Where the Tiny Things Are: Feathered Essays
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Published by Punctum Books

Walker, Nicole.
Where the Tiny Things Are: Feathered Essays.

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Microhematocrit

It is possible that there is not one word that cannot host a micro in front of it. The only things I can think of are real nouns—things you can eat. I cannot eat a hematocrit but I can micro it. Micro is the domain of the elusive, the abstract, the plausible but not the palpable. When does the micro ever really matter? Perhaps only when its meaning is displaced. Microbrew. It’s not that the beer is tiny. The micro is not Budweiser. Not Coors. Sometimes micro is merely a correction. I do not eat microberries, micropotatoes, microtoast, microsteak.

On a Tuesday in the fall, any fall, it doesn’t matter, fall is always dying, dying is worse than dead, and therefore, as beautiful as fall is, winter is still not as terrifying, I thought I was dying. There was a lump, there was a test, an X-ray, an electrocardiogram. There was the move, the leaving, the new air, the lack of red only yellow aspens, brown gambel oaks, there was only railroad and freeway. There was only doctor after doctor and then, only then, smaller copays and larger appointments, the kind that filled hours and required out-patient. How could I die so many ways in just one year? I held my cat close to me because he, I knew, would die before me and I could gauge my fear in the thinness of his skin, the rosary of his bones. His teeth were covered in tiny dots of red. It was not the red I had been missing. I missed his large orange fur. The markings that made him look like an ocelot. I missed the things I could see.