

MILLION-DOLLAR RAIN

ROBERT PEAKE

—for E.K.

It is hardly there at all,
this feather-rain, suffusing
the air with casual descent

pooling in crevices of husk
and trickling down the yellow stem,
dampening the topsoil sponge.

It is the antidote to drought, but also
to floods of Biblical scale, this
Providence and proof of tenderness—

each droplet a tiny silver dollar
skating the side of a piggybank,
reclaiming the mortgaged barn.

How strange to discover it here,
leashing an eager Retriever for his
pre-dawn hike through a London park,

four thousand miles and an ocean away
from where the saying first took root
in your keen farm-girl's mind.

Strange how what is hardly there
is there all the more for its gentleness,
dampening the head of your blonde companion,

who, when you unclip his collar, races
as fast as ever through clay and mud
toward doves he will never catch.

The neighbour dressed in misery still won't
return your smile, unaware he's breathing
money-mist, shaking gold-dust from his hair.

So you walk with this secret knowledge,
burning like a gas lamp inside, while all around
the land is soaking, gently, soaking.