

# Poet Wrestling with the Taking of Time

by ROSEBUD BEN-ONI

Don't call it returning.  
When you erupt  
from clinging  
aisle floor  
& nucleus  
on bloody milk  
glass & shattered  
screen & incoming  
familiar tones  
they mute  
while shoving  
a warm thing in your loose  
grasp. Don't call it *nothing*  
*lasts* or  
a choice:  
feed or fast.  
It won't let you eat your own body.  
It keeps you walking when you need to  
run to keep your heart  
from hearing  
footsteps  
too heavy  
& too close & estranged.  
It plots & covets & maims.  
*Yearns* to obliterate you from this earth.  
All place. & elsewhere. As if you could try  
to best. Or give  
chase.                    *Flashback* isn't a right name. It's never  
singular. It's never the same. Even when it rushes & rams  
again. You are now its explicit particulars  
without pinpointing  
where & how &  
when.

*Trauma* feels

too much  
like past tense. They mean  
well when they say  
*it takes time.*  
You know it takes  
time.  
It's not the same  
effacing you are  
facing.  
It isn't  
the same kind  
of  
taking.

Rosebud Ben-Oni is the winner of the 2019 Alice James Award for *If This Is the Age We End Discovery*, forthcoming in 2021, and the author of *turn around, BRXGHT XYXS* (Get Fresh Books, 2019). Her chapbook *20 Atomic Sonnets*, which appears online in *Black Warrior Review*, (2020) and is part of a larger project called *The Atomic Sonnets*, which she wrote in honor of the Periodic Table's 150th Birthday. She is a recipient of fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) and CantoMundo. Her work appears in *POETRY*, *The American Poetry Review*, *POETS.org*, *The Poetry Review (UK)*, *Tin House*, *Guernica*, *Black Warrior Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Electric Literature*, *TriQuarterly*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, among others. Her poem "Poet Wrestling with Angels in the Dark" was commissioned by the National September 11 Memorial & Museum in New York City, and published by *The Kenyon Review Online*. She writes for *The Kenyon Review* blog, and recently edited a special chemistry poetry portfolio for *Pleiades*. Find her at [7TrainLove.org](http://7TrainLove.org).