

Nina Rubenstein Alonso

Whatever It Takes

--for Grandpa Joseph Levine/Levandovski

In line gripping his bag
he says 'Warsaw' but

the clerk writes what
he thinks he hears-- 'Russia'

Grandpa bakes challah and bagels
sips schnapps and slowly

blinks bloodshot blue eyes
thin red hair a soft foggy voice

short and sturdy my mama's papa
they whisper about 'over there'

letters that stop coming
from auntie in Poland

he lifts empty hands
and says something in Yiddish

about sewing money into his jacket
whatever it takes to get out.

Nina Rubenstein Alonso's work has been published in *The New Yorker*, *Ploughshares*, *Ibbetson Street*, *Sumac*, *New Boston Review*, *Bagel Bards*, *U. Mass. Review*, etc., and her book *This Body* was published by David Godine Press. Stories have appeared in *Southern Women's Review*, one a Pushcart nominee, and most recently in *Broadkill Review*.