I don't want to feed the ghost hovering over warm homes, growing fat from scraps of grief, anger, scorn dutifully offered up to red-lit altars dark fruits of whose labor and for whom? confusing remembrance with vengeance — they lovingly laid family portraits next to burning embers, inky incense, ill bodings rise, a prayer that clouds out the heavens casting long shadows on paths ahead. The ghost stretches forward, ever hungry and ever fed.

Ghost pains —
for what was laid to rest
and deserves to rest,
yet lingers still.

I don't want to feed the ghost that tries to follows me, a strange sense of guilt: guilt to have never felt the aftershock of a bomb or the frigid lap of dark ocean waves, guilt to be alive and happy, guilt to see in colors beyond old silver photographs full of horror and debris, guilt to want to learn all sides of history, guilt to feel love for my homeland.

I don't want to feed the ghost but I wonder if the ghost is gone

will what remains be emptiness?

a void, devoid of memories both painful and beautiful. No stories left to grasp to remember the ghosts of who we were, what came before, to remind us we are more than a generation-wide sense of displacement.

Loyalty or a lifeline, Who has been feeding whom?

Ghost pains — for a life without ghosts, yet doubt lingers still, we linger still.

Katherina Nguyen is a person who hopes for a life full of memorable stories and beloved characters. Vietnamese-American since the age of Éive, Stanford University alumni working in design and technology. Lives in San Francisco, dreams from everywhere. Currently rediscovering herself through clumsy words and mixed metaphors.