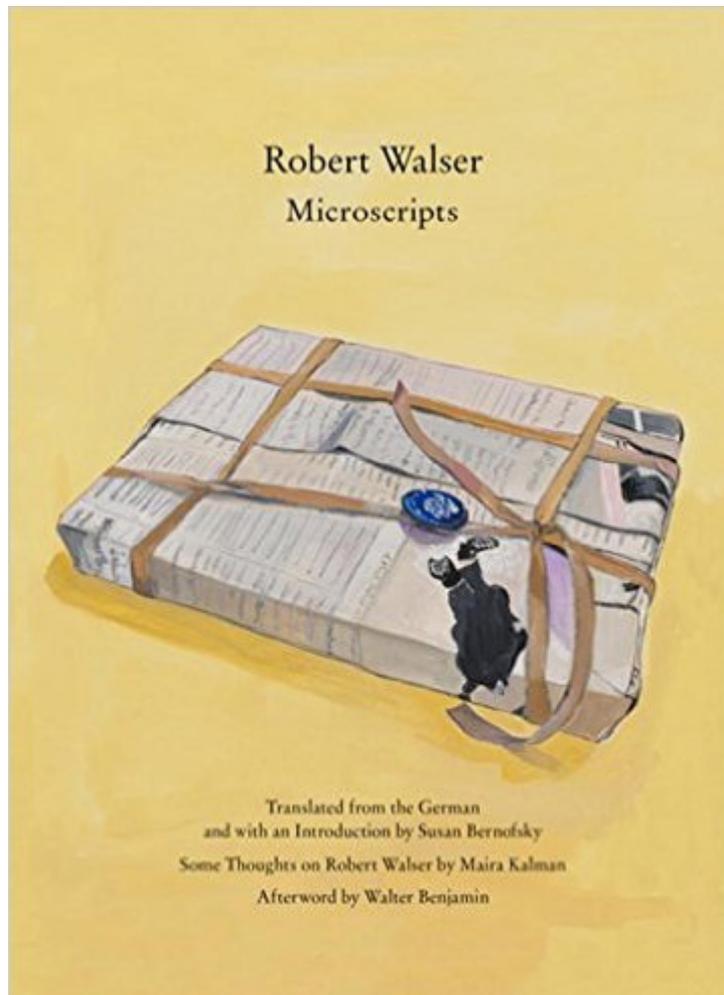


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Microscripts



Synopsis

Now in a gorgeous new paperback edition with full-color illustrations by Maira Kalman, *Microscripts* is a one-of-a-kind masterpiece. Robert Walser wrote many of his manuscripts in a highly enigmatic, shrunken-down form. These narrow strips of paper, covered with tiny ant-like pencil markings a millimeter high, came to light only after the author's death in 1956. At first considered random restless pencil markings or a secret code, the microscripts were in time discovered to be a radically miniaturized form of antique German script: a whole story was deciphered on the back of a business card. These twenty-five short pieces address schnapps, rotten husbands, small town life, elegant jaunts, the radio, swine, jealousy, and marriage proposals.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

... whether any reader could or should remain non-committal for more than five pages of Robert Walser's prose, in this or any other of his books, in the original German or in translation. You'll get it or you won't. I could label his typical story/sketch as gnomonic, hermeneutic, oracular, whimsical ... or trivial, picayune, infantile, coy ... but you still wouldn't know what to expect. So I think the only way to review Walser's *Microscripts* is to quote one at some length; here's the beginning of one: "He numbered, as might well have been true of many others, among the good. Perhaps it is an error to go about considering oneself good with no further ado. One might naturally also refer to him as a refined individual, since all good people believe they are very refined, and because all beautiful people are virtually incapable of relinquishing the illusion that they are good. Once he founded a sort

of enterprise, counting on the support of all the other nice, good, devout, joyous refined persons. Was there not a certain recklessness in this sort of calculation? Be that as it may, these good people left him utterly in the lurch, and the completeness with which they abandoned him might appear in itself to possess great worth. The good man was, at some point or other, good enough not to attribute particularly much importance to a beautiful woman. Moreover, this good fellow had brown hair, and when he began to think of something, his train of thought was brown. His blood was of the brownest brown. With his doe eyes he gazed -- as one might possibly be permitted to say -- in headwaiter fashion, perusing some Vienna Choir heights that can scarcely have existed, where the most stalwart acts of laziness were being performed." "The Good Man has a wife, Mrs. Brown, and an adversary, Mr.

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