

Dorothy Barnett

Austin

ESCARPMENT

Past Henly, half-way to Blanco
the winding road rises to meet the sky,
stocktanks and scrub cedars
stretch below in limitless landscape,

A red-winged hawk floats in spirals
down, then up, then down,
the earth, the world itself
is caught in this moment
where season has no meaning

Against the cliffs, rosy star-flowers
clutch to crumbling limestone
in this mid-summer heat,
a mere handful of mountain pinks
their roots pulling water from air

I, too, am rooted here, try to forget
that croplands and pastures
sprout into suburbs and
black-top drifts into white
concrete and dividers, try to forget
this land has been here forever