

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.