

It was one of those nights where our own indifference to time brought us, much too late, on a moonless night, to a place not visited since childhood.

The home we sought, and were generally expected, was just off the road we travelled, in a mountainous area, heavily trees, little population, no sign of other vehicles for the last 40 minutes. We weren't lost, just couldn't find the home of friends we would visit a few days.

The road twisted, turned to maintain a constant altitude on the west side of a generous mountain. When twisting left, headlights of the car showed cliffs and trees, and when the road turned right, headlights lights illuminate the western sky. This defined our road.

When we had driven well past our illusive destination, we headed north again. Still nothing was recognized. When we again turn south we stopped at the only building seen. It was lighted inside, a car parked at the door. The simple sign said BAR.

My companion went in, asked for the town, Ojo Sarco.  
"Not around here, senor", was the composite reply.

Back in the car together, I say "we'll both go in, I'll talk. Use my limited Spanish".

Again, three serious faces, put on convincing performance. Had never heard of Ojo Sarco, even when I show them the map confirming that village.

Gathering my wits, I tell them "We are looking for friends Frank and Rosemary" and almost before I mention their last name, the man behind the bar blurts,

"Oh you are the friends Francisco and Mari are expecting.  
Come with us, we'll take you."

And with that, he grabs two bottles of wine, throws his arms around us in welcome, and with his comrades, we depart, simply turning off the light, closing the door. In our car, a few yards north, he turns us left onto a road invisible from the highway. A short distance into this blackness, he stops us, gets out, opens a gate, motions us into the yard to park.

A door opens, and there are Frank and Rosemary, fiends of my parents from youth.

After greetings, our bar friends open the wines, everyone has a splash.

Rosemary goes to the kitchen, brings out the sandwiches she had ready, throws a cake in the oven, and for the next two hours we seven compares histories, bond, eat, drink. At ten Rosemary excuses herself retires. Frank last another 30 minutes. Our remaining hosts last until both bottles are empty. They leave pledging eternal kinship and we make

the same vow. They had saved us from wandering forever. We were sorry to lose their companionship, knowing we not meet again.

But they and the Hollands would have this memory.  
Of the time their neighbors mistook we two visitors as drug enforcement officials.

After all, they were the source of some of the finest marijuana fields in that state.

In two days we took leave.  
Drove south, descended the mountain into Santa Fe.