



Cockroaches

A proposal by someone to my mom
after the Vietnam War: *Why don't
you sell your baby, you don't have
anything to eat?*

A response by my four-year-old brother:
*No, don't sell my sister! There are lots
of cockroaches for us to eat!*

When I returned to the country
eighteen years later, I saw them—
large, brown shiny tanks on the wall,

evidence of my brother's love for me.

Teresa Mei Chuc



Teresa Mei Chuc (Chúc Mỹ Tuệ) was born in Sài Gòn, Việt Nam and immigrated to the U.S. as a refugee of war under political asylum with her mother and brother shortly after the American war in Việt Nam while her father, who had served in the Army of the Republic of Việt Nam, remained in a Viet Cong "reeducation" prison camp for nine years. Poet Laureate Emerita of Altadena, California (Editor-in-Chief) 2018-2020 and a member of the Pasadena Rose Poets, Teresa Mei Chuc is the author of three full-length collections of poetry, *Red Thread* (Fithian Press, 2012), *Keeper of the Winds* (FootHills Publishing, 2014) and *Invisible Light* (Many Voices Press, 2018). Teresa and Doug Rawlings, American veteran of the Việt Nam War, published a collaborative poetry book titled *Cầu Tre / Bamboo Bridge: Conversations between a Vietnamese Boat Refugee and an American Veteran of the Việt Nam War - Told in Poetry and Prose* (November 2021). Teresa's poetry chapbook, *Fenghuang*, will be published by Hummingbird Press and is forthcoming in Fall/Winter 2022.