

# He Was Thirty

*Jack Granath*

He was, I don't know, I guess he was thirty, and I was ten years younger so I was twenty, though it seems more like I was twenty-two, so maybe he was thirty-two or maybe I was eight years younger and I rounded off to ten, either way he was a lot older than me and, like, totally obsessed about his age. Or I used to say the difference, as in the age difference, but it wasn't the difference, it was just his age, which was thirty—or roughly—and not so old when you really think about it, but he was, like, obsessed, always calling himself an old man and stuff, always playing me songs, you know the one, "Old Man" I think, I don't know who played it, probably Bob Dylan—Christ—and poems, always giving me poems, one called "Old Man" too, I think, I'm not sure, and anyway I don't know who wrote it, and stories. I don't think he ever gave me a story called "Old Man," but he gave me lots of stories about old men, xeroxes mainly, sometimes books, and sometimes he just told them; at first, he always just told them, like they were his or like they were fairy tales or something, but finally he gave me the stories to read and they were just stories. They were somewhat depressing. He was a lot older but he was still pretty good at making love (we made love), not the best, by a long shot, but still pretty good, I mean it was fun, or more like—he just took it very seriously. But he was always going on about his age, I should be able to figure it out, it was four years ago so I was twenty, or maybe it was just two years ago, I don't know, I was drinking then, I know that much, but then I've been drinking since forever, you know, in moderation mainly, and you know it never occurred to me that maybe he was dying, like maybe he had cancer or something and that's why he thought of himself as old, because he was near, like, the end, or something, I don't know, I just

thought of it the other day, it would explain a lot. Or maybe he was just that way, some people are just that way, I don't know, I've never been with anyone else who was old, you know, so I can't really compare. Not *that* old anyway.