

nineteen fifty five
san antonio
texas
abuse set me on fire
i nearly burned to death
a working healer
who did work for my grandmother
dropped his tools
wrapped me in a painting drop cloth
and rushed
me to the hospital in his old green work truck
he came every day and prayed over me until
it became clear that i would live
weeks and weeks
skin grafts
transfusions
skin peeling off
face crusted up
out of my mind
excruciating pain
attending nurses in tears
nothing that could mirror me was allowed in the room.
then reynaldo disappeared
to go to others.
i do not know where his spirit is
but his name is always within reach.
he used tres flores brilliantine on his hair
he was thin and tall
he had a zapatista moustache
he had a smile that spread through the room
he wore a wooden cross
his hands were scarred
he had the hands of a calm workman
his eyes were brown.

are there any better hands to hold your spirit
than the ones who know how to hold your spirit with the belief that it needs to exist.

reynaldo.
wf.h.
2024