

Small Favors

Turquoise Coyotes and copper Kokopellis, cowboy kitsch
and Navajo bling, revival tent religion, *Arizona Highways*
sunsets and two-faced bolo-tie politicians,
wells going dry, family farms bankrupted
by global market industrial agriculture brought in
under laws and regulations that encourage unlimited pumping
(thousands of gallons/minute from thousands of feet down)
passed and kept in effect by commerce-monger true believers
who have no doubt the world was created solely for our use
or that Providence will provide until the end days
prove this world of flesh blood and water no more than a phase
on a preordained path to immaterial eternity.

Thanks for small favors: the rancher who holds the grazing lease
of the section of State Trust Land along the north fence
is out there with his excavator now that growing season is past
grubbing up the mesquite and whitethorn (chasing off the birds
and animals who lived there) to provide grass for his cattle
in coming years, assuming the drought lets up (trees I've known
for decades on that horizon disappearing one after one
to the growl and mechanical clunking of his long-necked machine)
ripping them up by the roots and leaving them in piles of dirt
instead of using herbicides as cattlemen commonly do
but he, for whatever personal reasons, decided not to.