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Sommario/riassunto	A free ebook version of this title is available through Luminos, University of California Press's Open Access publishing program. Visit www.luminosoa.org to learn more. Why are the small and unimportant relics of Roman antiquity often the most enduring, in material form and in our affections? Through close encounters with minor things such as insects, brief lives, quibbles, irritants, and jokes, Emily Gowers provocatively argues that much of what the Romans dismissed as superfluous or peripheral in fact took up immense imaginative space. It was often through the small stuff that the Romans most acutely probed and challenged their society's overarching values and priorities and its sense of proportion and justice. There is much to learn from what didn't or shouldn't matter. By marking the spots where the apparently pointless becomes significant, this book radically adjusts our understanding of the Romans and their world, as well as our own minor feelings and intimate preoccupations.

