

HE found himself dead and aged, at the same time; nobody he ever sought out afterwards would be able to explain it. The appalling scars, tokens of his ignominious demise, were something he could have foretold, but the abundant grey in his hair and the roughness of his skin were new.

Most people aged gradually, but that would have to be the last of his worries, now that he didn't even have the luxury of being *alive*; indeed, the best solution was perhaps to become an old man, in mind as well as body, all at once.