(fragment of chapter sample)

I see my beloved Charlie Chaplin at one of the tables
at the Café de las Estrellas. I walk over,
greet him, and he smiles at me, pointing to a chair across from him.

Chaplin: “Welcome, young man! Come in, come in.
Please have a seat. Here, time is like an
eternal long take—it never ends, though sometimes I feel like
rewinding it just to see the ending of *City Lights*
one more time. Do you like the place? I designed it with
Little Tramp’s house in mind.”

R:
It’s wonderful, Charles. You’re an absolute legend on Earth.
Your films, even without words, continue to move
entire generations. How do you view your life and work now from this
stellar immensity?

Chaplin: My
life was a tragicomedy, just like my films. At
first, way down there, I just wanted to make people laugh, to help them
forget their miseries for a moment with a pie in the face or
a funny stumble. But then I realized that true
comedy isn’t found in mockery, but in tenderness and human dignity
in the face of adversity.

From up here,
I see that my little Tramp wasn’t just a character; he was the
symbol of all the forgotten, of all the dreamers who, despite
being trampled by the machinery of the world (whether that of the
factory or of war), got back up time and time again,
tucked their hats back on, and kept moving forward with their heads held high. My
work wasn’t silent, boy; it was a silent cry of humanity,
hope, and love. And I see that that cry did

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