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WALT WHITMAN

Translated by Calvin Andre Claudel from the  
Spanish of Ruben Dario (1867-1916)

The great old man lives in his land of iron,  
beautiful like a patriarch, serene and saintly.  
He has in the wrinkle of his olympian brow  
something that commands and conquers with noble  
charm.

His soul seems a mirror of the infinite;  
with his weary shoulders worthy of the mantle,  
and his harp made from ancient oak,  
like a new prophet he sings his song.

Priest, breathing a divine breath,  
he announces a better future.  
He says to the eagle, "Fly!" to the seaman, "Row!"  
and to the robust laborer, "Work!"

Thus that poet goes along his way  
with his proud countenance of an emperor!