

Zilker Park

(Easter-Midnight)

by Dorothy Ellis Barnett

Sometimes there is a stillness in the park and the empty swings seem unfamiliar. It is like that tonight. A lone yellow dog crosses the soccer field, stops its canter long enough to look back at my moon-silvered car. The dog and I move through this emptiness towards something else. He seems so sure of his destination. I know only the certainty of the next corner then the right turn into the neighborhood where I've lived for 16 years. All those years, in this night quiet I feel that I don't belong among these native stone and red brick houses with pampered lawns. I remember the slat-backed familiarity of the wooden rocker on my grandmother's front porch, long for the red, sandy loam yard, the fireflies' light across the road in the darkness of the hog wallow where they said Slick Brown disappeared. There is little history in my life now, a few black and white photos of giant sequoia, Oregon logging camps, faces fading from my memory. My children will remember other things and long for those. The cedar chest by my bed holds baby clothes from 30 years ago and little else.