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A Texas Folk Tale

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A TEXAS FOLK TALE

The sign welcomed
“Drive Friendly
The Texan Way.”
The sun was shining,
the miles of road smooth.

But I was dark clouds,
cracking jokes,
acting Texan.
“Hell, I need a beer and a shotgun.
I’m gonna shoot meself a cow
and roast it over the spit.”
(Every Northern city boy knows
all good Texans have guns
and eat lots of red meat.)

But what did I know of Texas?
What could I know? I saw
a pickup truck ahead of us
driving slowly, our car
approaching steadily.

Across the plains,
cattle grazed,
barbed wire fences
stretched,
a picnic table
stood
alone,

our car grew close;
the driver ahead,
an older man
in a farmer’s cap
eased his pickup
to the side of the road.
We passed.

— *Bill Trudo*