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A Tour of the Southwest

Edward Lueders

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His father looked puzzled, and David side-stepped him and went to his room and lay down. From his bed all he could see were the soaked skeletal forms of the tumbleweeds, and the drumming of the rain on the flat roof was like the twitching of an eye muscle when he had read too much. He lay on the bed and wished that he would never have to get up again. Later his father stood silently in the doorway and looked at him a long time without speaking. David wanted to run to him and throw his arms around him and cry out "Oh Daddy the little boy is gone." But all he could hear was the drum-drum-drum of the rain, and all he could say was "I hate you, I hate you very much." He turned his face to the wall and hoped that his father would leave him alone or go up to the university and peck away on his typewriter on a dirty novel that nobody would ever want to read.

EDWARD LUEDERS

A TOUR OF THE SOUTHWEST

There are no nymphs on deserts,
 where twisted trees, the cacti,
 and the earth itself are male;
 where winds alone distill from dust
 the dryads dreaming there
 and spin them—sudden dervish devils—
 soundlessly, and
 senselessly, and
 aimlessly in air.

Nymphs prefer the sounds of sea,
 the pull, the pound, the suck of surf
 that shapes the sand and sends up spray.
 For nymphs are mist—essential
 moisture that defies evap-
 oration. The shoreline suits them.
 Damp and salt-sweet, they sigh, caress,
 dissolve, and kiss with liquid tongues
 our sensate sands—
 forever re-
 arranging the debris.