

## The Billion Dollar Dream: Stories

**Robert Day**

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Robert Day's third collection of stories offers treasures, surprises, and provocative points of view as his characters—some of them unsavory sorts—dig deep into the reality of their lives to reveal truths that can be startling in their clarity. In the story that gives rise to the book's title, a man puts himself to sleep at night by fantasizing that a mysterious source has given him a billion dollars—with increasingly more stringent conditions attached until he believes that his very life hangs in the balance. In another tale, a couple is burdened with the care of four birds, gifts of the wife's mother, but even more burdensome is the routine of a life marked chiefly by restraint. In still another, a simple High Plains gravedigger takes pleasure and pride in hand-digging graves by the light of the moon, with the "love of his life" at his side.

Day, whose work has garnered multiple prestigious awards and fellowships, has taught at the Iowa Writers Workshop, the University of Kansas, and the Université Bordeaux Montaine. He is past president of Associated Writing Programs, the founder and director of the Rose O'Neill Literary House, and founder and publisher of the Literary House Press at Washington College, where he is an adjunct professor of English literature. In this, his newest work, Day gives an unflinching look at how life is lived on the other side of the tracks as his well-drawn characters confront crossroads moments that compel them to make decisions that catapult them out of their familiar reality into something entirely different.

KRISTINE MORRIS (Winter 2016)

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