

## The Hands · *Ray Ronci*

At night, the hands come to the face and  
push it together again. The hands know the terrain,  
have always known how the years leave behind fragments  
of the face. The fingers push the layers, rub and  
spread the skin around, find their place closest  
to the skull. Skin and bones of my spirit, crawl space,  
temple, cave, waiting room and cathedral for many other  
spirits, at night the hands come to the face  
and push it together again.

\* \* \*

It's the cold that puts one hand inside the other,  
like prayer. And the trains go by. And the cold stays.  
And it's the cold that puts one hand inside the other,  
as in waiting for a train, as in waiting, waiting,  
one hand, for the other.

\* \* \*

The cold pushes the blood aside, howls through veins  
to heart, and from heart throughout the limbs. Hands  
and feet frantic. Old hands stretching from the dark,  
to the flames.

\* \* \*

It's been a long time since this wind, bright sun,  
a trace of old snow, squirrel on a fence holding on,  
swirling papers and leaves, walking, my hands unfisted  
in my pockets.