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A Profusion of Parallel Tracks: Why Mongolian Roads of Dirt and Gravel Branch, Multiply, and Fuse Endlessly

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A Profusion of Parallel Tracks: Why Mongolian Roads of Dirt and Gravel Branch, Multiply, and Fuse Endlessly

Whether crossing mountains, steppes,
or the Gobi, we meet no fences.

The way is paved with fragments
of bone; the insistent long lift
of winds that breathe out sage

and the fragrance of crushed onion sprigs.
We are our own police. and though there
are few bridges, we will find a thousand

fords. Having learned from nimble horses
to innovate—we dodge the washboard rattle,
the boil of dust, the shock-shattering potholes,

and winter's brickhard ruts. We juke the herds
of random camels & randy goats that balk and bolt

to uncertain rhythms. We make do.

You dally, my friend, and I will swing wide
& forge another passing lane.

-Bill Yake

Bill Yake examined water, sediment and air quality for environmental agencies before retiring to focus on poetry, travel and natural history. His collections include *This Old Riddle: Cormorants and Rain* and *Unfurl, Kite, and Veer*. In addition to having been featured on National Public Radio, his poems show up in magazines and anthologies serving the environmental and literary communities—from *Wilderness Magazine* to *Anthropology and Humanism*,

from *Open Spaces Quarterly* to *Fine Madness*, from *Rattle* to *ISLE*. Other interests include photography, natural history, evolution and hiking.