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What We Look at Now

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Pirkopf: What We Look at Now

WHAT WE LOOK AT NOW
Alita Pirkopf

Photos
of my friend's
relatives look
like mine—
my relatives,
my inherited photos.
I don't always know
who I am looking at.
Like the pictures
in a stereoscope,
the photos of our families
come together into one image.
Our stories, too, are similar.

Up to a point.

My German great-grandfather
came to America
to escape war. Hers did too
the only one in her family
to escape war.

And this is the point.

Her family, house mice
to Nazis, were trapped
and exterminated.
They traversed Galicia,
climbed the Carpathians,
and ended

in heavy clouds
of smoke.

That's what we look at
now. That's the point.