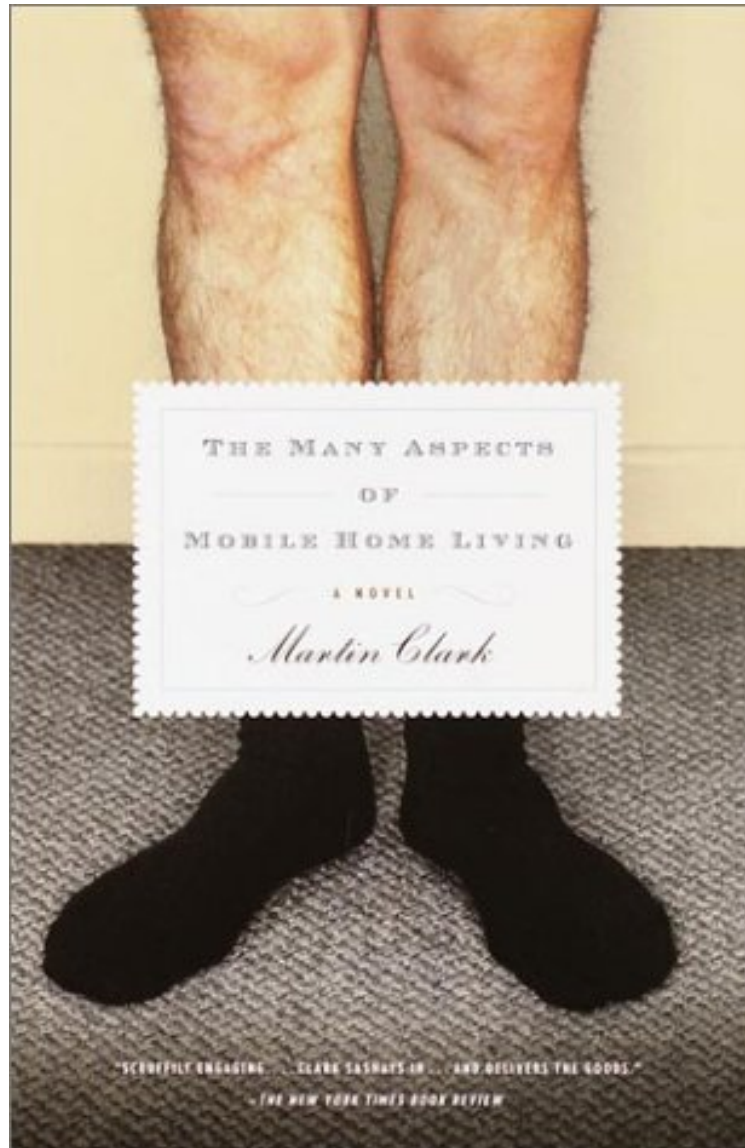


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## The Many Aspects of Mobile Home Living: A Novel

*Martin Clark*

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**Martin Clark : The Many Aspects of Mobile Home Living: A Novel** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Many Aspects of Mobile Home Living: A Novel:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. BookBy FarchimpFun, light hearted read.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Outstanding readBy Richard FVery quirky novel. I have no idea how this novel came together, but it really worked for me. There are a few times when you may consider giving up, but you won't be able to.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The Many Aspects of Mobile Home LivingBy R. HaggardI

couldn't finish it, it wasn't worth the time and effort. There was no one I liked and the main character seemed intelligent as a judge but totally lacking in common sense in his private life which was the main thrust of the story. Not worth the money.

In this masterful debut, Martin Clark proves to be the heir apparent of great Southern raconteurs and the envy of more seasoned novelists as he takes us on a frantic tour of the modern south. Hung over, beaten by the unforgiving sun, bitter at his estranged wife, and dreading the day's docket of petty criminal cases, Judge Evers Wheeling is in need of something on the morning he's accosted by Ruth Esther English. Ruth Esther's strange story certainly is something, and Judge Wheeling finds himself in uncharted territory. Reluctantly agreeing to help Ruth Esther retrieve some stolen money, he recruits his pot-addled brother and a band of merry hangers-on for the big adventure. Raucous road trips, infidelity, suspected killers, winning Lotto tickets, drunken philosophical rants, and at least one naked woman tied to a road sign ensue in *The Many Aspects of Mobile Home Living*, one part legal thriller, one part murder mystery, and all parts all wild.

.com Penzler Pick, April 2000: The world of mystery has long accepted the occasional offbeat tour de force that veers into the realm of uncertain reality. Even if its author might be startled to hear it, *The Many Aspects of Mobile Home Living* fits comfortably, I think, into the splendid list that includes John Dickson Carr's *The Burning Court*, Russell Greenan's *It Happened in Boston*, and William Hjortsberg's *Falling Angel*. At the same time, it is like none of those books. Imagine John Grisham crossed with Alice Hoffman and you might come closer to what's going on in these highly entertaining pages. The story itself offers interlocking strands that come together in the person of Evers Wheeling, a preternaturally young North Carolina judge who's headed to the dogs with his eyes wide open, "waiting to hit bottom," as he puts it. But just before he makes it there, into his life comes a blonde in trouble with an outrageous (and ever-mutating) tale of a brother who needs help avoiding a jail sentence. That this brother turns out not to resemble his sister in the slightest--he's an African-American dwarf, and strong for his size--is just a small surprise in the overall scheme of things. (Here you might start trying to picture *The Maltese Falcon* as rewritten by Charles Portis.) There's an elusive prize, possibly a cache of rare stamps worth millions, and a decided falling-out between an uncertain alliance of thieves; there's also a brutal murder, one that's close enough to home to put Evers Wheeling on trial for his own life. In addition to all this, there's Evers's brother, Pascal, to reckon with: he's the one with the double-wide trailer parked back in the woods, the IQ that's off the charts, the preference for staying stoned, and the one trying to help his sibling in any way he can, no matter the illegality. *The Many Aspects of Mobile Home Living* is enough to put Good Ole Boys back in style. But until Martin Clark writes his next book, I guess all I can do is go back and reread Michael Malone's equally memorable--and moving--*Handling Sin*, perhaps the best Southern novel of the past quarter-century. --Otto Penzler

From Publishers Weekly Clark, a circuit court judge in Virginia, has written a sophisticated legal thriller that is closer to the drug-besotted dadaism of Tom McGuane's early novels than to John Grisham. Evers Wheeling is a judge living in the small town of Norton, N.C. His wife, Jo Miller, refuses to visit him there; she lives, instead, on a farm Evers bought her near Durham. Evers and his brother, Pascal, inherited a fortune, but Pascal dissipated his share rapidly because "you're only young once, but you can be immature forever." One hungover morning, Evers is confronted by enigmatic Ruth Esther English, a used-car saleswoman with an inexplicable peculiarity: she cries white alabaster tears ("small bright circles... like a row of marble dimes") when she offers Evers money to intervene in favor of her brother, Artis, who is up on a cocaine possession charge. Artis holds a clue that would allow Ruth Esther to locate \$100,000 hidden after a robbery committed by Ruth, Artis and their late foster father. In a separate development, Evers, acting on a tip, discovers Jo Miller in flagrante with a local farmer. Egged on by Pascal's pot-smoking friends, Evers takes up with Ruth Esther and her lawyer, Pauletta Lightwren Qwai. Among Evers's less charming qualities are his bigotry and sexism, but Pauletta, a black activist, is attracted by some buried decency in the judge. As the couple lurch toward romance, Evers is mired in ever more shattering discoveries--the worst of which involves his wife and his brother. When Evers's vicious divorce trial is interrupted by violent death, Clark expertly causes Evers's own story and Ruth Esther's case to converge, delivering an enthralling mix of Southern gothic excess and legal procedure. BOMC and QPB alternate selection. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal Judge Evers Wheeling is drifting indifferently through life when he is brought up short by one Ruth Esther English, who asks him to help her oddball brother escape a drug charge. Ruth Esther entices the bored judge with the promise of an adventure. During their wacky journey, Evers, Ruth Esther, and her screw-up brother, Artis, are joined by Ruth Esther's lawyer; Evers's brother, Pascal; and other fake trailer-park trash friends. The group manages to recover stolen money and a mysterious letter only to have them taken by a crooked cop. But this book really isn't about the effort to track down the missing cash; instead, it explores the characters first novelist Clark, a circuit court judge, has created. Evers becomes belligerent after learning of the affairs of his long-distance wife, while Pascal chooses to get drunk and smoke pot with his engaging entourage. By the end, the only character with much mystery is Ruth Esther, whom Evers believes to hold almost angelic properties. Clark brings intelligence and a sense of the sinister to the proceedings and leaves the reader wondering how this cast of characters will move on once these

adventures roll past them. Highly enjoyable reading that is fast-moving and full of belly laughs.-Shannon Haddock,  
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