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To the Resigned

Albert Libertad

April 1905

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I hate the resigned!
I hate the resigned, like I hate the filthy, like I hate layabouts!
I hate resignation! I hate filthiness, I hate inaction.
I feel for the sick man bent under some malignant fever; I hate
the imaginary sick man that a little bit of will would set on his feet.
I feel for the man in chains, surrounded by guards, crushed under
the weight of irons and the many.
I hate soldiers who are bent by the weight of braids and three
stars; the workers who are bent under the weight of capital.
I love the man who says what he feels wherever he is; I hate the
believer in voting perpetually seeking conquest by the majority.
I love the savant crushed under the weight of scientific research;
I hate the individual who bends his body under the weight of an
unknown power, of some "X," of a god,
I hate, I say, all those who, surrendering to others through fear or
resignation a part of their power as men, not only keep their heads
down, but make me, and those I love, keep our heads down, too
through the weight of their frightful collaboration or their idiotic
inertia.

I hate them; yes I hate them, because for my part, I feel it. I don't bow before the officer's braid, the mayor's sash, the gold of the capitalist, morality or religion. For a long time I have known that all of these things are just baubles that we can break like glass...I bend beneath the weight of the resignation of others. O how I hate resignation!

I love life.

I want to live, not in a petty way like those who only satisfy some of their muscles, their nerves, but in a big way, satisfying facial muscles as well as calves, my back as well as my brain.

I don't want to trade a portion of now for a fictive portion of tomorrow. I don't want to surrender anything of the present for the wind of the future.

I don't want to bend anything of myself under the words "fatherland," "God," "honor." I too well know the emptiness of these words, these religious and secular ghosts.

I laugh at pensions, at paradises the hope for which hope allows religion and capital to maintain a hold on the resigned.

I laugh at those who, saving for their old age, deprive themselves in their youth; those who, in order to eat at sixty, fast at twenty.

I want to eat while I have strong teeth to tear and grind healthy meats and succulent fruits, while my stomach juices digest without a problem I want to drink my fill of refreshing and tonic drinks.

I want to love women, or a woman, depending on our common desire, and I don't want to resign myself to the family, to law, to the Code; no one has any rights over our bodies. You want, I want. Let us laugh at the family, the law, the ancient form of resignation.

But this isn't all. I want, since I have eyes, ears, and other senses, more than just to drink, to eat, to enjoy sexual love: I want to experience joy in other forms. I want to see beautiful sculptures and painting, to admire Rodin and Manet. I want to hear the best opera companies play Beethoven or Wagner. I want to know the classics at the Comédie Française, page through the literary and artistic bag-

gage left by men of the past to men of the present, or even better, page through the now and forever unfinished oeuvre of humanity.

I want joy for myself, for my chosen companion, for my friends. I want a home where my eyes can pleasantly rest when my work is done.

For I want the joy of labor, too, that healthy joy, that strong joy. I want my arms to handle the plane, the hammer, the spade and the scythe; that my muscles develop, the thoracic cage become larger with powerful, useful and reasoned movements.

I want to be useful; I want us to be useful. I want to be useful to my neighbor and for my neighbor to be useful to me. I desire that we labor much, for I am insatiable for joy. And it is because I want to enjoy myself that I am not resigned.

Yes, yes I want to produce, but I want to enjoy myself. I want to knead the dough, but eat better bread; to work at the grape harvest, but drink better wine; build a house, but live in better rooms; make furniture, but possess the useful, see the beautiful; I want to make theatres, but big enough to house me and mine.

I want to cooperate in producing, but I also want to cooperate in consuming.

Some dream of producing for others to whom they will leave, oh the irony of it, the best of their efforts. As for me, I want, freely united with others, to produce but also to consume.

You who are resigned, look: I spit on your idols. I spit on God, the Fatherland, I spit on Christ, I spit on the flag, I spit on capital and the golden calf; I spit on laws and Codes, on the symbols of religion; they are baubles, I could care less about them, I laugh at them ...

Only through you do they mean anything; leave them behind and they'll break into pieces.

You are thus a force, you who are resigned, one of those forces that don't know they are one, but who are nevertheless a force, and I can't spit on you, I can only hate you...or love you.

Above all my desire is that of seeing you shaking off your resignation in a terrible awakening of life.

There is no future paradise, there is no future; there is only the present.

Let us live!

Live! Resignation is death.

Revolt is life.