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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 ma-
jority.
I love the savant crushed under the weight of scientific re-
search; 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 collab-
oration 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 baggage 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.