

Nina Rubinstein Alonso

Why I Left

There was a point at which everything
became unreal my life like
a thin page of text held up to the light

print I couldn't read because margin
scribbles overlapped whatever was
originally written doubtfully smudged

with side-notes in many colors of ink
and somehow I both care and don't care
squinting can barely recognize my words

as if moths ate the wooly fabric of
so-called personal history that I didn't
think I could live without but even now

staring hard the photos seem flimsy as
brittle as old movies that time fades to blur
or woven textiles with washed away patterns

there's not much to hold in my hand
just flickering memory of something glowing
that used to be hot that was fiercely on fire.

Nina Rubinstein Alonso's work has appeared in *Ploughshares*, *The New Yorker*, *Ibbetson Street*, *Broadkill Review*, *Writing in a Woman's Voice*, etc. Her book *This Body* was published by David Godine Press, and her chapbook *Riot Wake* is upcoming from Cervena Barva Press. She's the editor of *Constellations a Journal of Poetry and Fiction*, constellations-lit.com.