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# Oklahoma Homecoming

BY RICHARD D. KAHOE

When California quakes or Florida hurricanes  
eclipse tornado memories,  
when Houston unemployment goes ballistic,  
when death or divorce dulls the luster  
of the Rockies or the Ozarks,  
can you go home to Oklahoma?

A pipeline matrix echoes busted oil booms;  
"deer crossing" warns where whitetails  
were never known before, but armadillos  
challenge possums for road kill honors—  
as egret immigrants curry beef,  
hide-bleached by Charolais DNA,  
ears half-masted by Brahman spin-offs.  
And turnpike restaurant arches  
are gilt McDonald's gold.

But strangers still hail strangers  
as pickups meet on country roads;  
Native American faces look up from  
highway crews, toll booths, and nursing stations.  
Flat-topped elms and spreading cedars  
bow to sun, wind, and drought;  
mid-day glare engenders crow's-feet,  
while wildly whirling windmills  
invoke the psychic ache of steady winds.  
Cicada summer roadside songs buzz incessant,  
where terra-cotta buttes table over grassy plains;  
melon stands overflow from fertile sands,  
the fatted wheat gilds June expanses,  
and sorghum plush red-carpets August fields.  
License plate codes prime dim memories  
of county names ingested for Oklahoma History, and  
sky blue state-flag fields shimmer over choice sites.  
Small town diner menus lean on beef and fries—  
"cholesterol" an oath in a foreign tongue.

But it can be.  
Eat your heart out, Mister Wolfe,  
I'm coming home. ■