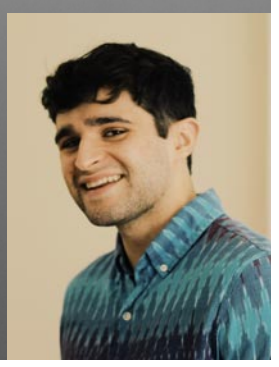
# Presences, Actions, Scars

But what if ghosts aren't perpetual
dying? Rather, singing. Old bone
creaked forward listening
to the summer vegetable shook
loose from its soil. Like the upset dirt,
most prefer the word spirit. Free, untethered.
Who would want something like that?
Scare me a little. Make me a bit
afraid of what accompanies me. What Dad called
good fear when I ran to him after a bad fall,
knowing it might have ended me. I am good
afraid of ghost. Their presences, actions, scars. Their cool
fingers conjuring my brow. Their tender thereness.
And dirge-like mourning for the dead in us.


## Darius Atefat-Peckham

Darius Atefat-Peckham's work has appeared in *Poem-a-Day, Indiana Review, Shenandoah, Rattle, The Journal, The Georgia Review*, and elsewhere. He is the author of the chapbook *How Many Love Poems*, (Seven Kitchens Press, 2021). His work has recently appeared in the anthology My Shadow is My Skin: Voices from the Iranian Diaspora (University of Texas Press). Atefat-Peckham grew up in Huntington, West Virginia and currently studies English and Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard.

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