Old Man

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remembrance (smiles/hurts sweetly)
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old man
with brown skin
talking of past
   when being shepherd
   in utah, nevada, colorado and new mexico
was life lived freely;
old man,
grandfather,
wise with time
running rivulets\(^1\) on face,
deep, rich furrows,
each one a legacy,
deep, rich memories
of life . . .

   “you are indio,\(^2\)
   among other things,”
he would tell me
during nights spent
so long ago
   amidst familial gatherings
   in albuquerque . . .
old man, loved and respected,
he would speak sometimes

\(^1\) rivulets (RIHV-yoo-lihts) n. pl. little streams
\(^2\) indio (EEN-dee-yoh) adj. Indian
of pueblos,³
    san juan, santa clara,
    and even santo domingo,
and his family, he would say,
came from there:
    some of our blood was here,
    he would say,
    before the coming of coronado,⁴
other of our blood
    came with los españoles,⁵
and the mixture
    was rich,
    though often painful . . .
old man,
who knew earth
    by its awesome aromas
and who felt
the heated sweetness
    of chile verde⁶
by his supple touch,
gone into dust is your body
    with its stoic look and resolution,
but your reality, old man, lives on
in a mindsoul touched by you . . .
Old Man . . .

³. pueblos (PWEH-blohz) n. pl. towns, villages; also people or nations. The reference here is to Native American pueblos in central and northern New Mexico.
⁴. coronado (koh-roh-NAH-doh) Francisco Vásquez de Coronado, Spanish explorer in the 1500s who led an expedition into what is now Arizona and New Mexico
⁵. los españoles (lohs ahs-pahn-NYOH-lays) n. pl. the Spaniards
⁶. chile verde (CHEE-lay VAIR-day) green pepper

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