

Ghosts

by David Ackley

...ghosts still resentful, ghosts far from home...

After Hwang Sok-Yong, *The Guest*

Mine are more benevolent I like to think,
though it may be Yankee reticence
to ignore the horror
for the milder sense.

If they resent, they keep it close.
I tell Harry and Fred about the grandkids,
Fred's great-great, and Harry's great;
they try to smile their calcified lips.

And for Uncle Philip,
how his medals finally came, and adorn my wall.
To them it matters not much what I say
To the dead all talk is small.

Talking to bones and scraps, words in the dark
though, for all that, if I were them—and I am—
what I'd want to hear.

