockingbird* with the woodcut  
oak on front, Henderson's *Artistry in Single Action*,  
celebrating the Grizzly six-shooter,  
McMurtry's *Lonesome Dove* in uncorrected proofs,  
its cover yellow and severe like the Texas sands,  
McCarthy's *The Crossing*, with sepia skulls  
staring out from the dust jacket.

I try to separate  
the books by the ones to be kept.  
When at last I find one to give away  
I read the inscription, "For John Graves:  
If I were stuck on a desert island  
with 25 books, his would be at least three of them..."  
and put it back.

I give in and lie on the office floor staring up  
at the ceiling, where flaps of paint hang down  
like the turned corners  
of book pages. One shivers in the air from a fan,  
then another. The ceiling begins to shimmer  
and flow like water, and the books start to float

in procession through the door, down the limestone steps,  
and into the draw that leads to the creek  
that leads to the final river.  
And the room stands silent and empty.