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Today or Tomorrow

Louise Michel

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Everything is good that strikes or stings.

So much the better if these bandits have finished their work. The scaffold has started the party, and the fire will beat its wings over the apotheosis.

The blood of Ravachol splashes, from his false collar to his cuffs, the cold man of the Élysée.

The Élysée! That's the spot that draws the looks! From it the grand finale, the final bouquet will rise into the air, and the cross of Our Lady of the Slaughter will be the streetlamp.

The sun has risen red in the prologue, and red it will set.

Yes, so much the better. It is necessary that this be finished, that we plow these accursed institutions like a field, in order to dry up the blood.

Let the slaves, more debased than ever, shout some Marseillaises. An instant is enough to change these docile dogs into wolves, and the winds blow liberty.

Pompeii danced when Vesuvius opened.

The trails of blood left by Deibler from one city to another indicate the road of the executioners, all the way to Montbrison where they slaughtered the dynamiter, the rebel, the anarchist who sang at the guillotine.

That is what is truly beautiful, the vision of those who die for justice; on the hideous trunk of the gallows, on the block, their necks clasped by the garrote or engaged in the infamous half-moon of the scaffold, they show that they are equal to the punishment that is offered by singing through the ordeal.

In the luminous bay that cuts into the night of death, isn't there beyond the free unknown, the taking possession of the world by humanity, the new dawn illuminating new times;

Like a magnet, limitless progress attracting men from ideal to ideal, as if from milestone to milestone, towards the future;

On the earth washed as after the rainstorms, an intense life germinating on the buried past;

Some still uncertain dawns covering in the infinite distance, some eras of harmony, science and love which, glimpsed, are worth eternity; isn't that enough to reason laugh at the torments?

It is fortunate that under the current circumstances pity is cowardly, or we would always have them.

It is better this way. They have wished for it. The merciless verdicts demand as a response: Everything is good that strikes or stings!

The crumbs thrown to the crowd in these provocative celebrations are covered with Ravachol's blood; in this way, on the nights of the hunt, they throw to the dogs bread soaked in the blood of the quarry.

He, dreaming of the happiness of all, has passionately thrown his life in the faces of the executioners.

So much the better if the anger mounts. The intensity of the battle will be short; there will be no more small means, no more foolish qualms!

The Deiblers of the Élysée, by the way, will prevent nothing. Let it be in just a little while or tomorrow, what does it matter!

When so many implacable wills have the same aim, so many convinced men have the same untiring patience, the same scorn for death, then the moment is imminent.

Each one, doing their work in their turn, will be worth a thousand, and the little Ravachols will not have time to grow much before the deliverance.

The streets, by then, will no longer be changed into slaughterhouses. It is the slaughterhouses which will be blown up.

It is not with wishes that the man of the stone age seized the cavern where the big cats peacefully devoured their prey.

Let each, like Ravachol, act according to his conscience, exploring the unwitting victims without letting themselves be diminished by hesitation; it is a lofty thought: the deliverance of the world.

Salute to the next flash of lightning thundering over the palaces, to the immense blaze that will end the orgy!

Nothing gives more to the struggle than the torture of a proud, brave man – it is no longer the time to cry for the dead; they must be avenged – this time it will be vengeance for all and always.

This is the battle without mercy where the lost children of liberty offer themselves joyfully.