

Spineless Meat

Albert Libertad

2 August 1906

We in Paris, almost without our knowledge, were threatened with a great revolution.

We were threatened with great perturbations in the slaughterhouses of La Villette.

A few snatches of reasons for this was allowed to reach indiscrete ears. Hoof and mouth was spoken of. But what is this alongside other reasons, ones we must know nothing of.

Only dead meat should leave the slaughterhouses of the city, and only living meat should enter.

But go see. Beasts enter, pulled on, pushed against. They must enter alive, with a breath, only a breath, hardly anything.

And the contaminated carrion is sold, served to the faubourgs of Paris from Menilmontant to Montrouge, from Belleville to La Chapelle.

Go, workers of the slaughterhouses, defend your "rights." Go, butcher boys, defend "your own." You must go on slaughtering, go on serving poisoned meat.

Go beef drivers, turn and re-turn your fever-bearing meats from the Beauce to Paris, from Paris to all the workers from the north, the west, and the east? Go ahead, come to Paris, contaminate your animals or bring here the poison contracted elsewhere.

What do evil gestures, useless gestures, poisonous gestures matter? One must live. And to work is to poison, to pillage, to steal, to lie to other men. Work means adulterating drinks, manufacturing cannons, slaughtering and serving slices of poisoned meat.

That's what work means for the spineless meat that surrounds us, the meat that should be slaughtered and pushed into the sewers.

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