The Mockingbird

Beth Turner Ayers
THE MOCKINGBIRD
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Necessity brought me here.
I had preconceived notions
Of Texas.
How appropriate, I thought.
The mockingbird perches
In a representative pose
As it mimics, yes mocks,
Inducing false hope
With its imitation of reality,
With unnatural voices.
Prolific, deceptive voices:
The cowboy want-to-be
Cheerleader moms
The voice of the Old South
“Ya’ll come back ya’ hear,”
If deemed acceptable.
I expected red-neck voices.
The real cowboy is extinct.

But years absorb cynicism
I now marvel at the mockingbird,
Texas bird.
No longer does it mimic.
It whistles the ultimate complement,
The flattery of reproduction.
It sings with its own voice,
Momentarily mistaken for another.
It is genuine; it is unique.
Offering a vast variety.
Preconceived notions evaporate.
How appropriate, I think.
The mockingbird was chosen,
Delegated to high status,
Its unequalled song covers the state
That absorbed the cowboy.
Necessity keeps me here
But I don’t mind.