Where the Tiny Things Are: Feathered Essays
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Microwind

I inch toward you, girl. I do not go with grace. I have been putting it off, which is not the right thing to do. You are just a baby but even when my baby, whose name means life in Greek, hovered in the hospital, I did not want to be hospital bound. I prefer to go. Tubes and trachs and vents are the 21st century chains in this broken world. Still, I should have come right away but I had just been to Tucson where the wind was blowing, where Zoe ate 48 orange Cuties, staving off all scurvy and also whatever diseases everyone else came down with later that week, where my friend from college, Misty, chopped the red bell peppers so tiny all the pesticides disappeared, where the re-routed Colorado sunk into the aquifer and we turned on the hose, brought up that water, made our own canal system in the gravel driveway, and then recycled it ourselves, letting it soak into the ground, back into aquifer from whence it came. I should have gone but I am not sure how much I can help. I do not blow much more than hot air and I don’t like to fly. I hate the I here. I should have gotten on a plane.

I would go to you girl, girl in California, girl, where the oranges we ate in Tucson came from, where the Colorado goes to, if I knew that my coming would catalyze your alveoli to do their chemical work. If there was something the smell of me could do, the slip of my sweat commingling with the abrasive soap that would make the CO₂ in your lungs convert out of your blood, to pull the oxygen in, if the dust mites
on my eyelashes could make nanowork and puff air sacs open better than the ventilator could, if the microorganisms in my gut, keeping me as healthy as any orange Cutie, could bounce into your stomach and train your stomach to pull in the whole round of the world. It’s like you’ve got your soul stuck halfway in and halfway out and you’re choking on it, little girl. You’ve been womb-free for eight weeks, girl, and your eyes are open and looking at your mom whose eyes I won’t be able to look into when I tell you, girl, it’s not the horror of death you see but the horror of little miracles that are just not getting off the ground. I would like to think that my impending arrival will bump those pneuma from concrete flats into the phenomena they are supposed to be, pneuma from the Greek, the vital spirit; the soul. Or in Theology, the Spirit of God; the Holy Ghost.

I will come anyway and sing a song about being forsaken. In between the lyrics of the song, I will chant words to you. An incantation that I pray will become an incarnation. In that song about flying on the wind I will sing also the word pneuma over and over again. From the Greek: pneûma, literally, breath, wind, akin to pneîn, to blow, breathe. I will say to you, forget about pneumonia. I will incant to you the pneuma and, in my dreams, it will become your lungs and I will blow myself from here, so far away, to you.
But my song, like everyone who is singing to you, is made of very privileged air. Air goes in. Air goes back out. How reliable. But wind. Wind is what you need. Where does it come from? Where does it go? Wind is its own kind of miracle. Not even the Holy Ghost can blow it himself. Wind is a small miracle and what’s going to save you has got to be a little thing. Smaller than you, tiny baby. The smallest thing in the world.