

DAVID ALLAN CATES *GOOD LUCK*

Photo by John Simpkins: Morning light, dust rises from a vehicle traveling Flat Tire Road, looking east from Old Andrews School

My dad was a poet who didn't write poems.
When he was serious, he had to make sense,
which is understandable if you know that nonsense
can be a painful place to be from, and he

was from there. Once my heart burst
me out of sleep and urged me run across
the river (or swim — I did that, too) and knock
on a girl's door. I had nothing but my desire—

no words, not even breath — so I kissed her
and she kissed me back, and the rest makes little sense
as well. Now I'm alone by a fire, drunk with the blood
that made me, dancing under the same stars

that made and turned millions, now all dead.
It's just a way to keep from feeling alone.
I can hear my dad if I told him. Easily
amused but kind, he took my ambitions

seriously. In his last years his boyhood loneliness
returned, and he sat looking at things he couldn't
understand, pictures, rings, pages of writing,
my mother. Good luck, he'd say, with all that.

David Allan Cates' collection of poetry, *The Mysterious Location of Kyrgyzstan*, is forthcoming from Satellite Press. He is the author of five novels, most recently *Tom Connor's Gift*, winner of the 2015 Independent Book Publishers Books Award for best fiction in the Rocky Mountain west region. He is the executive director of Missoula Medical Aid, a non-profit that does health care and health improvement projects in Honduras.



