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## Where am I?

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# Where am I?

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*Dr. Robert J. De Smith* — Professor Emeritus of English, Dordt University

I have heard about  
Mind Palaces,  
Taught mnemonics  
And the organization of the modern library.  
I have marveled at the medieval  
Art of memory,  
Handed out images  
Of Ramelli's book wheel.  
But I didn't know they mattered so  
Until I brought my books home from my campus office.  
They were sorted first,  
Handled each by each  
(Its own act of memory),  
Then distributed to a daughter,  
A friend, a library:  
"Martyrs of pies and relics of the bum,"  
As Dryden called remaindered stock.  
At home,  
The remaining are doled out  
Among six bookcases on two floors,  
Some by subject  
(Shakespeare, English Language),  
Some by size and available shelf space.  
I'm lost—tripping up and down the staircase,  
Lying on the floor to scan low shelves,  
Craning my neck for the high,  
Remembering only how I used to  
Glance up from my desk  
And hold discourse  
With my ordered books.