



Thus Spoke Zarathustra

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

Musean Translation

MOUSEIA



Thus Spoke Zarathustra



FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

Musean Translation

Translated by Michael Berardi

MOUSEIA

THIS EDITION

Complete machine-assisted Musean translation, made directly from the German in a separate pass from the Plain English edition. German source: Deutsches Textarchiv, Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, CC BY-SA 4.0; Schmeitzner 1883/1883/1884 and Naumann 1891. Print wrapping and markup normalized; source readings and extraction changes recorded in the source registry.

TRANSLATOR

Michael Berardi

THE WORK

Written 1883–1885 · Philosophical fiction

SOURCE

Original text from deutschestextarchiv.de.

GAPS AND UNCERTAINTIES

Identified early-edition source set, not the latest critical edition; Part 4 follows the public 1891 printing rather than the private 1885 printing. Machine-assisted translations and reviewing-model checks, not human scholarly certification.

Mouseia · mouseia.org

Edition dated 26 October 2026

Contents



Prologue PART 1	1
Discourses PART 1	15
Part 2	61
Part 3	119
Part 4	186

PART 1

Prologue



First Part

Zarathustra's Prologue

¹ When Zarathustra was thirty years old, he left his homeland and his homeland's lake and went into the mountains. There he delighted in his spirit and his solitude, and for ten years he did not tire of them. At last, however, his heart changed—and one morning he rose with the dawn, stepped before the sun, and spoke to it:

“You great star! What would your happiness be without those for whom you shine?

“For ten years you have climbed to my cave: you would have grown weary of your light and of this journey without me, my eagle, and my serpent.

“But we waited for you each morning, received your abundance, and blessed you for it.

“Look! I am weary of my wisdom, like a bee that has gathered too much honey. I need hands reaching out.

“I would give away and distribute until the wise among human beings once again delight in their folly, and the poor once again in their riches.

“For that I must descend into the depths, as you do in the evening when you pass behind the sea and bring light even to the underworld, you overflowing star!

“Like you, I must *go under*, as the people to whom I wish to descend call it.

“Then bless me, you tranquil eye that can look without envy even upon an overwhelming happiness!

“Bless the cup that longs to overflow, so its water may flow out golden and carry everywhere the reflected radiance of your joy!

“Look! This cup longs to be empty again, and Zarathustra longs to become human again.”

—Thus began Zarathustra’s going-under.

² Zarathustra descended the mountain alone and met no one. But when he entered the forests, suddenly an old man stood before him. He had left his holy hut to look for roots in the forest. And the old man spoke to Zarathustra:

“This wanderer is no stranger to me: many years ago he passed this way. His name was Zarathustra, but he has changed.

“Then you carried your ashes into the mountains: do you mean to carry your fire into the valleys today? Are you not afraid of the punishment for arson?

“Yes, I recognize Zarathustra. His eye is clear, and no disgust hides about his mouth. Does he not move like a dancer?

“Zarathustra has changed; Zarathustra has become a child; Zarathustra has awakened. What do you want now among the sleepers?

“You lived in solitude as in the sea, and the sea bore you. Alas, do you mean to climb ashore? Alas, do you mean to drag your body about yourself again?”

Zarathustra answered, “I love human beings.”

“Why,” said the holy man, “did I go into the forest and the wilderness? Was it not because I loved human beings too much?

“Now I love God: I do not love human beings. To me, the human being is too imperfect a thing. Love of humanity would destroy me.”

Zarathustra answered, “Why did I speak of love? I am bringing humanity a gift.”

“Give them nothing,” said the holy man. “Take something from them instead, and bear it with them—that will do them the most good, if only it does you good!

“And if you mean to give them anything, give no more than alms—and make them beg even for that!”

“No,” answered Zarathustra, “I give no alms. I am not poor enough for that.”

The holy man laughed at Zarathustra and said, “Then see that they accept your treasures! They distrust hermits and do not believe that we come to give.

“Our footsteps sound too lonely to them through the streets. And just as, lying in bed at night, they hear a man walking long before sunrise, they are likely to ask themselves: Where is the thief going?

“Do not go to human beings; stay in the forest! Better still, go to the animals! Why will you not be like me—a bear among bears, a bird among birds?”

“And what does the holy man do in the forest?” Zarathustra asked.

The holy man answered, “I make songs and sing them; and when I make songs, I laugh, weep, and growl. This is how I praise God.

“With singing, weeping, laughter, and growling, I praise the God who is my God. But what gift are you bringing us?”

When Zarathustra heard these words, he saluted the holy man and said, “What could I give you? But let me leave quickly, before I take anything from you!”

And so they parted, the old man and the man, laughing as two boys laugh.

But when Zarathustra was alone, he spoke to his heart: “Can it be possible? This old holy man in his forest has heard nothing yet of the fact that *God is dead!*”—

- ³ When Zarathustra reached the nearest town, which lies beside the forests, he found a great crowd gathered in the marketplace: they had been promised a tightrope walker. And Zarathustra spoke to the people:

“*I teach you the overhuman.* The human being is something that must be overcome. What have you done to overcome it?

“All beings until now have created something beyond themselves: and you would be the ebb of this great tide, would sooner return to the animal than overcome the human?”

“What is the ape to the human being? A laughingstock or a painful shame. And that is what the human being must be to the overhuman: a laughingstock or a painful shame.

“You have made your way from worm to human, and much within you is still worm. Once you were apes, and even now the human being is more ape than any ape.

“But even the wisest among you is only a discord and a hybrid of plant and ghost. Yet do I tell you to become ghosts or plants?

“Look, I teach you the overhuman!

“The overhuman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: The overhuman shall be the meaning of the earth!

“I implore you, my brothers, *remain faithful to the earth*, and do not believe those who speak to you of hopes beyond it! They are poisoners, whether they know it or not.

“They despise life; they are dying away, themselves poisoned, and the earth is weary of them: let them pass away!

“Once, an offense against God was the greatest offense; but God died, and with him these offenders died. Now the most terrible thing is to offend against the earth and to value the entrails of the inscrutable above the meaning of the earth!

“Once the soul looked contemptuously upon the body, and then this contempt was the highest thing: it wanted the body lean, ghastly, starved. In this way it hoped to escape the body and the earth.

“Oh, that soul itself was still lean, ghastly, and starved—and cruelty was its voluptuous pleasure!

“But you too, my brothers, tell me: What does your body reveal about your soul? Is your soul not poverty and filth and a pitiful contentment?

“Truly, the human being is a polluted river. One must be a sea to receive a polluted river without becoming unclean.

“Look, I teach you the overhuman: the overhuman is this sea; in it your great contempt can go under.

“What is the greatest thing you can experience? The hour of great contempt. The hour when even your happiness disgusts you, and your reason and your virtue likewise.

“The hour when you say, ‘What does my happiness matter? It is poverty and filth and a pitiful contentment. But my happiness ought to justify existence itself!’

“The hour when you say, ‘What does my reason matter? Does it hunger for knowledge as the lion hungers for its food? It is poverty and filth and a pitiful contentment!’

“The hour when you say, ‘What does my virtue matter? It has not yet driven me wild. How weary I am of my good and my evil! All of it is poverty and filth and a pitiful contentment!’

“The hour when you say, ‘What does my justice matter? I do not see myself as glowing embers and coal. Yet the just person is glowing embers and coal!’

“The hour when you say, ‘What does my pity matter? Is pity not the cross on which the lover of humanity is nailed? But my pity is no crucifixion.’

“Have you spoken like this? Have you cried out like this? Oh, if only I had already heard you cry out like this!

“Not your sin—your contentment cries to heaven; your stinginess even in sin cries to heaven!

“Where is the lightning to lick you with its tongue? Where is the madness with which you should be inoculated?

“Look, I teach you the overhuman: the overhuman is this lightning, this madness!”—

When Zarathustra had spoken, someone in the crowd shouted, “We have heard enough about the tightrope walker; now let us see him!” And everyone laughed at Zarathustra. But the tightrope walker, believing the words were meant for him, began his work.

⁴ But Zarathustra looked at the people in wonder. Then he spoke:

“The human being is a rope stretched between animal and overhuman—a rope above an abyss.

“A dangerous crossing, a dangerous journey, a dangerous backward glance, a dangerous shudder and standstill.

“What is great in the human being is that it is a bridge and not an end: what can be loved in the human being is that it is a *crossing-over* and a *going-under*.

“I love those who do not know how to live except by going under, for they are the ones who cross over.

“I love the great despisers, because they are the great reverers and arrows of longing for the other shore.

“I love those who do not first seek a reason beyond the stars for going under and becoming sacrifices, but sacrifice themselves to the earth so that one day the earth may belong to the overhuman.

“I love the one who lives in order to know, and seeks to know so that one day the overhuman may live. And so this one wills a going-under.

“I love the one who works and invents to build the overhuman a house and prepare earth, animal, and plant for its coming: for this one wills a going-under.

“I love the one who loves their virtue: for virtue is a will to go under and an arrow of longing.

“I love the one who keeps not a drop of spirit in reserve, but longs to be wholly the spirit of their virtue: thus, as spirit, this one strides across the bridge.

“I love the one who makes their virtue their inclination and their destiny: thus, for the sake of that virtue, this one wills to live on and to live no longer.

“I love the one who does not want too many virtues. One virtue is more virtue than two, because it is more of a knot on which destiny hangs.

“I love the one whose soul squanders itself, who wants no thanks and makes no repayment: for this one always gives and does not wish to preserve itself.

“I love the one who feels ashamed when the dice fall in their favor, and then asks: Am I a cheat?—for this one wants to perish.

“I love the one who casts golden words ahead of their deeds and always keeps more than they promise: for this one wills a going-under.

“I love the one who justifies those to come and redeems those who have gone: for this one wants to perish through those who live now.

"I love the one who chastises their God because they love their God: for this one must perish through their God's wrath.

"I love the one whose soul is deep even in its wounds, and who can perish from a small experience: thus this one gladly crosses the bridge.

"I love the one whose soul brims over, so that they forget themselves and all things dwell within them: thus all things become their going-under.

"I love the one who is free in spirit and free in heart: thus their head is only their heart's entrails, but their heart drives them to go under.

"I love all those who are like heavy drops, falling singly from the dark cloud that hangs above humanity: they proclaim the coming lightning and perish as its heralds.

"Look, I am a herald of the lightning and a heavy drop from the cloud: but this lightning is called overhuman."—

- 5 When Zarathustra had spoken these words, he looked at the people again and fell silent. "There they stand," he said to his heart, "there they laugh: they do not understand me; I am not the mouth for these ears.

"Must their ears first be battered before they learn to hear with their eyes? Must one thunder like kettledrums and preachers of repentance? Or do they believe only those who stammer?

"They have something they are proud of. What do they call this thing that makes them proud? Culture, they call it; it sets them apart from the goatherds.

"So they dislike hearing the word 'contempt' applied to themselves. Then I will speak to their pride.

"I will speak to them of what is most contemptible: and that is *the last human being*."

And Zarathustra spoke to the people:

"It is time for humanity to set itself a goal. It is time for humanity to plant the seed of its highest hope.

"Its soil is still rich enough. But one day this soil will be poor and tame, and no tall tree will be able to grow from it.

“Alas! The time is coming when humanity will no longer shoot the arrow of its longing beyond itself, and its bowstring will have forgotten how to sing!

“I tell you: one must still have chaos within to give birth to a dancing star. I tell you: you still have chaos within you.

“Alas! The time is coming when humanity will give birth to no more stars. Alas! The time of the most contemptible human being is coming, the one who can no longer despise itself.

“Look! I show you *the last human being*.

“‘What is love? What is creation? What is longing? What is a star?’ asks the last human being, and blinks.

“Then the earth has grown small, and on it hops the last human being, who makes everything small. Its kind is as ineradicable as the flea beetle; the last human being lives the longest.

“‘We have invented happiness,’ say the last human beings, and blink.

“They have left the places where life was hard: one needs warmth. One still loves one’s neighbor and rubs against him: one needs warmth.

“To fall ill or harbor mistrust is sinful in their eyes: one walks carefully. A fool, anyone who still stumbles over stones or people!

“A little poison now and then makes pleasant dreams. And plenty of poison at the end, for a pleasant death.

“One still works, for work is a pastime. But one takes care that the pastime does not become exhausting.

“One no longer becomes poor or rich: both are too burdensome. Who still wants to rule? Who still wants to obey? Both are too burdensome.

“No shepherd and one herd! Everyone wants the same thing; everyone is the same: anyone who feels differently enters the madhouse of their own accord.

“‘In the old days everyone was mad,’ say the most refined, and blink.

“One is clever and knows everything that has happened: so there is no end to the mockery. People still quarrel, but they soon make peace—otherwise it upsets the stomach.

“One has one’s little pleasure for the day and one’s little pleasure for the night: but one honors health.

“‘We have invented happiness,’ say the last human beings, and blink.”—

And here ended Zarathustra’s first discourse, which is also called “the Prologue”: for at this point the crowd’s cries and delight interrupted him. “Give us this last human being, Zarathustra!” they shouted. “Make us into these last human beings! Then you can have the overhuman!” And everyone cheered and clicked their tongues. But Zarathustra grew sad and said to his heart:

“They do not understand me: I am not the mouth for these ears.

“Perhaps I lived too long in the mountains, listened too much to streams and trees: now I speak to them as the goatherds do.

“My soul is still and bright as the mountains before noon. But they think me cold, a mocker with terrifying jokes.

“And now they look at me and laugh: and even as they laugh, they hate me. There is ice in their laughter.”

- 6 But then something happened that silenced every mouth and fixed every eye. Meanwhile the tightrope walker had begun his work: he had stepped through a little door and was walking along the rope stretched between two towers, hanging above the marketplace and the people. Just as he reached the middle of his journey, the little door opened again, and a brightly dressed fellow, like a jester, sprang out and followed the first with rapid steps. “Forward, clubfoot!” his dreadful voice cried. “Forward, sluggard, smuggler, pale face! Or I will tickle you with my heel! What are you doing here between towers? You belong inside the tower; you ought to be locked up! You are blocking the open road for a better man!” And with every word he drew nearer. But when he was only one step behind, the terrible thing happened that silenced every mouth and fixed every eye: he gave a devilish yell and leaped over the man in his way. Seeing his rival triumph like this, the tightrope walker lost both his head and the rope. He flung away his pole and plunged faster than it did into the depths, a whirl of arms and legs. The marketplace and its people were like the sea when a storm strikes: everyone fled apart and over one another, most of all where the body was bound to fall.

But Zarathustra stood still, and the body fell close beside him, mangled and broken, but not yet dead. After a while the shattered man regained consciousness and saw Zarathustra kneeling beside him. "What are you doing there?" he said at last. "I have long known the devil would trip me up. Now he is dragging me to hell: will you stop him?"

"On my honor, friend," Zarathustra answered, "none of what you speak of exists: there is no devil and no hell. Your soul will be dead even sooner than your body: fear nothing more!"

The man looked up distrustfully. "If you speak the truth," he said, "then I lose nothing by losing my life. I am not much more than an animal taught to dance with blows and meager morsels."

"Not so," said Zarathustra. "You have made danger your calling: there is nothing contemptible in that. Now you perish through your calling: for that I will bury you with my own hands."

When Zarathustra had said this, the dying man answered no more, but moved his hand as though reaching for Zarathustra's in gratitude.—

⁷ Meanwhile evening came, and the marketplace hid in darkness. The people dispersed, for even curiosity and terror grow weary. But Zarathustra sat on the ground beside the dead man, absorbed in thought, and forgot the time. At last night came, and a cold wind blew over the solitary man. Then Zarathustra rose and said to his heart:

"Truly, Zarathustra has made a fine catch today! Not a human being, but a corpse.

"Human existence is uncanny and still without meaning: a jester can become its doom.

"I will teach humanity the meaning of its being: the overhuman, the lightning from the dark cloud of humanity.

"But I am still far from them, and my meaning does not speak to their senses. To human beings I am still something midway between a fool and a corpse.

"Dark is the night, dark are Zarathustra's paths. Come, cold and stiff companion! I will carry you to the place where I shall bury you with my own hands."

8 When Zarathustra had said this to his heart, he lifted the corpse onto his back and set out. He had not gone a hundred paces when a man crept up and whispered in his ear—and look! The speaker was the jester from the tower. “Leave this town, Zarathustra,” he said. “Too many people here hate you. The good and the just hate you and call you their enemy and despiser; the believers in the true faith hate you and call you a danger to the crowd. It was your good fortune that they laughed at you: truly, you spoke like a jester. It was your good fortune that you joined the dead dog; by lowering yourself like that, you saved yourself today. But leave this town—or tomorrow I will leap over you, a living man over a dead one.” With that the man vanished; but Zarathustra walked on through the dark streets.

At the town gate he met the gravediggers. They shone their torch into his face, recognized him, and mocked him fiercely. “Zarathustra is carrying off the dead dog: well done, Zarathustra has become a gravedigger! Our hands are too clean for this roast. Does Zarathustra mean to steal the devil’s morsel? Well then! Enjoy your meal! If only the devil is not a better thief than Zarathustra! He will steal them both; he will eat them both!” And they laughed together and put their heads close.

Zarathustra said nothing and went on his way. After he had walked for two hours past forests and swamps, he had heard too much of the wolves’ hungry howling and grew hungry himself. So he stopped at a lonely house where a light was burning.

“Hunger falls upon me like a robber,” Zarathustra said. “In forests and swamps, in the depth of night, my hunger falls upon me.

“My hunger has strange moods. Often it comes only after a meal, and today it did not come all day: where was it lingering?”

With that Zarathustra knocked at the door. An old man appeared, carrying the light, and asked, “Who comes to me and my troubled sleep?”

“A living man and a dead one,” said Zarathustra.

“Give me food and drink: I forgot them during the day. Whoever feeds the hungry refreshes their own soul: so wisdom speaks.”

The old man went away, but returned at once and offered Zarathustra bread and wine. “This is a bad country for the hungry,” he said. “That is why I live here. Animal and human come to me, the hermit. But tell your companion to eat and drink too: he is wearier than you.” Zarathustra answered, “My companion is dead; I will hardly persuade him to do that.” “That is no concern of mine,” the old man said gruffly. “Whoever knocks at my house must take what I offer. Eat, and farewell!”—

Then Zarathustra walked another two hours, trusting the path and the light of the stars: for he was an accustomed night wanderer and loved looking into the face of everything asleep. But as morning dawned, Zarathustra found himself deep in a forest, with no path visible. He laid the dead man in a hollow tree at the head of his own resting place—for he wished to protect him from the wolves—and lay down himself on the ground and moss. At once he fell asleep, weary in body, but with a tranquil soul.

- 9 Zarathustra slept a long time: not only the dawn, but the morning too passed over his face. At last his eye opened. He looked in wonder into the forest and its silence, and in wonder into himself. Then he rose quickly, like a sailor who suddenly sights land, and shouted for joy: for he saw a new truth. And he spoke to his heart:

“A light has dawned on me: I need companions, living ones—not dead companions and corpses that I carry wherever I will.

“I need living companions who follow me because they wish to follow themselves—and to the place I will.

“A light has dawned on me: let Zarathustra speak not to the people, but to companions! Zarathustra must not become a herd’s shepherd and dog!

“To lure many away from the herd—that is why I came. Let people and herd be angry with me: Zarathustra wants the shepherds to call him a robber.

“I say shepherds, but they call themselves the good and the just. I say shepherds, but they call themselves believers in the true faith.

“Look at the good and the just! Whom do they hate most? The one who breaks their tablets of values, the breaker, the lawbreaker—but that is the creator.

“Look at the believers of every faith! Whom do they hate most? The one who breaks their tablets of values, the breaker, the lawbreaker—but that is the creator.

“The creator seeks companions, not corpses, not herds or believers. The creator seeks fellow creators, those who write new values on new tablets.

“The creator seeks companions and fellow harvesters: for everything stands ripe for harvest. But the hundred sickles are missing; so the creator tears out ears of grain and grows angry.

“The creator seeks companions who know how to sharpen their sickles. They will be called destroyers and despisers of good and evil. But they are the harvesters and the celebrants.

“Zarathustra seeks fellow creators, fellow harvesters, fellow celebrants: what has he to do with herds and shepherds and corpses?

“And you, my first companion, farewell! I buried you well in your hollow tree, hid you well from the wolves.

“But I leave you; the time is over. Between one dawn and the next, a new truth came to me.

“I must be neither shepherd nor gravedigger. I do not even want to speak to the people again; for the last time I have spoken to a dead man.

“I will join the creators, the harvesters, the celebrants: I will show them the rainbow and all the stairways of the overhuman.

“I will sing my song to the solitary and to those solitary in pairs; and whoever still has ears for the unheard-of, I will weigh down their heart with my happiness.

“I will go to my goal; I follow my own course. I will leap over the hesitant and the slow. Let my going be their going-under!”

- 10 Zarathustra had spoken this to his heart when the sun stood at noon. Then he looked upward questioningly—for he heard a bird’s sharp cry above him. And look! An eagle wheeled through the air in wide circles, and a serpent hung from it, not like prey, but like a friend: she had wound herself around its neck.

“These are my animals!” said Zarathustra, rejoicing from his heart.

“The proudest animal beneath the sun and the cleverest animal beneath the sun—they have gone out scouting.

“They want to discover whether Zarathustra still lives. Truly, am I still alive?

“I found life more dangerous among human beings than among animals; Zarathustra follows dangerous paths. May my animals guide me!”

When Zarathustra had said this, he remembered the words of the holy man in the forest, sighed, and spoke to his heart:

“If only I were cleverer! If only I were clever to the core, like my serpent!

“But I am asking for the impossible: so I ask my pride always to walk beside my cleverness!

“And if one day my cleverness leaves me—ah, it loves to fly away!—may my pride then fly beside my folly!”

—Thus began Zarathustra’s going-under.

PART 1

Discourses



Zarathustra's Discourses

On the Three Transformations

I name for you three transformations of the spirit: how the spirit becomes a camel, the camel a lion, and at last the lion a child.

There are many heavy burdens for the spirit, the strong, enduring spirit in which reverence dwells: its strength longs for the heavy and the heaviest.

“What is heavy?” asks the enduring spirit, kneeling like a camel and wishing to be well laden.

“What is heaviest, you heroes?” asks the enduring spirit. “Let me take it upon myself and rejoice in my strength.

“Is it not this: to humble oneself in order to wound one’s pride? To let one’s folly shine in order to mock one’s wisdom?

“Or this: to desert our cause when it celebrates its victory? To climb high mountains in order to tempt the tempter?

“Or this: to feed on the acorns and grass of knowledge, and suffer hunger in the soul for truth’s sake?

“Or this: to be ill and send the comforters away, and make friends with the deaf, who never hear what you want?

“Or this: to step into dirty water if it is the water of truth, and not drive away the cold frogs and hot toads?

“Or this: to love those who despise us, and offer the ghost a hand when it tries to frighten us?”

All these heaviest burdens the enduring spirit takes upon itself: like the camel hurrying laden into the desert, it hurries into its desert.

But in the loneliest desert the second transformation takes place: here the spirit becomes a lion; it means to seize freedom as its prey and be master in its own desert.

Here it seeks its last master: it means to become the enemy of that master and of its last God, and wrestle for victory with the great dragon.

What is the great dragon that the spirit no longer wishes to call master and God? “You must” is the great dragon’s name. But the lion’s spirit says, “I will.”

“You must” lies in its path, a scaled beast glittering with gold; and on every scale the golden words shine: “You must!”

Values a thousand years old gleam on those scales, and the mightiest of all dragons speaks: “All the value of things—it gleams upon me.”

“All value has already been created, and all created value—that is what I am. Truly, there must be no more ‘I will!’” Thus speaks the dragon.

My brothers, why is the lion needed in the spirit? Why is the burden-bearing animal, reverent and renouncing, not enough?

To create new values—even the lion cannot yet do that. But to create freedom for new creation—that the lion’s power can do.

To create freedom and a sacred No even before duty: for that, my brothers, the lion is needed.

To seize the right to new values—that is the most terrible seizure for an enduring and reverent spirit. Truly, to such a spirit it is robbery, the work of a beast of prey.

Once it loved “You must” as its holiest possession: now it must find delusion and caprice even in the holiest, in order to wrest freedom from its love. The lion is needed for this robbery.

But tell me, my brothers: what can the child do that even the lion could not? Why must the predatory lion become a child as well?

The child is innocence and forgetting, a new beginning, a game, a wheel rolling out of itself, a first movement, a sacred Yes.

Yes, for the game of creation, my brothers, a sacred Yes is needed: now the spirit wills *its own* will; the one lost to the world wins its own world.

I have named for you three transformations of the spirit: how the spirit became a camel, the camel a lion, and at last the lion a child.— —

Thus spoke Zarathustra. And at that time he was staying in the town called the Motley Cow.

On the Teaching Chairs of Virtue

People praised to Zarathustra a sage who knew how to speak well of sleep and virtue: for this he was greatly honored and rewarded, and all the young men sat before his teaching chair. Zarathustra went to him and sat before his chair with all the young men. And the sage spoke:

“Honor and modesty before sleep! That comes first! And keep out of the way of anyone who sleeps badly and stays awake at night!

“Even the thief is modest before sleep: he always steals softly through the night. But the night watchman is shameless; shamelessly he carries his horn.

“Sleeping is no small art: for its sake one must stay awake all day.

“Ten times a day you must overcome yourself: that brings a wholesome weariness and is the soul’s poppy.

“Ten times you must make peace with yourself again: for overcoming is bitter, and the unreconciled sleep badly.

“Ten truths a day you must find: otherwise you will still be searching for truth at night, and your soul will remain hungry.

“Ten times a day you must laugh and be cheerful: otherwise your stomach will disturb you at night, that father of melancholy.

“Few know this, but one must possess all the virtues to sleep well. Shall I bear false witness? Shall I commit adultery?

“Shall I covet my neighbor’s maidservant? None of that would sit well with sound sleep.

“And even if one possesses all the virtues, one must understand one more thing: how to send the virtues themselves to sleep at the proper time.

“So that those well-behaved little women do not quarrel with one another—and over you, you unfortunate man!

“Peace with God and one’s neighbor: sound sleep requires it. And peace with the neighbor’s devil as well! Otherwise he will haunt you at night.

“Honor and obedience to authority, even crooked authority! Sound sleep requires it. Is it my fault that power likes to walk on crooked legs?

“To me, the best shepherd will always be the one who leads his sheep to the greenest meadow: that agrees with sound sleep.

“I want neither many honors nor great treasures: they inflame the spleen. But one sleeps badly without a good name and a little treasure.

“A small gathering is more welcome to me than a bad one: but it must come and go at the proper time. That agrees with sound sleep.

“I am also very fond of the poor in spirit: they promote sleep. Blessed are they, especially if one always agrees with them.

“Thus the day passes for the virtuous. But when night comes, I take care not to summon sleep! Sleep does not want to be summoned: sleep is the master of the virtues!

“Instead, I think over what I have done and thought during the day. Chewing it over, patient as a cow, I ask myself: What were your ten overcomings?

“And what were the ten reconciliations, the ten truths, and the ten bursts of laughter with which my heart feasted?

“As I ponder these things, rocked by forty thoughts, sleep suddenly falls upon me, the unbidden one, the master of the virtues.

“Sleep taps upon my eye: it grows heavy. Sleep touches my mouth: it stays open.

“Truly, on soft soles it comes to me, the dearest of thieves, and steals my thoughts: I stand as stupid as this teaching chair.

“But I do not stand for long: already I am lying down.”—

Hearing the sage speak, Zarathustra laughed within his heart: for a light had dawned on him. And he said to his heart:

“To me this sage with his forty thoughts is a fool: but I believe he understands sleeping well.

“Happy, indeed, whoever lives near this sage! Such sleep is contagious: it spreads even through a thick wall.

“A spell dwells even in his teaching chair. And not in vain did the young men sit before this preacher of virtue.

“His wisdom means: stay awake in order to sleep well. And truly, if life had no meaning and I had to choose nonsense, this would be the nonsense most worth choosing, even for me.

“Now I see clearly what people once sought above all when they sought teachers of virtue. They sought sound sleep, and poppy-flowered virtues to go with it!

“For all these celebrated sages of the teaching chair, wisdom was dreamless sleep: they knew no better meaning of life.

“Even today, no doubt, there are some like this preacher of virtue, and not always so honest: but their time is over. They will not stand much longer: already they are lying down.

“Blessed are these sleepy ones: for soon they will nod off.”—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Believers in Other Worlds

Once Zarathustra too cast his delusion beyond humanity, like all believers in other worlds. Then the world seemed to me the work of a suffering, tormented God.

Then the world seemed to me the dream and invention of a God: colored smoke before the eyes of a divinely dissatisfied being.

Good and evil, joy and suffering, I and you—colored smoke, I thought, before creative eyes. The creator wished to look away from himself—and so he created the world.

For the sufferer it is a drunken delight to look away from suffering and lose oneself. A drunken delight and a losing of oneself: that is what I once thought the world was.

This world, eternally imperfect, an image—and an imperfect image—of an eternal contradiction: a drunken delight for its imperfect creator. That is what I once thought the world was.

Thus I too once cast my delusion beyond humanity, like all believers in other worlds. Truly beyond humanity?

Ah, my brothers, this God I created was human handiwork and human madness, like all gods!

Human he was, and only a poor piece of human and I: this ghost came to me from my own ashes and fire, and truly it did not come to me from beyond!

What happened, my brothers? I overcame myself, the sufferer; I carried my own ashes into the mountains; I invented a brighter flame for myself. And look! The ghost *withdrew* from me!

Now, recovered, I would find suffering and torment in believing such ghosts: now it would mean suffering and humiliation. This is what I say to believers in other worlds.

Suffering and incapacity created all other worlds—and that brief madness of happiness known only to the deepest sufferer.

Weariness that wants to reach the ultimate in a single leap, a death leap; a poor, ignorant weariness that no longer even wants to want: that created all gods and other worlds.

Believe me, my brothers! It was the body that despaired of the body—that felt along the final walls with the fingers of a deluded spirit.

Believe me, my brothers! It was the body that despaired of the earth—that heard the belly of being speak to it.

And then it wanted to break headfirst through the final walls, and not with its head alone—across into “that world.”

But “that world” is well hidden from humanity, that dehumanized, inhuman world that is a heavenly nothing; and the belly of being does not speak to humanity at all, except as a human being.

Truly, all being is hard to prove and hard to make speak. Tell me, my brothers: is not the strangest of all things still the best proved?

Yes, this I, with its contradiction and confusion, still speaks most honestly of its being—this creating, willing, valuing I, which is the measure and value of things.

And this most honest being, the I, speaks of the body and still wants the body, even when it invents and raves and flutters with broken wings.

The I learns to speak ever more honestly: and the more it learns, the more words and honors it finds for body and earth.

My I taught me a new pride, which I teach humanity: no longer to bury one's head in the sand of heavenly things, but to carry it freely, an earthly head that creates meaning for the earth!

I teach humanity a new will: to will this path that human beings have walked blindly, to call it good, and no longer creep aside from it like the sick and the dying!

The sick and the dying despised body and earth, and invented heavenly things and redeeming drops of blood: yet even these sweet and gloomy poisons they took from body and earth!

They wanted to escape their misery, and the stars were too far away. Then they sighed, "If only there were heavenly paths by which to slip into another being and happiness!" And so they invented their secret ways and little potions of blood!

They imagined themselves transported beyond their bodies and this earth, these ungrateful ones. Yet to what did they owe the convulsion and delight of their transport? To their bodies and this earth.

Zarathustra is gentle with the sick. Truly, he is not angry at their ways of finding comfort or showing ingratitude. May they become convalescents and overcomers, and create a higher body for themselves!

Nor is Zarathustra angry with the convalescent who looks tenderly back upon a delusion and steals at midnight around the grave of a God: but even those tears remain sickness and a sick body to me.

There have always been many sickly people among those who invent and crave God; they hate the knower furiously, and that youngest of virtues whose name is honesty.

They always look backward toward dark ages: then, of course, delusion and faith were another matter; the frenzy of reason was likeness to God, and doubt was sin.

I know these godlike people all too well: they want to be believed in, and doubt to be a sin. All too well I also know what they themselves believe in most.

Truly, not other worlds and redeeming drops of blood: they too believe most in the body, and their own body is their thing-in-itself.

But to them it is a sickly thing: they would gladly leap out of their skins. That is why they listen to the preachers of death, and preach other worlds themselves.

Listen instead, my brothers, to the voice of the healthy body: it is a more honest and a purer voice.

More honestly and purely speaks the healthy body, the perfect body, squarely built: and it speaks of the earth's meaning.

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Those Who Despise the Body

I will speak my word to those who despise the body. I do not ask them to learn anew or teach anew, but only to bid farewell to their own bodies—and thus fall silent.

“I am body and soul,” says the child. And why should one not speak like children?

But the awakened one, the knower, says: I am body through and through, and nothing besides; and soul is only a word for something about the body.

The body is a great reason, a multiplicity with one sense, a war and a peace, a herd and a shepherd.

Your little reason too, my brother, which you call “spirit,” is an instrument of your body, a little instrument and plaything of your great reason.

You say “I” and are proud of this word. But the greater thing, which you refuse to believe in, is your body and its great reason: it does not say I, but does I.

What the senses feel, what the spirit knows, never has its end within itself. Yet senses and spirit would persuade you that they are the end of all things: so vain are they.

Senses and spirit are instruments and playthings: behind them still lies the self.

The self searches with the eyes of the senses too; it listens with the ears of the spirit too.

The self is always listening and searching: it compares, subdues, conquers, destroys. It rules, and is also the ruler of the I.

Behind your thoughts and feelings, my brother, stands a mighty ruler, an unknown sage—whose name is self. It dwells in your body; it is your body.

There is more reason in your body than in your finest wisdom. And who knows why your body needs precisely your finest wisdom?

Your self laughs at your I and its proud leaps. “What are these leaps and flights of thought to me?” it says to itself. “A detour toward my purpose. I am the I’s leading string and the prompter of its concepts.”

The self says to the I, “Feel pain here!” And the I suffers and thinks how to suffer no more—and that is precisely why it is supposed to think.

The self says to the I, “Feel pleasure here!” Then the I rejoices and thinks how to rejoice often again—and that is precisely why it is supposed to think.

I will say a word to those who despise the body. Their contempt is born of their esteem. What created esteem and contempt, value and will?

The creating self created esteem and contempt for itself; it created pleasure and pain for itself. The creating body created spirit for itself as a hand of its will.

Even in your folly and contempt, you despisers of the body, you serve your self.

I tell you: your self itself wants to die and turns away from life.

It can no longer do what it most wants: create beyond itself. That is what it most wants; that is all its ardor.

But now it is too late for that—so your self wants to go under, you despisers of the body.

Your self wants to go under, and that is why you became despisers of the body!

For you can no longer create beyond yourselves.

And that is why you are now angry with life and the earth. An unconscious envy lives in the sidelong glance of your contempt.

I do not follow your way, you despisers of the body! To me you are no bridges to the overhuman!—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Passions of Joy and Suffering

My brother, if you have a virtue, and it is your virtue, then you share it with no one.

Of course you want to call it by name and caress it; you want to tug its ear and amuse yourself with it.

And look! Now you share its name with the people, and with your virtue you have become people and herd!

You would do better to say: “Unspeakable and nameless is what makes torment and sweetness for my soul, and is also the hunger of my entrails.”

Let your virtue be too high for the familiarity of names: and if you must speak of it, do not be ashamed to stammer.

Then speak and stammer: “This is *my* good; I love it; this way it pleases me entirely; this alone is how I will the good.

“I do not want it as a God’s law, nor as a human ordinance and necessity: let it be no signpost for me toward worlds above the earth and paradises.

“It is an earthly virtue that I love: there is little cleverness in it, and least of all the reason of everyone.

“But this bird built its nest with me: that is why I love and cherish it—now it sits with me upon its golden eggs.”

This is how you should stammer and praise your virtue.

Once you had passions and called them evil. But now you have only your virtues: they grew out of your passions.

You laid your highest goal upon the hearts of these passions: then they became your virtues and passions of joy.

And whether you came from the race of the quick-tempered, the lustful, the fanatically faithful, or the vengeful:

In the end all your passions became virtues, and all your devils angels.

Once you had wild dogs in your cellar: but in the end they changed into birds and lovely songstresses.

From your poisons you brewed your balm; you milked your cow, Melancholy—now you drink the sweet milk from her udder.

And henceforth nothing evil grows out of you, except the evil that grows from the struggle of your virtues.

My brother, if you are fortunate, you have one virtue and no more: then you cross the bridge more lightly.

To have many virtues is a distinction, but a heavy fate; and many have gone into the desert and killed themselves because they were weary of being the battle and battlefield of virtues.

My brother, are war and battle evil? Yet this evil is necessary; necessary are the envy and mistrust and slander among your virtues.

Look how each of your virtues desires the highest place: it wants your whole spirit as *its* herald; it wants all your strength in anger, hatred, and love.

Each virtue is jealous of the others, and jealousy is a terrible thing. Even virtues can perish of jealousy.

Whoever is encircled by jealousy's flame turns at last, like the scorpion, the poisoned sting against themselves.

Ah, my brother, have you never seen a virtue slander and stab itself?

The human being is something that must be overcome: and that is why you should love your virtues—for through them you will perish.—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Pale Criminal

You judges and sacrificers will not kill before the animal has nodded? Look, the pale criminal has nodded: great contempt speaks from his eye.

“My I is something that must be overcome: my I is to me the great contempt for humanity.” That is what speaks from this eye.

His highest moment was when he judged himself: do not let the exalted one sink back into his lowliness!

There is no deliverance for one who suffers so from himself, except a swift death.

Let your killing, you judges, be pity and not revenge. And as you kill, take care that you yourselves justify life!

It is not enough to make peace with the one you kill. Let your sadness be love for the overhuman: thus you justify your continuing to live!

Say “enemy,” but not “villain”; say “sick,” but not “scoundrel”; say “fool,” but not “sinner.”

And you, red judge, if you wished to say aloud everything you have already done in thought, everyone would cry, "Away with this filth and poisonous worm!"

But thought is one thing, the deed another, and the image of the deed another still. The wheel of causation does not roll between them.

An image made this pale man pale. He was equal to his deed when he did it: but once it was done, he could not bear its image.

Now he always saw himself as the doer of one deed. I call this madness: the exception became his essence.

A line holds the hen spellbound; the stroke he struck held his poor reason spellbound—I call this madness *after* the deed.

Listen, you judges! There is another madness as well: the madness before the deed. Ah, you have not crawled deep enough into this soul!

The red judge says, "Why did this criminal murder? He wanted to rob." But I tell you: his soul wanted blood, not robbery; he thirsted for the happiness of the knife!

But his poor reason did not understand this madness, and persuaded him. "What does blood matter?" it said. "Will you not at least commit a robbery along with it? Take revenge?"

And he listened to his poor reason: its words lay on him like lead—and so he robbed as he murdered. He did not want to be ashamed of his madness.

And now the lead of his guilt lies on him again, and again his poor reason is so rigid, so paralyzed, so heavy.

If only he could shake his head, his burden would roll away: but who will shake this head?

What is this man? A heap of diseases reaching out through the spirit into the world: there they mean to seize their prey.

What is this man? A tangle of wild serpents that rarely find peace together—so they go their separate ways and seek prey in the world.

Look at this poor body! What it suffered and desired, this poor soul interpreted for itself—as murderous pleasure and craving for the happiness of the knife.

Whoever falls sick now is assailed by the evil that is evil now: with what hurts him, he wants to hurt others. But there were other times, and another evil and good.

Once doubt was evil, and the will to selfhood. Then the sick person became a heretic or witch: as heretic and witch, the sufferer suffered and wanted to make others suffer.

But this will not enter your ears: it harms your good people, you tell me. Yet what do your good people matter to me?

Much in your good people disgusts me, and truly not their evil. If only they had a madness through which they perished, like this pale criminal!

Truly, I wish their madness were called truth or loyalty or justice: but they have their virtue in order to live long, in a pitiful contentment.

I am a railing beside the torrent: whoever can grasp me, let them grasp me! But I am not your crutch.—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Reading and Writing

Of all that is written, I love only what someone writes with their blood. Write with blood, and you will discover that blood is spirit.

It is not easy to understand another's blood: I hate idle readers.

Whoever knows the reader does nothing more for the reader. Another century of readers—and spirit itself will stink.

That everyone is allowed to learn to read will in the long run spoil not only writing, but thinking too.

Once spirit was God, then it became human, and now it is becoming rabble as well.

Whoever writes in blood and sayings wants not to be read, but to be learned by heart.

In the mountains the shortest way is from summit to summit: but for that you must have long legs. Let sayings be summits, and those addressed be great and tall.

The air thin and pure, danger close, and the spirit filled with cheerful malice: these things go well together.

I want goblins around me, for I am courageous. Courage that drives ghosts away creates goblins for itself—courage wants to laugh.

I no longer feel with you: this cloud I see beneath me, this blackness and heaviness I laugh at—that is your thundercloud.

You look upward when you long to be uplifted. And I look down, because I am uplifted.

Which of you can laugh and be uplifted at once?

Whoever climbs the highest mountains laughs at all tragic plays and tragic solemnity.

Courageous, carefree, mocking, violent—that is how wisdom wants us: she is a woman and always loves only a warrior.

You tell me, “Life is hard to bear.” But why else would you have your pride in the morning and your submission in the evening?

Life is hard to bear: then stop acting so delicately! We are all fine burden-bearing donkeys, male and female.

What have we in common with the rosebud that trembles because a drop of dew lies upon its body?

It is true: we love life, not because we are accustomed to life, but because we are accustomed to loving.

There is always some madness in love. But there is always some reason in madness too.

And to me too, who am well disposed toward life, butterflies and soap bubbles, and their kind among human beings, seem to know most about happiness.

To see these light, foolish, delicate, nimble little souls fluttering—that tempts Zarathustra to tears and songs.

I would believe only in a God who knew how to dance.

And when I saw my devil, I found him earnest, thorough, deep, solemn: he was the spirit of gravity—through him all things fall.

One kills not with anger, but with laughter. Come, let us kill the spirit of gravity!

I have learned to walk: since then I let myself run. I have learned to fly: since then I need no push to set me moving.

Now I am light; now I fly; now I see myself beneath myself; now a God dances through me.

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Tree on the Mountain

Zarathustra had noticed a young man avoiding him. One evening, walking alone through the mountains surrounding the town called the Motley Cow, he found this young man seated against a tree, gazing wearily into the valley. Zarathustra took hold of the tree beside him and spoke:

“If I wanted to shake this tree with my hands, I could not do it.

“But the wind we cannot see torments and bends it wherever it will. Invisible hands bend and torment us most cruelly.”

Then the young man rose in alarm and said, “I hear Zarathustra, and I was just thinking of him.” Zarathustra replied:

“Why should that frighten you? But the human being is like the tree.

“The more it wants to rise into height and light, the more strongly its roots strive earthward, downward, into darkness, depth—into evil.”

“Yes, into evil!” cried the young man. “How is it possible that you have discovered my soul?”

Zarathustra smiled and said, “Some souls will never be discovered unless one first invents them.”

“Yes, into evil!” the young man cried again.

“You spoke the truth, Zarathustra. Since I began wanting to rise, I no longer trust myself, and no one trusts me anymore—how does this happen?

“I change too quickly: my today refutes my yesterday. I often leap over steps as I climb—and no step forgives me.

“When I reach the heights, I always find myself alone. No one speaks to me; the frost of solitude makes me tremble. What do I want in the heights?

“My contempt and my longing grow together; the higher I climb, the more I despise the climber. What does he want in the heights?

“How ashamed I am of my climbing and stumbling! How I mock my labored panting! How I hate the one who flies! How weary I am in the heights!”

Here the young man fell silent. And Zarathustra contemplated the tree beside them and spoke:

“This tree stands solitary here on the mountainside; it has grown high above human and animal.

“And if it wished to speak, it would have no one who understood it: so high it has grown.

“Now it waits and waits—what is it waiting for? It dwells too near the clouds’ seat: perhaps it waits for the first lightning?”

When Zarathustra had said this, the young man cried with vehement gestures, “Yes, Zarathustra, you speak the truth. I longed for my going-under when I wished to rise, and you are the lightning I awaited! Look, what remains of me since you appeared among us? It is *envy* of you that has destroyed me!” So spoke the young man, weeping bitterly. But Zarathustra put his arm around him and led him away.

And after they had walked together for a while, Zarathustra began to speak:

“It tears my heart. Your eye tells me all your danger more clearly than your words.

“You are not yet free; you are still *seeking* freedom. Your seeking has left you sleepless and over-wakeful.

“You long for the free heights; your soul thirsts for stars. But your bad drives thirst for freedom too.

“Your wild dogs want freedom; they bark for joy in their cellar when your spirit strives to unlock every prison.

“To me you are still a prisoner imagining freedom: ah, the soul of such prisoners grows clever, but also cunning and bad.

“The liberated spirit must still purify itself. Much prison and mold remain within it: its eye must still become pure.

“Yes, I know your danger. But by my love and hope I implore you: do not throw away your love and hope!

“You still feel noble, and the others still sense your nobility too, even those who resent you and send you evil looks. Know that a noble person stands in everyone’s way.

“A noble person stands in the way of the good as well: even when they call him good, they mean to put him aside with that name.

“The noble person wants to create new things and a new virtue. The good person wants the old, and wants the old preserved.

“But the noble person’s danger is not to become good, but to become insolent, a mocker, a destroyer.

“Ah, I knew noble people who lost their highest hope. And then they slandered every high hope.

“Now they lived insolently in fleeting pleasures, scarcely casting a goal beyond the day.

“‘Spirit is sensual pleasure too,’ they said. Then their spirit’s wings broke: now it crawls about and soils things by gnawing.

“Once they thought to become heroes: now they are sensualists. The hero is a grief and a horror to them.

“But by my love and hope I implore you: do not cast away the hero in your soul! Hold your highest hope sacred!”—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Preachers of Death

There are preachers of death: and the earth is full of those to whom turning away from life must be preached.

The earth is full of the superfluous; life is spoiled by the all-too-many. May they be lured out of this life with “eternal life”!

“Yellow ones,” people call the preachers of death, or “black ones.” But I will show them to you in other colors as well.

There are the terrible ones, who carry the beast of prey within them and have no choice except pleasures or self-laceration. And even their pleasures are self-laceration.

These terrible ones have not even become human yet: let them preach turning away from life, and pass away themselves!

There are the consumptives of the soul: scarcely born, they already begin to die and long for teachings of weariness and renunciation.

They want to be dead, and we should approve their will! Let us beware of waking these dead and injuring these living coffins!

They encounter a sick person, an old man, or a corpse, and immediately say, "Life is refuted!"

But only they are refuted, and their eye, which sees only this one face of existence.

Wrapped in thick melancholy, eager for the little accidents that bring death, they wait and clench their teeth.

Or else they reach for sweetmeats and mock their own childishness: they cling to their straw of life and mock themselves for still clinging to a straw.

Their wisdom says, "A fool, anyone who stays alive—but such fools are we! And that is precisely the most foolish thing about life!"—

"Life is only suffering," say others, and do not lie: then see to it that you cease! See to it that life ceases, life that is only suffering!

And let the teaching of your virtue say, "You must kill yourself! You must steal yourself away!"—

"Lust is sin," say some who preach death. "Let us step aside and beget no children!"

"Giving birth is arduous," say others. "Why give birth at all? One gives birth only to the unhappy!" They too are preachers of death.

"Pity is needed," say a third group. "Take what I have! Take what I am! So much less will life bind me!"

If they were compassionate to the core, they would make their neighbors weary of life. To be evil—that would be their true goodness.

But they want to escape life: what do they care if they bind others still more firmly with their chains and gifts!—

And you too, to whom life is frantic labor and unrest: are you not very weary of life? Are you not very ripe for the preaching of death?

All of you who love frantic labor and whatever is fast, new, strange—you bear yourselves poorly; your diligence is flight and a will to forget yourselves.

If you believed more in life, you would fling yourselves less into the moment. But you have too little substance within you to wait—or even to be idle!

Everywhere the voice of those who preach death resounds: and the earth is full of those to whom death must be preached.

Or “eternal life”: it is all the same to me—if only they pass away quickly!

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On War and Warriors

We do not wish to be spared by our best enemies, nor by those we love to the core. Then let me tell you the truth!

My brothers in war! I love you to the core; I am and have been one of you. And I am also your best enemy. Then let me tell you the truth!

I know the hatred and envy in your hearts. You are not great enough to know neither hatred nor envy. Then be great enough not to be ashamed of them!

And if you cannot be saints of knowledge, at least be its warriors. They are the companions and forerunners of such sainthood.

I see many soldiers: if only I saw many warriors! What they wear is called “uniform”: may what they hide beneath it not be uniform!

Be people whose eyes are always searching for an enemy—for *your* enemy. And in some of you there is hatred at first sight.

Seek your enemy, wage your war—and for your thoughts! And if your thought is defeated, let your honesty still cry triumph over that defeat!

Love peace as a means to new wars. And love a short peace more than a long one.

I counsel you not to work, but to struggle. I counsel you not to peace, but to victory. Let your work be a struggle, your peace a victory!

One can remain silent and sit still only when one has bow and arrow: otherwise one chatters and quarrels. Let your peace be a victory!

You say it is the good cause that sanctifies even war? I tell you: it is the good war that sanctifies every cause.

War and courage have done more great things than love of one’s neighbor. Not your pity, but your bravery has saved the unfortunate until now.

“What is good?” you ask. Being brave is good. Let the little girls say, “Being good is whatever is pretty and touching at once.”

People call you heartless: but your heart is genuine, and I love the modesty of your warmth. You are ashamed of your flood, while others are ashamed of their ebb.

Are you ugly? Well then, my brothers! Wrap the sublime around you, the cloak of the ugly!

And when your soul grows great, it grows high-spirited, and there is malice in your sublimity. I know you.

In malice the high-spirited meet the weakling. But they misunderstand one another. I know you.

You may have enemies to hate, but not enemies to despise. You must be proud of your enemy: then your enemy's successes are your successes too.

Rebellion—that is the slave's nobility. Let your nobility be obedience! Let your commanding itself be an obeying!

To a good warrior, "You must" sounds sweeter than "I will." And let everything you love first be commanded to you.

Let your love of life be love for your highest hope: and let your highest hope be life's highest thought!

But let me command your highest thought to you—and it says: the human being is something that must be overcome.

So live your life of obedience and war! What does long life matter? What warrior wants to be spared?

I do not spare you; I love you to the core, my brothers in war!

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the New Idol

Somewhere there are still peoples and herds, but not among us, my brothers: here there are states.

State? What is that? Come, open your ears now, for now I will speak my word to you about the death of peoples.

The state is the name of the coldest of all cold monsters. Coldly it lies as well; and this lie crawls from its mouth: "I, the state, am the people."

It is a lie! Creators created peoples and hung a faith and a love above them: thus they served life.

Destroyers set traps for the many and call them a state: they hang a sword and a hundred desires above them.

Where a people still exists, it does not understand the state and hates it as an evil eye and a sin against customs and rights.

I give you this sign: every people speaks its own tongue of good and evil, which its neighbor does not understand. It invented its language for itself in customs and rights.

But the state lies in every tongue of good and evil; whatever it says, it lies—and whatever it has, it has stolen.

Everything about it is false; with stolen teeth it bites, the biting beast. Even its entrails are false.

Confusion of the tongues of good and evil: this is the sign I give you as the sign of the state. Truly, this sign signifies the will to death! Truly, it beckons to the preachers of death!

Far too many are born: the state was invented for the superfluous!

Just look how it lures them to itself, the all-too-many! How it swallows them and chews and chews them over!

“On earth there is nothing greater than I: I am God’s ordering finger,” roars the monster. And not only the long-eared and shortsighted sink to their knees!

Ah, into you too, great souls, it murmurs its gloomy lies! Ah, it divines the rich hearts that gladly squander themselves!

Yes, it divines you too, conquerors of the old God! You grew weary in battle, and now your weariness serves the new idol as well!

Heroes and honorable people—the new idol wants to array them around itself!

The cold monster gladly suns itself in the sunshine of good consciences!

It wants to give *you* everything, the new idol, if *you* worship it: thus it buys the radiance of your virtue and the look of your proud eyes.

With you it wants to bait a trap for the all-too-many! Yes, a hellish trick was invented here, a horse of death clattering in the finery of divine honors!

Yes, here a dying for many was invented, which praises itself as life: truly, a heartfelt service to all preachers of death!

I call it state where everyone drinks poison, good and bad alike; state, where everyone loses themselves, good and bad alike; state, where the slow suicide of everyone is called “life.”

Just look at these superfluous people! They steal the inventors’ works and the sages’ treasures; they call their theft culture—and everything turns to sickness and affliction for them!

Just look at these superfluous people! They are always sick; they vomit their bile and call it a newspaper. They devour one another and cannot even digest themselves.

Just look at these superfluous people! They acquire riches and grow poorer through them. They want power, and first of all the crowbar of power, much money—these powerless ones!

Look at them climbing, these nimble apes! They climb over one another, and so drag one another into the mud and the depths.

They all want to reach the throne: that is their madness—as if happiness sat upon the throne! Often mud sits upon the throne—and often the throne sits upon mud as well.

To me they are all madmen and climbing apes and feverishly overheated. Their idol, the cold monster, stinks to me: all these idolaters stink to me together.

My brothers, do you mean to suffocate in the fumes of their mouths and appetites? Better smash the windows and leap into the open!

Keep out of the way of the stench! Leave the idolatry of the superfluous!

Keep out of the way of the stench! Leave the vapor of these human sacrifices!

The earth still lies open to great souls. Many places remain empty for the solitary and for pairs, with the scent of tranquil seas blowing around them.

A free life still lies open to great souls. Truly, whoever possesses little is possessed so much less: praised be a modest poverty!

There, where the state ends, begins the human being who is not superfluous: there begins the song of the necessary one, the singular and irreplaceable melody.

There, where the state *ends*—look there, my brothers! Do you not see it, the rainbow and the bridges of the overhuman?—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Flies of the Marketplace

Flee, my friend, into your solitude! I see you stunned by the noise of great men and pierced by the stings of the small.

Forest and rock know how to keep a worthy silence with you. Be again like the tree you love, the broad-branched one: still and listening, it hangs above the sea. Where solitude ends, the marketplace begins; and where the marketplace begins, there begins the noise of great actors and the buzzing of poisonous flies. In the world, the best things are worth nothing without someone first performing them: the people call these performers great men.

The people understand little of greatness—that is, of creation. But they have senses for every performer and actor of great things.

The world turns around the inventors of new values: invisibly it turns. But the people and fame turn around the actors: that is the way of the world.

The actor has spirit, but little conscience of the spirit. He always believes in whatever most strongly makes others believe—believe in *himself*!

Tomorrow he has a new faith, and the day after a newer one. His senses are quick, like the people's, and his scent for things changes.

To overturn—that means to him to prove. To drive people wild—that means to him to convince. And blood counts with him as the best of all arguments.

A truth that slips only into subtle ears he calls a lie and nothing. Truly, he believes only in gods that make a great noise in the world!

The marketplace is full of solemn jesters—and the people boast of their great men! To them these are the masters of the hour.

But the hour presses them: so they press you. And from you too they demand Yes or No. Alas, do you mean to set your chair between For and Against?

Do not envy these absolute and pressing ones, you lover of truth! Truth has never yet taken the arm of an absolutist.

Because of these sudden ones, return to your security: only in the marketplace are people assailed with Yes? or No?

Experience comes slowly to all deep wells: they must wait long before they know what has fallen into their depths.

Away from marketplace and fame, all greatness happens: away from marketplace and fame, inventors of new values have always lived.

Flee, my friend, into your solitude: I see you pierced by poisonous flies. Flee where the air blows rough and strong!

Flee into your solitude! You have lived too close to the small and pitiful. Flee their invisible revenge! Toward you they are nothing but revenge.

Raise your arm against them no more! They are countless, and it is not your lot to be a fly whisk.

Countless are these small and pitiful ones; and raindrops and weeds have already brought many a proud structure to ruin.

You are no stone, yet many drops have already hollowed you. Many drops will yet break and shatter you.

I see you wearied by poisonous flies, scratched bloody in a hundred places; and your pride will not even grow angry.

In all innocence they want blood from you; their bloodless souls crave blood—and so, in all innocence, they sting.

But you, deep one, suffer too deeply even from small wounds; and before you have healed, the same poisonous worm has crawled across your hand.

You are too proud to kill these nibblers. But beware lest bearing all their poisonous injustice become your doom!

They buzz around you with their praise as well: their praising is an intrusion. They want the nearness of your skin and blood.

They flatter you as a God or devil; they whine before you as before a God or devil. What does it matter? They are flatterers and whiners, and nothing more.

Often they also present themselves as lovable. But that has always been the coward's cleverness. Yes, cowards are clever!

They think much about you with their narrow souls—you are always a matter of suspicion to them! Whatever is much considered grows suspect.

They punish you for all your virtues. At heart they forgive you only—your mistakes.

Because you are gentle and just-minded, you say, "They are innocent of their little existence." But their narrow soul thinks, "All great existence is guilt."

Even when you are gentle with them, they still feel despised by you; and they repay your kindness with hidden injuries.

Your wordless pride always offends their taste; they rejoice when you are once modest enough to be vain.

What we recognize in a person, we also kindle in that person. So beware of the small!

Before you they feel small, and their lowliness smolders and burns against you in invisible revenge.

Have you not noticed how often they fell silent when you approached, and how their strength left them like smoke from a dying fire?

Yes, my friend, you are your neighbors' bad conscience: for they are unworthy of you. So they hate you and would gladly suck your blood.

Your neighbors will always be poisonous flies; what is great in you must itself make them more poisonous and ever more flylike.

Flee, my friend, into your solitude, where the air blows rough and strong. It is not your lot to be a fly whisk.—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Chastity

I love the forest. Life is bad in the cities: too many people there are in heat.

Is it not better to fall into a murderer's hands than into a lustful woman's dreams?

And just look at these men: their eyes tell it—they know nothing better on earth than lying with a woman.

There is mud at the bottom of their souls; and woe if their mud has spirit as well!

If only you were at least perfect as animals! But innocence belongs to the animal.

Do I counsel you to kill your senses? I counsel you to the innocence of the senses.

Do I counsel you to chastity? For some, chastity is a virtue, but for many it is almost a vice.

These people abstain, certainly: but the she-dog Sensuality looks enviously out of everything they do.

This beast and its unrest follow them even into the heights of their virtue and into the cold spirit itself.

And how prettily the she-dog Sensuality knows how to beg for a piece of spirit when a piece of flesh is denied her!

You love tragedies and everything that breaks the heart? But I distrust your she-dog.

Your eyes are too cruel for me, and you look lustfully at those who suffer. Has your lust merely disguised itself and called itself pity?

I give you this parable too: not a few who wanted to drive out their devil entered into the swine themselves.

Anyone who finds chastity difficult should be counseled against it: lest it become the road to hell—that is, to mud and heat in the soul.

Am I speaking of dirty things? To me that is not the worst of it.

Not when truth is dirty, but when it is shallow, does the knower hesitate to enter its waters.

Truly, there are people chaste to the core: they are gentler at heart; they laugh more readily and more abundantly than you.

They laugh at chastity too, and ask, “What is chastity?

“Is chastity not folly? But this folly came to us, not we to it.

“We offered this guest lodging and our hearts: now it lives with us—let it stay as long as it wishes!”

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Friend

“One is always one too many around me,” thinks the hermit. “Always one times one—in time that makes two!”

I and Me are always too eager in their conversation: how could one bear it if there were no friend?

For the hermit, the friend is always the third: the third is the cork that keeps the conversation of the two from sinking into the depths.

Ah, there are too many depths for all hermits. That is why they long so much for a friend and for his height.

Our faith in others betrays what we would gladly believe about ourselves. Our longing for a friend betrays us.

And often love seeks only to leap over envy. And often one attacks and makes an enemy to hide one's own vulnerability.

"At least be my enemy!" says true reverence, which does not dare ask for friendship.

If one wants a friend, one must also want to wage war for him: and to wage war, one must be *able* to be an enemy.

One should honor the enemy even in one's friend. Can you come close to your friend without crossing over to his side?

In one's friend one should have one's best enemy. Your heart should be nearest him when you resist him.

You want to wear no clothes before your friend? It should honor your friend that you give yourself as you are? But for that he wishes you to the devil!

Whoever makes no secret of themselves provokes indignation: such reason you have to fear nakedness! Yes, if you were gods, then you might be ashamed of your clothes!

You cannot adorn yourself beautifully enough for your friend: for to him you should be an arrow and a longing for the overhuman.

Have you seen your friend asleep, to discover what he looks like? What else is your friend's face? It is your own face in a rough and imperfect mirror.

Have you seen your friend asleep? Were you not frightened that your friend looked like that? Oh, my friend, the human being is something that must be overcome.

In divining and keeping silent the friend should be a master: you must not wish to see everything. Let your dream reveal what your friend does while awake.

Let your pity be a divining, so that you first learn whether your friend wants pity. Perhaps he loves in you the unbroken eye and the gaze of eternity.

Let pity for the friend hide beneath a hard shell; you should break a tooth on it. Thus it will have its delicacy and sweetness.

Are you pure air and solitude and bread and medicine to your friend? Many cannot loosen their own chains and yet deliver their friends.

Are you a slave? Then you cannot be a friend. Are you a tyrant? Then you cannot have friends.

Too long a slave and a tyrant have lain hidden in woman. That is why woman is not yet capable of friendship: she knows only love.

In woman's love there is injustice and blindness toward everything she does not love. And even in woman's knowing love there are still ambush and lightning and night beside the light.

Woman is not yet capable of friendship: women are still cats, and birds. Or, at best, cows.

Woman is not yet capable of friendship. But tell me, you men, which of you is capable of friendship?

Oh, your poverty, you men, and your stinginess of soul! What you give your friend, I would give even my enemy, and would not have become poorer for it.

There is comradeship: may there be friendship!

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On a Thousand and One Goals

Zarathustra saw many lands and many peoples: thus he discovered the good and evil of many peoples. Zarathustra found no greater power on earth than good and evil.

No people could live without first valuing; but if it means to preserve itself, it must not value as its neighbor values.

Much that one people called good, another called mockery and disgrace: so I found. Much I found called evil here and adorned with purple honors there.

One neighbor never understood another: its soul always wondered at its neighbor's delusion and malice.

A tablet of good things hangs above every people. Look, it is the tablet of its overcomings; look, it is the voice of its will to power.

What it considers difficult is praiseworthy; what is indispensable and difficult is called good; and what delivers even from the greatest need, the rarest and hardest—that it praises as holy.

Whatever makes it rule and conquer and shine, to its neighbor's terror and envy—that it considers the high, the first, the measure, the meaning of all things.

Truly, my brother, once you know a people's need, land, sky, and neighbor, you can divine the law of its overcomings and why it climbs this ladder toward its hope.

"You must always be first and excel all others: your jealous soul must love no one except the friend"—this made a Greek's soul tremble; by this he followed his path to greatness.

"To speak truth and wield bow and arrow well"—this seemed both dear and difficult to the people from whom my name comes, the name that is both dear and difficult to me.

"To honor father and mother and do their will down to the soul's root": another people hung this tablet of overcoming above itself, and through it became mighty and everlasting.

"To practice loyalty and, for loyalty's sake, stake honor and blood even on evil and dangerous causes": teaching itself this, another people overcame itself; and overcoming itself thus, it became pregnant and heavy with great hopes.

Truly, human beings gave themselves all their good and evil. Truly, they did not take it, did not find it; it did not fall to them as a voice from heaven.

Human beings first placed values in things to preserve themselves—first created meaning for things, a human meaning! That is why they call themselves "human," which means: the valuing one.

Valuing is creating: hear it, you creators! Valuing itself is the treasure and jewel of all valued things.

Only through valuing is there value: without valuing, the nut of existence would be hollow. Hear it, you creators!

A change in values—that is a change in creators. Whoever must be a creator always destroys.

Peoples were creators first; individuals came late. Truly, the individual is itself still the youngest creation.

Once peoples hung a tablet of good above themselves. Love that wants to rule and love that wants to obey created such tablets together.

Pleasure in the herd is older than pleasure in the I: and as long as good conscience is called herd, only bad conscience says I.

Truly, the cunning I, the loveless one that seeks its advantage in the advantage of many, is not the herd's origin, but its going-under.

It was always lovers and creators who created good and evil. The fire of love glows in the names of all virtues, and the fire of anger.

Zarathustra saw many lands and many peoples: no greater power did Zarathustra find on earth than the works of lovers; "good" and "evil" are their names.

Truly, the power of this praising and blaming is a monster. Tell me, who will subdue it for me, my brothers? Tell me, who will throw a fetter over this beast's thousand necks?

There have been a thousand goals until now, for there have been a thousand peoples. Only the fetter for the thousand necks is still missing; the one goal is missing. Humanity has no goal yet.

But tell me, my brothers: if humanity's goal is still missing, is not humanity itself still missing too?—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Love of the Neighbor

You crowd around your neighbor and have beautiful words for it. But I tell you: your love of your neighbor is your bad love of yourselves.

You flee from yourselves to your neighbor and would make a virtue of it: but I see through your "selflessness."

The You is older than the I; the You has been declared holy, but not yet the I: so the human being presses toward the neighbor.

Do I counsel you to love your neighbor? I would sooner counsel you to flee your neighbor and love what is farthest away!

Higher than love of the neighbor is love of the farthest and the future; higher still than love of human beings is love of things and ghosts.

This ghost running ahead of you, my brother, is more beautiful than you: why do you not give it your flesh and bones? But you are afraid and run to your neighbor.

You cannot endure yourselves and do not love yourselves enough: now you want to seduce your neighbor into love and gild yourselves with his error.

I wish you could not endure all sorts of neighbors and their neighbors: then you would have to create your friend and his overflowing heart out of yourselves.

You invite a witness when you want to speak well of yourselves; and when you have persuaded him to think well of you, you think well of yourselves too.

Not only the one who speaks against what they know lies, but even more the one who speaks as though they knew what they do not. And that is how you speak about yourselves in company, deceiving your neighbor with yourselves.

Thus speaks the fool: "The company of human beings spoils character, especially if one has none."

One goes to the neighbor because he seeks himself, another because he wants to lose himself. Your bad love of yourselves turns solitude into a prison for you.

Those farther away pay for your love of the neighbor; and even when five of you gather, a sixth must always die.

I do not love your festivals either: I found too many actors there, and often the spectators behaved like actors too.

I teach you not the neighbor, but the friend. Let the friend be to you the earth's festival and a foretaste of the overhuman.

I teach you the friend and his overflowing heart. But one must know how to be a sponge to be loved by overflowing hearts.

I teach you the friend in whom the world stands complete, a bowl of goodness—the creating friend who always has a complete world to give away.

And as the world rolled apart for him, it rolls together again in rings, as the becoming of good through evil, as the becoming of purposes out of chance.

Let the future and the farthest be the cause of your today: in your friend, love the overhuman as your cause.

My brothers, I do not counsel you to love your neighbor: I counsel you to love what is farthest away.

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Creator's Way

Do you want, my brother, to go into solitude? Do you want to seek the way to yourself? Wait a little longer and hear me.

“Whoever seeks easily gets lost. All solitude is guilt”: so speaks the herd. And you belonged to the herd for a long time.

The herd's voice will still resound within you. And when you say, “I no longer share one conscience with you,” it will be a lament and a pain.

Look, that single conscience itself gave birth even to this pain: its last glimmer still glows upon your melancholy.

But you want to follow the path of your melancholy, which is the path to yourself? Then show me your right and your strength to do so!

Are you a new strength and a new right? A first movement? A wheel rolling out of itself? Can you also compel stars to revolve around you?

Ah, there is so much lust for heights! So much convulsion among the ambitious! Show me that you are neither lustful nor ambitious!

Ah, there are so many great thoughts that do no more than a bellows: they inflate and make emptier.

You call yourself free? I want to hear your ruling thought, not that you have escaped a yoke.

Are you someone who *was entitled* to escape a yoke? Many threw away their last value when they threw away their servitude.

Free from what? What does Zarathustra care! But let your eye tell me clearly: free *for what*?

Can you give yourself your evil and your good, and hang your will above yourself like a law? Can you be your own judge and the avenger of your law?

Terrible is being alone with the judge and avenger of one's own law. Thus a star is hurled into desolate space and the icy breath of aloneness.

Today you still suffer from the many, you solitary one: today your courage and your hopes are still whole.

But one day solitude will weary you; one day your pride will bend and your courage grind its teeth. One day you will cry, "I am alone!"

One day you will no longer see your heights, and will see your depths too closely; your very sublimity will frighten you like a ghost. One day you will cry, "Everything is false!"

There are feelings that want to kill the solitary: if they fail, well, they themselves must die! But are you capable of being a murderer?

My brother, do you already know the word "contempt"? And the torment of your justice in being just toward those who despise you?

You force many to learn anew about you: they hold that bitterly against you. You came close to them and yet passed by: they will never forgive you for that.

You go beyond them: but the higher you climb, the smaller the eye of envy sees you. Most of all, however, it hates the one who flies.

"How could you be just toward me!" you must say. "I choose your injustice as my allotted portion."

They throw injustice and filth at the solitary: but, my brother, if you want to be a star, you must shine no less for them because of it!

And beware of the good and the just! They gladly crucify those who invent their own virtue—they hate the solitary.

Beware also of holy simplicity! Everything not simple is unholy to it; it also likes to play with fire—the fire of the stake.

And beware of the assaults of your love! Too quickly the solitary stretches out a hand to whoever approaches.

To many people you must give not your hand, but only your paw: and I want your paw to have claws as well.

But you yourself will always be the worst enemy you can meet; you lie in wait for yourself in caves and forests.

Solitary one, you follow the path to yourself! And your path leads past yourself and your seven devils!

You will be your own heretic and witch and soothsayer and fool and doubter and unholy one and villain.

You must be willing to burn in your own flame: how could you become new without first becoming ashes?

Solitary one, you follow the creator's way: you want to create a God for yourself out of your seven devils!

Solitary one, you follow the lover's way: you love yourself and therefore despise yourself as only lovers despise.

The lover wants to create because he despises! What does anyone know of love who has not had to despise precisely what he loved?

With your love go into your solitude, and with your creating, my brother; only late will justice limp after you.

With my tears go into your solitude, my brother. I love the one who wants to create beyond himself and thus perishes.—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Old and Young Women

“Why do you creep so shyly through the twilight, Zarathustra? And what are you hiding so carefully beneath your cloak?

“Is it a treasure you were given? Or a child born to you? Or are you now walking the thieves' paths yourself, you friend of the wicked?”—

“Truly, my brother!” said Zarathustra. “It is a treasure I was given: I am carrying a little truth.

“But it is unruly as a young child, and unless I cover its mouth, it cries out too loudly.

“Today, as I walked alone at the hour when the sun sinks, an old woman met me and spoke to my soul:

“‘Zarathustra has said much to us women, but never spoken to us about woman.’

“And I answered her, ‘One should speak about woman only to men.’

“‘Speak to me about woman too,’ she said. ‘I am old enough to forget it again at once.’

“And I granted the old woman's wish and spoke to her:

“Everything about woman is a riddle, and everything about woman has one solution: it is called pregnancy.

“For woman, man is a means: the end is always the child. But what is woman for man?

“The true man wants two things: danger and play. That is why he wants woman, the most dangerous plaything.

“Man should be educated for war, and woman for the warrior’s recreation: everything else is folly.

“The warrior does not like over-sweet fruit. That is why he likes woman: even the sweetest woman is bitter.

“Woman understands children better than man, but man is more childlike than woman.

“A child is hidden in the true man: it wants to play. Come, women, discover the child in man!

“Let woman be a plaything, pure and fine, like a precious stone, lit by the virtues of a world that does not yet exist.

“Let a star’s ray shine in your love! Let your hope say, ‘May I give birth to the overhuman!’

“Let there be bravery in your love! With your love you should advance upon the one who inspires fear in you!

“Let your honor be in your love! Otherwise woman understands little of honor. But let this be your honor: always to love more than you are loved, and never to be second.

“Let man fear woman when she loves: then she makes every sacrifice, and everything else is worthless to her.

“Let man fear woman when she hates: for at the bottom of his soul man is merely evil, but there woman is bad.

“Whom does woman hate most? Thus iron spoke to the magnet: ‘I hate you most because you attract, but are not strong enough to draw me to you.’

“Man’s happiness says: I will. Woman’s happiness says: he wills.

“Look, just now the world became perfect!’ every woman thinks when she obeys out of wholehearted love.

“And woman must obey and find a depth for her surface. Woman’s disposition is a surface, a shifting, stormy skin upon shallow water.

“But man’s disposition is deep; his stream roars through underground caves: woman senses its strength, but does not comprehend it.”—

“Then the old woman answered me, ‘Zarathustra has said many pretty things, especially for those young enough for them.

“‘Strange, Zarathustra knows little of women, and yet he is right about them! Is that because nothing is impossible with woman?

“‘And now take a little truth in thanks! I am certainly old enough for it!

“‘Wrap it up and cover its mouth: otherwise this little truth cries out too loudly.’

“‘Woman, give me your little truth!’ I said. And the old woman spoke:

“‘You are going to women? Do not forget the whip!’”—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Adder’s Bite

One day, because it was hot, Zarathustra had fallen asleep beneath a fig tree with his arms over his face. Then an adder came and bit his neck, and Zarathustra cried out in pain. Taking his arm from his face, he looked at the serpent: she recognized Zarathustra’s eyes, twisted awkwardly, and tried to leave. “No,” said Zarathustra, “you have not yet accepted my thanks! You woke me in time; my journey is still long.” “Your journey is short now,” the adder said sadly. “My poison kills.” Zarathustra smiled. “When did a dragon ever die of a serpent’s poison?” he said. “But take your poison back! You are not rich enough to give it to me.” Then the adder wound herself around his neck again and licked his wound.

When Zarathustra once told this to his disciples, they asked, “And what, Zarathustra, is the moral of your story?” Zarathustra answered:

“The good and the just call me the destroyer of morality: my story is immoral.

“But if you have an enemy, do not repay evil with good: that would shame him. Show instead that he has done you some good.

“And rather be angry than cause shame! If someone curses you, I do not like your wanting to bless them. Better join a little in the cursing!

“And if a great injustice has been done to you, quickly do five small ones as well! A person weighed down by injustice alone is dreadful to behold.

“Did you already know this? Shared injustice is half justice. And whoever can bear the injustice should take it upon themselves!

“A little revenge is more human than no revenge at all. And if punishment is not also a right and an honor for the offender, I do not like your punishing either.

“It is nobler to admit oneself wrong than to insist on being right, especially when one is right. Only, one must be rich enough for it.

“I do not like your cold justice; and from your judges’ eyes the executioner and his cold iron always look at me.

“Tell me, where is the justice that is love with seeing eyes?

“Invent for me the love that bears not only all punishment, but all guilt as well!

“Invent for me the justice that acquits everyone except the judge!

“Would you hear this too? In someone who wants to be just to the core, even lying becomes kindness toward humanity.

“But how could I be just to the core? How can I give each their own? Let this be enough for me: I give each what is mine.

“Finally, my brothers, beware of wronging any hermit! How could a hermit forget? How could he repay?

“A hermit is like a deep well. It is easy to throw a stone into it; but once it has sunk to the bottom, tell me, who will bring it out again?

“Beware of insulting the hermit! But if you have done it, well, kill him too!”

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Child and Marriage

I have a question for you alone, my brother: like a plumb line I cast this question into your soul, to learn its depth.

You are young and wish for child and marriage. But I ask you: are you someone *entitled* to wish for a child?

Are you the victorious one, the self-conqueror, the commander of the senses, the master of your virtues? That is what I ask you.

Or do the animal and necessity speak from your wish? Or loneliness? Or discord with yourself?

I want your victory and your freedom to long for a child. You should build living monuments to your victory and your liberation.

You should build beyond yourself. But first you must yourself be built, squarely in body and soul.

You should propagate not merely onward, but upward! May the garden of marriage help you do so!

You should create a higher body, a first movement, a wheel rolling out of itself—you should create a creator.

Marriage: that is my name for the will of two to create the one that is more than those who created it. Marriage is what I call their reverence for one another as people willing such a will.

Let this be the meaning and truth of your marriage. But what the all-too-many, the superfluous, call marriage—ah, what do I call that?

Ah, this poverty of soul in pairs! Ah, this filth of soul in pairs! Ah, this pitiful contentment in pairs!

They call all this marriage, and say their marriages were made in heaven.

Well, I do not like it, this heaven of the superfluous! No, I do not like these animals entangled in the heavenly net!

And keep far from me the God who limps up to bless what he did not join together!

Do not laugh at such marriages! What child would have no reason to weep over its parents?

This man seemed worthy to me, and ripe for the meaning of the earth: but when I saw his wife, the earth seemed a madhouse to me.

Yes, I wish the earth would shake in convulsions when a saint and a goose mate.

This one set out like a hero in pursuit of truths, and at last captured a little dressed-up lie. He calls it his marriage.

That one was reserved in company and chose fastidiously. But all at once he spoiled his company once and for all: he calls it his marriage.

Another sought a maidservant with an angel's virtues. But all at once he became a woman's maidservant, and now he would need to become an angel as well.

I have found all buyers careful now, and all with cunning eyes. Yet even the cleverest buys his wife unseen in a sack.

Many brief follies—that is what you call love. And your marriage puts an end to many brief follies as one long stupidity.

Your love for woman, and woman's love for man: ah, if only it were pity for suffering, veiled gods! But usually two animals merely divine one another.

Yet even your best love is only an ecstatic image and a painful fire. It is a torch meant to light higher paths for you.

One day you should love beyond yourselves! So first *learn* to love! That is why you had to drink the bitter cup of your love.

There is bitterness in the cup of even the best love: thus it creates longing for the overhuman; thus it creates thirst in you, the creator!

Thirst in the creator, arrow and longing toward the overhuman: tell me, my brother, is this your will to marriage?

Holy is what I call such a will and such a marriage.—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Free Death

Many die too late, and some too early. The teaching still sounds strange: “Die at the proper time!”

Die at the proper time: so Zarathustra teaches.

Of course, how could someone who never lives at the proper time ever die at the proper time? If only that person had never been born! This is my counsel to the superfluous.

But even the superfluous make much of their dying, and even the hollowest nut still wants to be cracked.

Everyone takes dying seriously: but death is not yet a festival. Human beings have not yet learned how to consecrate the most beautiful festivals.

I show you the consummating death, which becomes a spur and a pledge to the living.

The one who consummates dies his death victoriously, surrounded by those who hope and pledge themselves.

That is how one should learn to die; and there should be no festival where such a dying person does not consecrate the oaths of the living!

To die like this is best; second best is to die in battle and squander a great soul.

But to fighter and victor alike, your grinning death is hateful: it creeps up like a thief—and yet comes as master.

I commend my death to you, the free death that comes to me because *I* will it.

And when shall I will it? Whoever has a goal and an heir wills death at the proper time for goal and heir.

And out of reverence for goal and heir, he will hang no more withered wreaths in the sanctuary of life.

Truly, I do not want to resemble the rope makers: they draw out their thread while walking backward themselves.

Many also grow too old for their truths and victories; a toothless mouth no longer has a right to every truth.

And everyone who wants fame must take leave of honor in good time, and practice the difficult art of—going at the proper time.

One must stop letting oneself be eaten when one tastes best: those who want to be loved long know this.

There are sour apples, certainly, whose fate is to wait until autumn's last day: and they become ripe, yellow, and wrinkled at once.

In some the heart ages first, in others the spirit. And some are old in youth: but youth that comes late keeps one young long.

For some, life fails: a poisonous worm eats into their hearts. Let them see to it that death succeeds all the better.

Some never grow sweet; they rot in summer already. Cowardice holds them fast to their branches.

Far too many live, and far too long they hang upon their branches. If only a storm would come to shake all this rotten, worm-eaten fruit from the tree!

If only preachers of *swift* death would come! To me they would be the right storms and shakers of life's trees! But I hear only slow death preached, and patience with everything "earthly."

Ah, you preach patience with earthly things? These earthly things have too much patience with you, you slanderous mouths!

Truly, that Hebrew whom the preachers of slow death honor died too early: and for many it has been their doom ever since that he died too early.

He still knew only tears and the Hebrew's melancholy, together with the hatred of the good and the just—Jesus the Hebrew: then longing for death assailed him.

If only he had remained in the desert, far from the good and the just! Perhaps he would have learned to live and love the earth—and to laugh as well!

Believe me, my brothers! He died too early; he himself would have recanted his teaching had he reached my age! He was noble enough to recant!

But he was still unripe. The young man loves unripe, and unripe he hates humanity and earth. His disposition and his spirit's wings are still bound and heavy.

But there is more child in the man than in the youth, and less melancholy: he understands death and life better.

Free for death and free in death, a sacred No-sayer when it is no longer time for Yes: thus he understands death and life.

My friends, let your dying be no slander against humanity and earth: this I ask of the honey in your souls.

In your dying let your spirit and virtue still glow like sunset around the earth: otherwise your dying has gone badly.

Thus I myself want to die, so that you, my friends, love the earth more for my sake; and I want to become earth again, to find rest in her who bore me.

Truly, Zarathustra had a goal; he threw his ball. Now you, my friends, are my goal's heirs: I throw you the golden ball.

More than anything, my friends, I love to see you throwing the golden ball!

And so I linger a little longer on earth: forgive me!

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Giving Virtue

¹ When Zarathustra had taken leave of the town to which his heart was attached, whose name is the Motley Cow, many who called themselves his disciples followed and accompanied him. They came to a crossroads: there Zarathustra told them he now wished to go alone, for he was a friend of walking alone. But in farewell his disciples gave him a staff whose golden handle bore a serpent coiled around the sun. Zarathustra delighted in the staff and leaned upon it; then he spoke to his disciples.

“Tell me: how did gold come to have the highest value? Because it is uncommon and useless, gleaming and gentle in its radiance; it always gives itself away.

“Only as an image of the highest virtue did gold attain the highest value. The giver’s gaze shines like gold. The radiance of gold makes peace between moon and sun.

“The highest virtue is uncommon and useless; gleaming and gentle is its radiance: a giving virtue is the highest virtue.

“Truly, I divine you well, my disciples: like me, you strive for the giving virtue. What could you have in common with cats and wolves?

“This is your thirst: to become sacrifices and gifts yourselves. That is why you thirst to heap all riches into your souls.

“Insatiably your soul strives for treasures and jewels, because your virtue is insatiable in its desire to give.

“You compel all things toward you and into you, so that they may stream back from your spring as the gifts of your love.

“Truly, such giving love must become a robber of all values; but I call this selfishness whole and holy.

“There is another selfishness, an all-too-poor, hungry selfishness that always wants to steal: the selfishness of the sick, sick selfishness.

“With the thief’s eye it looks at everything that glitters; with hunger’s greed it measures whoever has abundant food; and it always steals around the givers’ table.

“Sickness and invisible degeneration speak from such desire; the thieving greed of this selfishness speaks of an ailing body.

“Tell me, my brothers: what do we consider bad and worst? Is it not *degeneration*? And we always infer degeneration where the giving soul is absent.

“Our way leads upward, beyond the kind to the higher kind. But the degenerating outlook that says, ‘Everything for me,’ is a horror to us.

“Our minds fly upward: thus they are an image of our body, an image of elevation. The names of virtues are images of such elevations.

“Thus the body passes through history, becoming and struggling. And spirit—what is it to the body? The herald, companion, and echo of its struggles and victories.

“All names of good and evil are images: they do not speak things out; they only beckon. A fool, anyone who demands knowledge of them!

“Attend, my brothers, to every hour when your spirit wants to speak in images: there is the origin of your virtue.

“Then your body is elevated and risen again; with its delight it transports the spirit, so that it becomes creator and valuer and lover and benefactor of all things.

“When your heart surges broad and full like a river, a blessing and a danger to those who dwell along it: there is the origin of your virtue.

“When you are raised above praise and blame, and your will wants to command all things as a lover’s will: there is the origin of your virtue.

“When you despise the pleasant and the soft bed, and cannot lie far enough from the soft: there is the origin of your virtue.

“When you are willers of one will, and this turning of all need you call necessity: there is the origin of your virtue.

“Truly, it is a new good and evil! Truly, a new deep rushing, the voice of a new spring!

“Power is this new virtue; a ruling thought it is, with a clever soul around it: a golden sun with the serpent of knowledge around it.”

- ² Here Zarathustra fell silent for a while and looked lovingly at his disciples. Then he continued—and his voice had changed.

“Remain faithful to the earth, my brothers, with the power of your virtue! Let your giving love and your knowledge serve the meaning of the earth! This I ask and implore of you.

“Do not let them fly away from earthly things and beat their wings against eternal walls! Ah, there has always been so much virtue flown astray!

“Like me, lead the virtue flown astray back to earth—yes, back to body and life, so that it may give the earth its meaning, a human meaning!

“In a hundred ways spirit and virtue alike have flown astray and reached amiss until now. Ah, all this delusion and error still dwells in our bodies: there it has become body and will.

“In a hundred ways spirit and virtue alike have attempted and strayed until now. Yes, the human being was an attempt. Ah, so much ignorance and error has become body in us!

“Not only the reason of millennia—their madness too breaks out in us. It is dangerous to be an heir.

“We still struggle step by step with the giant Chance; and until now nonsense, the absence of meaning, has ruled over all humanity.

“Let your spirit and your virtue serve the meaning of the earth, my brothers, and let the value of all things be set anew by you! For that you must be fighters! For that you must be creators!

“Through knowing, the body purifies itself; experimenting with knowledge, it elevates itself; to the knower all drives become holy; to the elevated one the soul becomes joyful.

“Physician, help yourself: thus you help your patient too. Let this be the best help for him: to see with his own eyes the one who makes himself whole.

“There are a thousand paths never yet walked, a thousand forms of health and hidden islands of life. Humanity and the human earth are still unexhausted and undiscovered.

“Wake and listen, you solitary ones! Winds come from the future with a secret beating of wings; and good tidings reach subtle ears.

“You solitary ones of today, you who separate yourselves, shall one day be a people: from you who chose yourselves, a chosen people shall grow—and from it the overhuman.

“Truly, the earth shall yet become a place of recovery! Already a new scent surrounds it, a healing scent—and a new hope!”

- 3 When Zarathustra had spoken these words, he fell silent like someone who has not said his last word. For a long time he weighed the staff doubtfully in his hand. At last he spoke—and his voice had changed.

“Now I go alone, my disciples! You too, go away now, and alone! That is my will.

“Truly, I counsel you: leave me and defend yourselves against Zarathustra! Better still, be ashamed of him! Perhaps he deceived you.

“The person of knowledge must be able not only to love enemies, but also to hate friends.

“One repays a teacher badly by remaining only a pupil forever. And why do you not want to pluck at my wreath?

“You revere me; but what if your reverence falls one day? Beware lest a statue crush you!

“You say you believe in Zarathustra? But what does Zarathustra matter? You are my believers: but what do all believers matter?

“You had not yet sought yourselves when you found me. So all believers do; that is why all belief amounts to so little.

“Now I bid you lose me and find yourselves; and only when you have all denied me will I return to you.

“Truly, then I will seek my lost ones with other eyes, my brothers; then I will love you with another love.

“And one day you shall have become my friends and children of one hope: then I will be with you a third time, to celebrate the great noon with you.

“And this is the great noon: when humanity stands midway on its course between animal and overhuman and celebrates its way toward evening as its highest hope—for it is the way to a new morning.

“Then the one going under will bless himself for being one who crosses over;
and the sun of his knowledge will stand at noon for him.

“*‘All gods are dead: now we will that the overhuman should live.’* Let this one
day, at the great noon, be our final will!” —

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

Part 2



Second Part

“—and only when you have all denied me will I return to you.

“Truly, then I will seek my lost ones with other eyes, my brothers; then I will love you with another love.”

Zarathustra, On the Giving Virtue (I. p. 112.)

The Child with the Mirror

After this Zarathustra returned to the mountains and the solitude of his cave, withdrawing from humanity: waiting like a sower who has scattered his seed. But his soul grew full of impatience and desire for those he loved, for he still had much to give them. This is the hardest thing: to close the open hand out of love and, as a giver, preserve one's modesty.

Thus months and years passed for the solitary; but his wisdom grew, and its abundance caused him pain.

One morning he woke before dawn, reflected for a long time upon his bed, and at last spoke to his heart:

“What frightened me so in my dream that I awoke? Did a child not approach me carrying a mirror?

“‘Zarathustra,’ the child said to me, ‘look at yourself in the mirror!’

“But when I looked in the mirror, I cried out and my heart was shaken: for I saw not myself, but a devil's grimace and mocking laughter.

“Truly, I understand the dream’s sign and warning all too well: my *teaching* is in danger. Weeds want to be called wheat!

“My enemies have grown powerful and distorted the image of my teaching, so that those dearest to me must be ashamed of the gifts I gave them.

“My friends have been lost to me; the hour has come to seek my lost ones!”—

With these words Zarathustra sprang up, not like a frightened man gasping for breath, but rather like a seer and singer seized by the spirit. His eagle and serpent looked at him in wonder: for a coming happiness lay upon his face like dawn.

“What has happened to me, my animals?” Zarathustra said. “Have I not changed? Has blessedness not come upon me like a storm wind?

“My happiness is foolish and will speak foolish things: it is still too young—so be patient with it!

“I am wounded by my happiness: let all who suffer be my physicians!

“I may descend again to my friends, and to my enemies too! Zarathustra may speak and give again, and do what is dearest for those he loves!

“My impatient love overflows in streams, downward, toward sunrise and sunset. From silent mountains and thunderstorms of pain, my soul roars into the valleys.

“Too long I longed and gazed into the distance. Too long I belonged to solitude: thus I forgot how to be silent.

“I have become mouth through and through, and the rushing of a brook from high cliffs: I will plunge my *speech* down into the valleys.

“And let my river of love plunge into pathless places! How could a river fail at last to find its way to the sea?

“There is indeed a lake within me, solitary and self-sufficient; but my river of love sweeps it down with itself—to the sea!

“I follow new paths; a new speech comes to me. Like all creators, I have grown weary of old tongues. My spirit no longer wants to walk on worn-out soles.

“All speech moves too slowly for me: into your chariot I leap, storm! And I will lash even you with my malice!

“Like a cry and a shout of joy I will pass over wide seas until I find the blissful islands where my friends dwell—

“And my enemies among them! How I now love everyone to whom I may speak! Even my enemies belong to my blessedness.

“And when I want to mount my wildest horse, my spear always helps me best: it is my foot’s ever-ready servant—

“The spear I hurl against my enemies! How grateful I am to my enemies that at last I may hurl it!

“My cloud’s tension was too great: amid the laughter of lightning I will cast hailstorms into the depths.

“Then mightily my breast will heave; mightily it will blow its storm across the mountains: thus relief comes to it.

“Truly, my happiness and freedom come like a storm! But let my enemies believe *the Evil One* is raging above their heads.

“Yes, you too, my friends, will be frightened by my wild wisdom; perhaps you will flee with my enemies.

“Ah, if only I knew how to lure you back with shepherds’ flutes! Ah, if only my lioness Wisdom learned to roar tenderly! And we have already learned so much together!

“My wild wisdom became pregnant on solitary mountains; on rough stones she bore her young, her youngest.

“Now she runs foolishly through the hard desert, searching and searching for soft turf—my old wild wisdom!

“For the soft turf of your hearts, my friends! Upon your love she would lay what she loves most!”

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Blissful Islands

The figs fall from the trees; they are good and sweet, and as they fall their red skins split. I am a north wind to ripe figs.

Thus, like figs, these teachings fall to you, my friends: now drink their juice and sweet flesh! Autumn surrounds us, with clear sky and afternoon.

Look at the abundance around us! And from abundance it is beautiful to gaze out over distant seas.

Once people said God when they looked upon distant seas; but now I have taught you to say: overhuman.

God is a conjecture: but I want your conjecturing to reach no farther than your creating will.

Could you *create* a God? Then say nothing to me of any gods! But you could indeed create the overhuman.

Perhaps not you yourselves, my brothers! But you could remake yourselves into fathers and forebears of the overhuman: let that be your finest creation!—

God is a conjecture: but I want your conjecturing bounded by what can be thought.

Could you *think* a God? But let this mean will to truth for you: that everything be transformed into what human beings can think, see, and feel! You must think your own senses through to the end!

And what you called world must first be created by you: it must itself become your reason, your image, your will, your love! And truly, for your blessedness, you knowers!

And how could you bear life without this hope, you knowers? You must not have been born into either the incomprehensible or the irrational.

But to reveal my whole heart to you, my friends: *if* gods existed, how could I bear not to be a god? *Therefore* there are no gods.

I drew the conclusion, certainly; but now it draws me.—

God is a conjecture: but who could drink all the torment of this conjecture without dying? Should the creator be deprived of faith, and the eagle of its soaring in eagle distances?

God is a thought that makes everything straight crooked, and everything standing spin. What? Time would be gone, and everything transient only a lie?

To think this is whirl and dizziness to human bones, and vomiting even to the stomach: truly, I call it the spinning sickness to conjecture such things.

I call it evil and hostile to humanity, all this teaching of the One and the Full and the Unmoved and the Satisfied and the Imperishable!

Everything imperishable—that is only an image! And poets lie too much.—
But let the finest images speak of time and becoming: let them be praise and
justification of all transience!

Creating—that is the great deliverance from suffering, and life's becoming
light. But for the creator to exist, suffering itself is needed, and much
transformation.

Yes, there must be much bitter dying in your lives, you creators! Thus you are
advocates and justifiers of all transience.

For the creator himself to be the child born anew, he must also want to be the
mother and the mother's pain.

Truly, I have made my way through a hundred souls, through a hundred cradles
and birth pangs. I have taken many farewells already; I know the heart-breaking
final hours.

But thus my creating will wills it, my fate. Or, to speak more honestly to you:
precisely such a fate is what my will wills.

All that feels suffers because of me and lies in prisons: but my willing always
comes to me as my liberator and bringer of joy.

Willing liberates: that is the true teaching of will and freedom—so Zarathustra
teaches you.

No longer to will, no longer to value, no longer to create! Ah, may this great
weariness always stay far from me!

Even in knowing I feel only my will's delight in begetting and becoming; and if
there is innocence in my knowledge, it is because the will to beget is within it.

This will lured me away from God and gods: what would there be to create if
gods existed?

But my ardent will to create drives me back to humanity again and again; thus
the hammer is driven toward the stone.

“Ah, you human beings, an image sleeps for me within the stone, the image of
my images! Ah, that it must sleep in the hardest, ugliest stone!

“Now my hammer rages cruelly against its prison. Fragments fly from the
stone: what do I care?

“I mean to finish it: for a shadow came to me—the stillest and lightest of all things once came to me!

“The overhuman’s beauty came to me as a shadow. Ah, my brothers! What do the gods matter to me now?”—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Pitying

My friends, a mocking saying reached your friend: “Just look at Zarathustra! Does he not walk among us as among animals?”

But better to say: “The knower walks among human beings as among animals.”

To the knower, however, the human being means the animal with red cheeks.

How did that happen? Is it not because humanity has had to feel ashamed too often?

Oh, my friends! Thus speaks the knower: shame, shame, shame—that is human history!

That is why the noble person commands himself not to cause shame: he commands himself to feel shame before all that suffers.

Truly, I do not like the merciful who find blessedness in their pity: they lack modesty too much.

If I must pity, I do not want to be called pitying; and when I am, I prefer it from a distance.

I also gladly cover my head and flee before I am recognized: and I bid you do the same, my friends!

May my fate always lead the untroubled across my path, like you, and those with whom I *may* share hope and a meal and honey!

Truly, I have done this and that for sufferers: but I always thought I did better when I learned to rejoice better.

Since human beings have existed, humanity has rejoiced too little: that alone, my brothers, is our original sin!

And if we learn to rejoice better, we best unlearn hurting others and devising hurts.

That is why I wash the hand that helped the sufferer; that is why I wipe my soul as well.

For I was ashamed to have seen the sufferer suffering, for the sake of his shame; and when I helped him, I deeply offended his pride.

Great obligations make people not grateful but vengeful; and if a small kindness is not forgotten, it becomes a gnawing worm.

“Be reserved in accepting! Distinguish someone by accepting!” That is my counsel to those who have nothing to give away.

But I am a giver: I gladly give as a friend to friends. Let strangers and the poor pick the fruit from my tree themselves: that causes less shame.

But beggars should be abolished altogether! Truly, one is irritated to give to them and irritated not to give.

And likewise sinners and bad consciences! Believe me, my friends: the bites of conscience teach people to bite.

Worst of all, however, are petty thoughts. Truly, better an evil deed than a petty thought!

You do say, “Pleasure in little malicious acts spares us many great evil deeds.”

But here one should not wish to economize.

The evil deed is like an ulcer: it itches and scratches and breaks out—it speaks honestly.

“Look, I am sickness,” says the evil deed: that is its honesty.

But the petty thought is like a fungus: it creeps and crouches and wants to be nowhere—until the whole body is rotten and withered with little fungi.

To someone possessed by the devil, however, I whisper this word: “Better rear your devil to greatness! For you too there is still a way to greatness!”—

Ah, my brothers! We know a little too much about everyone! Many become transparent to us, but that by no means lets us pass through them.

It is hard to live with human beings, because silence is so hard.

And we are most unfair not to those we dislike, but to those who are no concern of ours.

But if you have a suffering friend, be a resting place for his suffering, though like a hard bed, a camp bed: thus you will help him best.

And if a friend does you harm, say, “I forgive what you did to me; but that you did it to *yourself*—how could I forgive that?”

Thus all great love speaks: it overcomes even forgiveness and pity.

One must hold fast to one's heart: if one lets it go, how soon one loses one's head!

Ah, where in the world have greater follies occurred than among the pitying?
And what in the world has caused more suffering than the follies of the pitying?

Woe to all lovers who have no height above their pity!

Once the devil said to me, "Even God has his hell: it is his love for human beings."

And lately I heard him say, "God is dead; God died of his pity for humanity."—
So be warned against pity: *from there* a heavy cloud will yet come upon humanity! Truly, I understand weather signs!

But mark this word as well: all great love stands above all its pity, for it still wants to—create the beloved!

"I offer myself to my love, *and my neighbor as myself*": so speaks every creator.

But all creators are hard.—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Priests

And once Zarathustra made a sign to his disciples and spoke these words to them:

"Here are priests: though they are my enemies, pass quietly by them, with your swords asleep!

"Among them too are heroes; many of them suffered too much—so they want to make others suffer.

"They are dangerous enemies: nothing is more vengeful than their humility. And whoever attacks them is easily soiled.

"But my blood is kin to theirs, and I want my blood honored even in theirs."—
And after they had passed, pain seized Zarathustra. He had not struggled long with his pain before he began to speak:

"These priests arouse my pity. They offend my taste as well; but since I have lived among human beings, that is the least of it.

“But I suffer and have suffered with them: to me they are prisoners and marked men. The one they call Redeemer put them in chains—

“In chains of false values and deluded words! Ah, if only someone would redeem them from their Redeemer!

“They once believed they had landed on an island as the sea tossed them about: but look, it was a sleeping monster!

“False values and deluded words are the worst monsters for mortals: doom sleeps and waits long within them.

“But at last it comes and wakes and eats and swallows whatever built its huts upon it.

“Oh, look at these huts the priests built! Churches, they call their sweet-smelling caves.

“Oh, this falsified light, this stifling air! Here the soul must not fly upward to its height!

“Instead, their faith commands, ‘Up the stairs on your knees, you sinners!’

“Truly, I would sooner look upon the shameless than the twisted eyes of their shame and devotion!

“Who created such caves and penitential stairways? Was it not those who wished to hide and were ashamed before the clear sky?

“Only when the clear sky looks again through broken roofs, down upon grass and red poppies beside broken walls, will I turn my heart again toward this God’s dwelling places.

“They called God whatever contradicted and hurt them: and truly, there was much of the heroic in their worship!

“And they knew no way to love their God except by nailing the human being to the cross!

“They planned to live as corpses; they lined their corpse in black. Even in their speech I still smell the foul spice of death chambers.

“And whoever lives near them lives near black pools, from which the toad sings its song with sweet profundity.

“They would have to sing better songs before I learned to believe in their Redeemer; his disciples would have to look more redeemed!

“I would like to see them naked: for beauty alone should preach repentance. But whom can this muffled melancholy persuade?

“Truly, their redeemers themselves did not come from freedom and freedom’s seventh heaven! Truly, they themselves never walked upon the carpets of knowledge!

“These redeemers’ spirit consisted of gaps: but into every gap they had placed their delusion, their gap-filler, whom they called God.

“Their spirit had drowned in their pity; and when they swelled and overflowed with pity, a great folly always floated on top.

“Eagerly and with shouting they drove their herd over their footbridge, as if only one bridge led into the future! Truly, these shepherds still belonged among the sheep!

“These shepherds had small spirits and expansive souls: but, my brothers, what small countries even the most expansive souls have been until now!

“They wrote signs of blood upon their path, and their folly taught that blood proves truth.

“But blood is truth’s worst witness; blood poisons even the purest teaching into delusion and hatred in the heart.

“And if someone walks through fire for his teaching—what does that prove? Truly, it is more when one’s own teaching comes from one’s own burning!

“A sultry heart and a cold head: where these meet, the raging whirlwind called ‘Redeemer’ arises.

“Truly, there have been greater and more highly born people than those the people call redeemers, these sweeping whirlwinds!

“And even from greater ones than all redeemers you must be redeemed, my brothers, if you would find the way to freedom!

“Never yet has there been an overhuman. Naked I saw both the greatest and the smallest human being—

“They are still all too similar. Truly, even the greatest I found—all too human!” Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Virtuous

With thunder and heavenly fireworks one must speak to slack and sleeping senses.

But beauty's voice speaks softly: it slips only into the most awakened souls.

Today my shield trembled softly and laughed: that is beauty's sacred laughter and trembling.

Today my beauty laughed at you, you virtuous ones. And its voice came to me: "They still want—to be paid!"

You still want to be paid, you virtuous ones! You want wages for virtue, heaven for earth, and eternity for your today?

And now you are angry with me because I teach that there is no paymaster and rewarder? Truly, I do not even teach that virtue is its own reward.

Ah, this is my sorrow: people have lied reward and punishment into the foundation of things—and now into the foundation of your souls as well, you virtuous ones!

But like a boar's snout, my word shall tear up the ground of your souls: a plow-share is what I want you to call me.

All the secrets of your depths shall come to light; and when you lie churned up and broken in the sun, your lie too will be separated from your truth.

For this is your truth: you are *too clean* for the filth of the words revenge, punishment, reward, retribution.

You love your virtue as a mother her child: but when has anyone heard of a mother wanting payment for her love?

Your virtue is your dearest self. The ring's thirst is within you: every ring struggles and turns to reach itself again.

And every work of your virtue is like a star that goes out: its light is always still traveling—and when will it no longer be on its way?

Thus the light of your virtue is still traveling even when the work is done. Let it now be forgotten and dead: its ray of light still lives and travels.

That your virtue be your self and not something foreign, a skin, a cloak: that is the truth from the depths of your soul, you virtuous ones!—

But there are indeed those for whom virtue means convulsions beneath a whip: and you have listened too much to their cries!

And there are others who call the growing lazy of their vices virtue; and when their hatred and jealousy stretch their limbs, their “justice” wakes and rubs its sleepy eyes.

And there are others drawn downward: their devils draw them. But the farther they sink, the more ardently their eyes and their desire for their God shine.

Ah, their cries too reached your ears, you virtuous ones: “What I am *not*—that is God and virtue to me!”

And there are others who come heavily and creaking, like wagons carrying stones downhill: they speak much of dignity and virtue—they call their brake virtue!

And there are others like ordinary clocks that have been wound: they make their ticktock and want ticktock to be called virtue.

Truly, I take pleasure in these: wherever I find such clocks, I shall wind them up with my mockery—and let them whirl for me as I do!

And others are proud of their handful of justice and for its sake outrage all things, so that the world is drowned in their injustice.

Ah, how foully the word “virtue” runs from their mouths! And when they say, “I am just,” it always sounds like, “I am avenged!”

With their virtue they want to scratch out their enemies’ eyes; they rise only to lower others.

And again there are those who sit in their swamp and speak from the reeds: “Virtue means sitting quietly in the swamp.

“We bite no one and avoid whoever wants to bite; and in everything we hold the opinion we are given.”

And again there are those who love gestures and think: virtue is a kind of gesture.

Their knees are always worshiping, and their hands are praises of virtue, but their hearts know nothing of it.

And again there are those who consider it virtue to say, “Virtue is necessary”; but at bottom they believe only that the police are necessary.

And many who cannot see the heights in human beings call it virtue to see their depths too closely: thus they call their evil eye virtue.

And some want to be edified and raised up, and call that virtue; others want to be thrown down—and call that virtue too.

And thus almost everyone believes they have a share in virtue; at the very least, everyone wants to be an authority on “good” and “evil.”

But Zarathustra did not come to say to all these liars and fools: “What do *you* know of virtue? What *could* you know of virtue?”—

Rather, he came so that you, my friends, might grow weary of the old words you learned from fools and liars:

“Weary of the words ‘reward,’ ‘retribution,’ ‘punishment,’ ‘revenge in justice’—

“Weary of saying, ‘What makes an action good is that it is selfless.’

“Ah, my friends! Let *your* self be in the action as the mother is in the child: let that be *your* word about virtue!”

Truly, I took a hundred words from you and your virtue’s dearest playthings: and now you are angry with me as children are angry.

They played beside the sea—then the wave came and swept their playthings into the depths: now they weep.

But the same wave shall bring them new playthings and pour out new bright shells before them!

Thus they will be comforted; and like them, my friends, you too shall have your comforts—and new bright shells!—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Rabble

Life is a spring of delight; but where the rabble drinks as well, every well is poisoned.

I am fond of all that is clean; but I do not want to see the grinning mouths and the thirst of the unclean.

They cast their eye down into the well: now their repulsive smile gleams up at me from it.

They poisoned the holy water with their lust; and when they called their dirty dreams delight, they poisoned words as well.

The flame grows indignant when they lay their damp hearts beside the fire; spirit itself seethes and smokes where the rabble approaches the fire.

In their hands the fruit grows cloying and overripe; their gaze leaves the fruit tree vulnerable to wind and withered at the crown.

And many who turned away from life turned away only from the rabble: they did not want to share spring and flame and fruit with the rabble.

And many who went into the desert and thirsted with beasts of prey merely did not want to sit around the cistern with dirty camel drivers.

And many who came like destroyers, like hail upon every orchard, wanted only to set their foot in the rabble's jaws and stop its gullet.

And the morsel that choked me most was not knowing that life itself needs enmity and dying and crosses of torment—

Rather, once I asked and almost suffocated on my question: What? Does life *need* the rabble too?

Are poisoned wells necessary, and stinking fires, and soiled dreams, and maggots in life's bread?

Not my hatred but my disgust gnawed hungrily at my life! Ah, I often grew weary of spirit when I found even the rabble spirited!

And I turned my back on the rulers when I saw what they now call ruling: haggling and bargaining for power—with the rabble!

Among peoples of foreign tongues I lived with ears closed, so that the tongue of their haggling and their bargaining for power might remain foreign to me.

And holding my nose, I passed discontentedly through all yesterday and today: truly, all yesterday and today stink of the writing rabble!

Like a cripple who had become deaf and blind and mute, I lived long, so as not to live with the rabble of power and writing and pleasure.

Laboriously and carefully my spirit climbed stairs; alms of delight refreshed it; life crept with a staff for the blind man.

What happened to me? How did I deliver myself from disgust? Who rejuvenated my eye? How did I fly to the height where no rabble sits beside the spring?

Did my disgust itself create wings for me, and powers of divining springs?
Truly, I had to fly to the highest heights to find the spring of delight again!

Oh, I found it, my brothers! Here in the highest heights the spring of delight
wells up for me! And there is a life from which no rabble drinks!

Almost too forcefully you stream for me, spring of delight! Often you empty
the cup again by wanting to fill it!

And I must still learn to approach you more modestly: my heart still streams
too forcefully toward you—

“My heart, upon which my summer burns, the short, hot, melancholy, over-
blessed summer: how my summer heart longs for your coolness!

“Gone is the hesitant melancholy of my spring! Past is the malice of my
snowflakes in June! I have become wholly summer and summer noon!”

A summer in the highest heights, with cold springs and blessed stillness: oh,
come, my friends, that the stillness may grow more blessed still!

For this is *our* height and our home: here we live too high and steep for all the
unclean and their thirst.

Only cast your pure eyes into the spring of my delight, my friends! How could
that cloud it? It shall laugh toward you with *its* purity.

In the tree Future we build our nest; let eagles bring food in their beaks to us
solitary ones!

Truly, no food the unclean might share! They would think they were eating fire
and burn their mouths!

Truly, we keep no homes ready here for the unclean! An ice cave is what our
happiness would mean to their bodies and spirits!

And like strong winds we will live above them, neighbors to eagles, neighbors
to snow, neighbors to the sun: thus strong winds live.

And like a wind I will one day blow among them and with my spirit take their
spirit's breath away: so my future wills.

Truly, Zarathustra is a strong wind to every lowland; and this is his counsel to
his enemies and to everything that spits and spews: “Beware of spitting *against*
the wind!”

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Tarantulas

Look, this is the tarantula's cave! Do you want to see her herself? Her web hangs here: touch it and make it tremble.

There she comes willingly: welcome, tarantula! Your triangle and emblem sit black upon your back; and I know what sits within your soul as well.

Revenge sits within your soul: wherever you bite, black scabs grow; with revenge your poison makes the soul spin!

Thus I speak in an image to you who make souls spin, you preachers of *equality*! To me you are tarantulas and concealed seekers of revenge!

But I will bring your hiding places into the light: that is why I laugh my laughter of the heights into your faces.

That is why I tear at your web, so that your fury may lure you out of your cave of lies, and your revenge spring out from behind your word "justice."

For *that humanity be delivered from revenge*: this is to me the bridge to the highest hope, and a rainbow after long storms.

But the tarantulas, of course, will it otherwise. "Let this precisely be justice to us: that the world become full of the storms of our revenge," they say among themselves.

"We will practice revenge and abuse upon everyone who is not equal to us," the tarantula hearts vow.

"And 'will to equality' shall henceforth become the very name of virtue; against everything with power we will raise our cries!"

You preachers of equality, the tyrant's madness of impotence thus cries from you for "equality": your most secret tyrannical desires disguise themselves in words of virtue!

Embittered conceit, suppressed envy, perhaps your fathers' conceit and envy: these burst from you as flame and madness of revenge.

What the father kept silent comes to speech in the son; and often I found the son to be the father's unveiled secret.

They resemble the inspired: but it is not the heart that inspires them—it is revenge. And when they become subtle and cold, it is not spirit but envy that makes them subtle and cold.

Their jealousy also leads them along thinkers' paths; and this is the mark of their jealousy: they always go too far, until their weariness must at last lie down to sleep upon snow.

Revenge resounds from every complaint; every word of praise conceals an injury; and being judges seems blessedness to them.

But this is my counsel, my friends: distrust everyone in whom the drive to punish is powerful!

These are people of bad kind and descent; the executioner and the bloodhound look out from their faces.

Distrust all who speak much of their justice! Truly, honey is not the only thing their souls lack.

And if they call themselves "the good and the just," do not forget that they lack nothing to be Pharisees except—power!

My friends, I do not want to be mixed up and confused with others.

There are those who preach my teaching of life, and at the same time are preachers of equality and tarantulas.

That these poisonous spiders speak in life's favor, although they sit in their cave turned away from life, comes from their wanting to cause pain.

They want to hurt those who now hold power: for among those, the preaching of death is still most at home.

Were things otherwise, the tarantulas would teach otherwise: and formerly they themselves were the best slanderers of the world and burners of heretics.

I do not want to be mixed up and confused with these preachers of equality.

For justice speaks thus *to me*: "Human beings are not equal."

And they must not become equal either! What would my love of the overhuman be if I spoke otherwise?

On a thousand bridges and footbridges let them press toward the future, and let ever more war and inequality be set between them: thus my great love makes me speak!

Let them become inventors of images and ghosts in their enmities, and with their images and ghosts fight the highest struggle against one another!

Good and evil, rich and poor, high and low, and all the names of values: let them be weapons and clattering signs that life must overcome itself again and again!

Life itself wants to build upward with pillars and steps: it wants to gaze into wide distances and out toward blessed beauties—*that* is why it needs height!

And because it needs height, it needs steps, and contradiction among steps and climbers! Life wants to climb, and in climbing overcome itself.

And look, my friends! Here, where the tarantula's cave is, the ruins of an ancient temple rise upward—look there with illuminated eyes!

Truly, whoever once piled his thoughts upward in stone here knew the secret of all life as well as the wisest!

That struggle and inequality exist even in beauty, and war for power and supremacy: this he teaches us here in the clearest image.

How divinely vault and arch break against each other here in wrestling; how, with light and shadow, these divine strivers strive against one another—

“Let us too be enemies as surely and beautifully, my friends! Divinely let us strive *against* one another!”—

Alas! The tarantula herself has bitten me, my old enemy! Divinely sure and beautiful, she bit my finger!

“There must be punishment and justice,” she thinks. “Not for nothing shall he sing songs here in enmity's honor!”

Yes, she has taken revenge! And alas, now with revenge she will make my soul spin too!

But so that I do *not* spin, my friends, bind me fast here to this pillar! I would rather be a pillar saint than a whirl of vengeance!

Truly, Zarathustra is no spinning whirlwind; and if he is a dancer, he is certainly no tarantula dancer!—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Famous Sages

You have served the people and the people's superstition, all you famous sages—and *not* truth! And that is precisely why people paid you reverence.

And that is also why they tolerated your unbelief: it was a jest and a detour toward the people. Thus the master lets his slaves have their way and even delights in their high spirits.

But the one hated by the people as a wolf by dogs is the free spirit, the enemy of fetters, the non-worshiper, the forest dweller.

To hunt him from his hiding place—that is what the people have always called “a sense of right”: they still set their sharpest-toothed dogs upon him.

“For truth is here: are the people not here? Woe, woe to the seekers!” So the cry has always gone.

You wanted to prove your people right in their reverence: that is what you called “will to truth,” you famous sages!

And your heart always said to itself, “I came from the people: God’s voice came to me from there as well.” Stubborn and clever as the donkey, you have always been the people’s advocates.

And many a powerful man who wanted to get on well with the people harnessed before his horses—a little donkey, a famous sage.

And now I wish you famous sages would at last throw off the lion’s skin entirely!

The beast of prey’s skin, dappled with spots, and the shaggy coat of the investigator, seeker, conqueror!

Ah, before I can learn to believe in your “truthfulness,” you must first break your revering will for me.

Truthful—that is my name for the one who goes into godless deserts and has broken his revering heart.

In yellow sand, burned by the sun, he may gaze thirstily toward islands rich in springs, where living things rest beneath dark trees.

But his thirst does not persuade him to become like those comfortable ones: for where oases are, there are idols too.

Hungry, violent, solitary, godless: that is how the lion’s will wants itself.

Free from the happiness of servants, delivered from gods and worship, fearless and fearsome, great and solitary: such is the truthful one’s will.

In the desert the truthful, the free spirits, have always dwelt as the desert's masters; but in the cities dwell the well-fed famous sages—the draft animals.

For always, as donkeys, they pull—the *people's* cart!

Not that I am angry with them for it: but to me they remain servants and harnessed beasts, even when they gleam in golden harness.

And often they were good servants, worthy of praise. For thus speaks virtue: “If you must be a servant, seek the one whom your service benefits most!

“Let your master's spirit and virtue grow through your service: thus you yourself grow with his spirit and virtue!”

And truly, you famous sages, you servants of the people! You yourselves grew with the people's spirit and virtue—and the people through you! I say this to your honor!

But even in your virtues you remain people to me, people with dull eyes—people who do not know what *spirit* is!

Spirit is life that itself cuts into life: through its own torment it increases its own knowledge—did you already know that?

And spirit's happiness is this: to be anointed and consecrated through tears as a sacrificial animal—did you already know that?

And the blind man's blindness, his searching and groping, shall still bear witness to the power of the sun into which he looked—did you already know that?

And the knower must learn to *build* with mountains! It is little that spirit moves mountains—did you already know that?

You know only spirit's sparks: but you do not see the anvil it is, nor the cruelty of its hammer!

Truly, you do not know spirit's pride! But still less could you bear spirit's modesty if once it wished to speak!

And never yet were you entitled to throw your spirit into a pit of snow: you are not hot enough for that! So you do not know the raptures of its cold either.

But in everything you treat spirit too familiarly; and often you made wisdom a poorhouse and hospital for bad poets.

You are not eagles: so you have not experienced happiness in spirit's terror. And whoever is no bird should not settle above abysses.

You are lukewarm to me: but every deep knowledge streams cold. Ice-cold are spirit's innermost wells: a refreshment for hot hands and people of action. You stand respectably before me, stiff and straight-backed, you famous sages! No strong wind or will drives you. Have you never seen a sail pass over the sea, rounded and swollen and trembling before the wind's impetuosity? Like the sail, trembling before spirit's impetuosity, my wisdom passes over the sea—my wild wisdom! But you servants of the people, you famous sages—how *could* you go with me?

—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

The Night Song

It is night: now all leaping fountains speak more loudly. And my soul too is a leaping fountain.

It is night: only now do all lovers' songs awaken. And my soul too is a lover's song.

Something unappeased, unappeasable is within me; it wants to find a voice. A desire for love is within me, itself speaking love's language.

I am light: ah, if only I were night! But this is my solitude: I am girded with light.

Ah, if only I were dark and of the night! How I would suck at the breasts of light!

And I would bless you yourselves, little glittering stars and glowworms above, and find blessedness in your gifts of light.

But I live in my own light; I drink back into myself the flames that break from me.

I do not know the happiness of receiving; and often I dreamed that stealing must be more blessed still than receiving.

This is my poverty: my hand never rests from giving. This is my envy: I see waiting eyes and the illuminated nights of longing.

Oh, the unhappiness of all givers! Oh, the darkening of my sun! Oh, desire for desire! Oh, ravenous hunger in satiety!

They take from me: but do I still touch their souls? A gulf lies between giving and receiving; and the smallest gulf is the last to be bridged.

A hunger grows from my beauty: I would hurt those for whom I shine; I would rob those I have gifted—thus I hunger for malice.

Drawing back the hand when another hand already reaches toward it; hesitating like the waterfall that hesitates even in its plunge—thus I hunger for malice.

Such revenge my abundance devises; such treachery wells from my solitude.

My happiness in giving died in giving; my virtue grew weary of itself through its abundance!

The one who always gives is in danger of losing modesty; the one who always distributes has hand and heart calloused from distributing.

My eye no longer overflows at the shame of those who ask; my hand has grown too hard for the trembling of filled hands.

Where have the tears gone from my eye, and the down from my heart? Oh, solitude of all givers! Oh, silence of all shining ones!

Many suns circle in desolate space: to all that is dark they speak with their light—to me they are silent.

Oh, this is light's enmity toward what shines: mercilessly it follows its courses.

Unjust toward what shines in its deepest heart, cold toward suns—thus every sun goes its way.

Like a storm the suns fly their courses: that is their journey. They follow their inexorable will: that is their coldness.

Oh, only you, dark ones, night-born ones, create warmth from what shines!

Oh, only you drink milk and refreshment from light's udders!

Ah, ice surrounds me; my hand burns upon icy things! Ah, within me is thirst that yearns for your thirst!

It is night: ah, that I must be light! And thirst for the night! And solitude!

It is night: now my longing breaks from me like a spring—I long for speech.

It is night: now all leaping fountains speak more loudly. And my soul too is a leaping fountain.

It is night: only now do all lovers' songs awaken. And my soul too is a lover's song.—

Thus sang Zarathustra.

The Dance Song

One evening Zarathustra walked through the forest with his disciples. Searching for a spring, he came upon a green meadow quietly surrounded by trees and bushes: there girls were dancing together. As soon as they recognized Zarathustra, they stopped dancing; but Zarathustra approached with a friendly gesture and spoke:

“Do not stop dancing, lovely girls! No spoilsport with an evil eye has come among you, no enemy of girls.

“I am God’s advocate before the devil: but the devil is the spirit of gravity. How could I, you light-footed ones, be an enemy of divine dances? Or of girls’ feet with lovely ankles?

“I am indeed a forest and a night of dark trees: but whoever does not shrink from my darkness finds rose-covered slopes beneath my cypresses as well.

“And perhaps the little God dearest to girls is found there too: beside the spring he lies, still, with closed eyes.

“Truly, he fell asleep in broad daylight, the idler! Had he chased too many butterflies?

“Do not be angry, beautiful dancers, if I chastise the little God a little! He will probably cry out and weep—but even in weeping he is still laughable!

“And with tears in his eyes he shall ask you for a dance; and I myself will sing a song for his dance:

“A dancing, mocking song against the spirit of gravity, my highest and most mighty devil, of whom they say that he is ‘the lord of the world.’”—

And this is the song Zarathustra sang while Cupid and the girls danced together.

“Into your eye I looked lately, Life! And I seemed to sink into the unfathomable.

“But you drew me out with a golden hook; mockingly you laughed when I called you unfathomable.

“‘That is how all fish speak,’ you said. ‘What *they* cannot fathom is unfathomable.

“But I am merely changeable and wild, and in everything a woman, and no virtuous one:

“Though you men call me “the Deep,” or “the Faithful,” “the Eternal,” “the Mysterious.”

“But you men always bestow your own virtues upon us—ah, you virtuous ones!”

“Thus she laughed, the incredible one; but I never believe her or her laughter when she speaks ill of herself.

“And when I spoke privately with my wild Wisdom, she told me angrily, ‘You will, you desire, you love; that alone is why you *praise* life!’

“I almost answered angrily and told the angry one the truth; and one cannot answer more angrily than by ‘telling the truth’ to one’s wisdom.

“For this is how things stand among us three. At heart I love only Life—and truly, most of all when I hate her!

“But that I am fond of Wisdom, often too fond, comes from her reminding me so strongly of Life!

“She has her eye, her laughter, even her little golden fishing rod: is it my fault that the two look so alike?

“And when Life once asked me, ‘Who is this Wisdom?’ I answered eagerly, ‘Ah yes! Wisdom!’

“One thirsts for her and is never satisfied; one peers through veils and snatches through nets.

“Is she beautiful? What do I know? But even the oldest carp are still baited with her.

“She is changeable and defiant; often I saw her bite her lip and draw the comb against the grain of her hair.

“Perhaps she is evil and false, and in everything a woman; but precisely when she speaks badly of herself, she is most seductive.’

“When I said this to Life, she laughed maliciously and closed her eyes. ‘Whom are you speaking of?’ she said. ‘Of me, perhaps?’

“And even if you were right—does one say that to my face? But now speak of your Wisdom too!”

“Ah, and now you opened your eye again, beloved Life! And again I seemed to sink into the unfathomable.”—

Thus sang Zarathustra. But when the dance was over and the girls had gone, he grew sad.

“The sun has long since set,” he said at last. “The meadow is damp; coolness comes from the forests.

“Something unknown surrounds me and gazes thoughtfully. What! Are you still alive, Zarathustra?

“Why? For what? Through what? Toward what? Where? How? Is it not folly to live on?—

“Ah, my friends, it is the evening that questions through me like this. Forgive my sadness!

“It has become evening: forgive me that it has become evening!”

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

The Grave Song

“There is the island of graves, the silent one; there too are the graves of my youth. There I will carry an evergreen wreath of life.”

So resolving in my heart, I sailed across the sea.—

Oh, visions and apparitions of my youth! Oh, all you looks of love, you divine moments! How quickly you died for me! Today I remember you as my dead.

From you, my dearest dead, comes a sweet scent that loosens heart and tears. Truly, it shakes and loosens the heart of the solitary sailor.

Still I am the richest and most enviable—I, the loneliest! For I *had* you, and you still have me: tell me, for whom did such rose apples fall from the tree as for me?

Still I am your love’s heir and soil, blooming in your memory with bright, wild-grown virtues, you most beloved!

Ah, we were made to remain close, you lovely foreign wonders; and you came to me and my desire not like timid birds—no, as trusting ones to the trusting one!

Yes, made for faithfulness, like me, and for tender eternities: must I now name you by your faithlessness, you divine glances and moments? I have learned no other name yet.

Truly, you died too quickly for me, you fugitives. Yet you did not flee me, nor did I flee you: toward each other we are innocent in our faithlessness.

To kill *me*, they strangled you, singing birds of my hopes! Yes, malice always shot its arrows at you, my dearest, to strike my heart!

And it struck! For you were always what was dearest to my heart, my possession and my being possessed: *that* is why you had to die young and all too early!

They shot the arrow at the most vulnerable thing I possessed: that was you, whose skin is like down, and more like the smile that dies beneath a glance!

But I will speak this word to my enemies: what is all human murder beside what you did to me!

You did worse to me than any human murder; you took what cannot be restored: thus I speak to you, my enemies!

You murdered the visions and dearest wonders of my youth! You took my playmates from me, the blessed spirits! In their memory I lay down this wreath and this curse.

This curse against you, my enemies! You cut my eternal short, like a note breaking in the cold night! Now it came to me scarcely as a flash of divine eyes—as a moment!

Thus, once in a good hour, my purity spoke: “Let all beings be divine to me.”

Then you assailed me with dirty ghosts: ah, where did that good hour flee?

“Let all days be holy to me,” the wisdom of my youth once said: truly, the speech of a joyful wisdom!

But then, my enemies, you stole my nights and sold them into sleepless torment: ah, where did that joyful wisdom flee?

Once I longed for fortunate signs of birds: then you led a repulsive owl-monster across my path. Ah, where did my tender desire flee?

Once I vowed to renounce all disgust: then you transformed those close and closest to me into abscesses. Ah, where did my noblest vow flee?

Blind, I once walked blessed paths: then you threw filth upon the blind man's way, and now he was disgusted with his old blind man's footpath.

And when I did my hardest deed and celebrated the victory of my overcomings, you made those who loved me cry out that I hurt them most.

Truly, this was always your work: you embittered my finest honey and the diligence of my finest bees.

You always sent the most shameless beggars to my charity; around my pity you always crowded the incurably shameless. Thus you wounded my virtue in its faith.

And even when I laid down my holiest thing as a sacrifice, your "piety" swiftly set its fatter gifts beside it, so that even my holiest suffocated in the smoke of your fat.

And once I wished to dance as I had never danced: I wished to dance beyond all heavens. Then you persuaded my dearest singer.

And now he struck up a dreadful, muffled tune; ah, he blared into my ears like a gloomy horn!

Murderous singer, instrument of malice, most innocent one! Already I stood ready for my finest dance: then with your tones you murdered my rapture!

Only in dance do I know how to speak the image of the highest things—and now my highest image remained unspoken in my limbs!

Unspoken and unredeemed my highest hope remained! And all the visions and consolations of my youth died for me!

How did I bear it? How did I survive and overcome such wounds? How did my soul rise again from these graves?

Yes, something invulnerable, unburi-able is in me, something that bursts rocks: it is called *my will*. Silently and unchanged it strides through the years.

My old will wants to go its way upon my feet; its purpose is hard-hearted and invulnerable.

Only in my heel am I invulnerable. Still you live there and remain yourself, most patient one! Still you have broken through every grave!

In you the unredeemed part of my youth still lives; and as life and youth you sit here hoping upon yellow grave ruins.

Yes, still you are the shatterer of every grave for me: hail to you, my will! And only where graves are is there resurrection.—

Thus sang Zarathustra.—

On Self-Overcoming

“Will to truth” is what you call the force that drives and inflames you, you wisest ones?

Will to the thinkability of everything that exists: that is what *I* call your will!

First you want to *make* everything that exists thinkable: for with good mistrust you doubt whether it is thinkable already.

But it must also yield and bend! So your will wills. It must become smooth and subject to spirit, as its mirror and reflected image.

That is your entire will, you wisest ones, as a will to power—even when you speak of good and evil and of valuations.

You still want to create the world before which you can kneel: that is your final hope and intoxication.

The unwise, of course, the people, are like the river on which a boat floats onward: and in the boat sit valuations, solemn and disguised.

You set your will and your values upon the river of becoming: what the people believe to be good and evil betrays to me an old will to power.

It was you, you wisest ones, who seated such guests in this boat and gave them splendor and proud names—you and your ruling will!

Now the river carries your boat onward: it *must* carry it. It matters little if the broken wave foams and angrily contradicts the keel!

The river is not your danger and the end of your good and evil, you wisest ones: it is that will itself, the will to power—the inexhaustible, begetting will of life.

But so that you understand my word about good and evil, I will also tell you my word about life and the nature of all living things.

I followed the living; I went the greatest and smallest paths to learn its nature.

With a hundredfold mirror I caught its gaze even when its mouth was closed, so that its eye might speak to me. And its eye spoke.

But wherever I found living things, I also heard the language of obedience. Everything living is an obeying thing.

And this is the second thing: the one who cannot obey himself is commanded. Such is the nature of the living.

But this is the third thing I heard: commanding is harder than obeying. Not only because the commander carries the burden of all who obey, and this burden can easily crush him—

In all commanding I saw an experiment and a risk; whenever it commands, the living thing risks itself.

Even when it commands itself, it must still pay for its commanding. It must become judge and avenger and victim of its own law.

How does this happen? I asked myself. What persuades the living to obey and command, and even in commanding to practice obedience?

Now hear my word, you wisest ones! Test it earnestly: have I crawled into life's own heart and down to the roots of its heart?

Wherever I found living things, I found will to power; and even in the servant's will I found the will to be master.

The weaker is persuaded to serve the stronger by its will to rule something weaker still: this pleasure alone it cannot forgo.

And as the smaller yields to the greater to have pleasure and power over the smallest, so even the greatest yields itself, and for the sake of power stakes—life.

This is the greatest one's devotion: to be risk and danger and a casting of dice for death.

And where sacrifice and service and loving glances are, there too is the will to be master. By secret paths the weaker steals into the stronger one's fortress and into its heart—and there steals power.

And life itself spoke this secret to me. "Look," it said, "I am that *which must always overcome itself*."

"Of course, you call it will to beget, or a drive toward a goal, toward the higher, farther, more manifold: but all this is one thing and one secret.

"I would sooner go under than renounce this one thing; and truly, where there is going-under and falling leaves, look, life sacrifices itself—for power!

“That I must be struggle and becoming and purpose and the contradiction of purposes: ah, whoever divines my will also divines the *crooked* paths it must follow!

“Whatever I create, however I love it, soon I must become its opponent and the opponent of my love: so my will wills.

“And you too, knower, are only a path and footprint of my will: truly, my will to power walks even on the feet of your will to truth!

“The one who shot the phrase ‘will to existence’ at truth certainly missed truth: this will does not exist!

“For what does not exist cannot will; but what already exists—how could it still will existence?

“Only where life is, there is will: but not will to life—rather, so I teach you, will to power!

“Much is valued by the living more highly than life itself; yet from valuing itself speaks—the will to power!” —

Thus life once taught me: and from this I also solve for you, you wisest ones, the riddle of your hearts.

Truly, I tell you: there is no imperishable good and evil! Out of itself, it must overcome itself again and again.

With your values and words of good and evil you exercise force, you valuers: and this is your hidden love, and your soul’s shining, trembling, and overflowing.

But a stronger force grows from your values, a new overcoming: against it egg and eggshell break.

And whoever must be a creator in good and evil must first, truly, be a destroyer and break values.

Thus the highest evil belongs to the highest goodness: but that goodness is creative.—

Let us speak of it, you wisest ones, even if it is bad. Silence is worse; all truths kept silent become poisonous.

And let everything break that can break upon our truths! There are still many houses to build!

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Sublime

Still is the bottom of my sea: who would guess that it shelters playful monsters!

Unshakable is my depth: but it gleams with swimming riddles and laughter.

Today I saw a sublime man, a solemn man, a penitent of the spirit: oh, how my soul laughed at his ugliness!

With chest raised, like those drawing in their breath, he stood there, the sublime man, silent:

Hung with ugly truths, the spoils of his hunt, and rich in torn clothes; many thorns hung upon him too—but I saw no rose yet.

He has not yet learned laughter or beauty. Gloomily this hunter returned from the forest of knowledge.

He came home from combat with wild beasts: but a wild beast still looks out of his seriousness—an unconquered one!

Still he stands like a tiger about to spring; but I do not like these tense souls, and my taste is hostile to all these withdrawn ones.

And you tell me, friends, that one must not dispute about taste and tasting? But all life is a dispute about taste and tasting!

Taste is at once weight and scales and weigher; and woe to all living things that would live without disputing over weight and scales and weighers!

If this sublime man grew weary of his sublimity, only then would his beauty begin—and only then would I taste him and find him pleasing.

And only when he turns away from himself will he leap over his own shadow—and truly, into *his own* sun.

Too long he sat in shadow; the penitent of the spirit grew pale in the cheeks; he almost starved upon his expectations.

Contempt is still in his eye, and disgust hides about his mouth. He rests now, certainly, but his rest has not yet lain down in the sun.

He should act like the bull; and his happiness should smell of earth, not contempt for earth.

I would like to see him as a white bull, snorting and bellowing before the plow-share; and his bellowing should praise everything earthly!

His face is still dark; the hand's shadow plays upon it. The meaning of his eye is still shadowed.

His own deed is still the shadow upon him: the hand darkens the doer. He has not yet overcome his deed.

I love the bull's neck in him, certainly: but now I want to see the angel's eye as well.

He must unlearn even his heroic will: I want him lifted up, not merely sublime—let the ether itself lift him, the will-less one!

He subdued monsters and solved riddles: but he should also redeem his monsters and riddles, transform them into heavenly children.

His knowledge has not yet learned to smile and be without jealousy; his surging passion has not yet grown still in beauty.

Truly, his desire should fall silent and submerge not in satiety, but in beauty! Grace belongs to the magnanimity of the great-minded.

With arm laid over his head: thus the hero should rest, and thus overcome even his resting.

But precisely for the hero, *beauty* is the hardest of all things. Beauty cannot be wrested by any violent will.

A little more, a little less: that is precisely much here, that is the most.

To stand with relaxed muscles and unharnessed will: that is hardest for all of you, you sublime ones!

When power grows gracious and descends into the visible: beauty is my name for such a descent.

And from no one do I want beauty so much as from you, mighty one: let your goodness be your final self-conquest.

I believe you capable of every evil: that is why I want the good from you.

Truly, I often laughed at weaklings who thought themselves good because their paws were lame!

You should strive for the pillar's virtue: it grows ever more beautiful and delicate, but inwardly harder and better able to bear weight, the higher it rises.

Yes, sublime one, one day you shall be beautiful and hold the mirror before your own beauty.

Then your soul will tremble with divine desires; and even in your vanity there will be worship!

For this is the soul's secret: only when the hero has left it does the overhero approach it—in a dream.

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Land of Culture

Too far into the future I flew: a horror seized me.

And when I looked around, look! Time was my only contemporary.

Then I fled backward, homeward, ever more hurriedly: thus I came to you, people of the present, and to the land of culture.

For the first time I brought an eye for you, and a willing desire: truly, I came with longing in my heart.

But what happened to me? Afraid as I was, I had to laugh! Never had my eye seen anything so brightly speckled!

I laughed and laughed while my foot and heart still trembled: "Here indeed is the home of every paint pot!" I said.

Painted with fifty blotches upon face and limbs: thus you sat before my astonishment, people of the present!

And with fifty mirrors around you, flattering and echoing your play of colors!

Truly, you could wear no better mask, people of the present, than your own faces! Who could *recognize* you?

Covered in the signs of the past, and those signs painted over with new signs: thus you have hidden yourselves well from all interpreters of signs!

And even if one probes the kidneys, who still believes you have kidneys? You seem baked from colors and pasted slips of paper.

All ages and peoples look brightly out of your veils; all customs and faiths speak brightly from your gestures.

Whoever stripped away your veils and coverings and colors and gestures would have just enough left to frighten birds.

Truly, I myself am the frightened bird that once saw you naked and unpainted; and I flew away when the skeleton beckoned love to me.

I would sooner be a day laborer in the underworld among the shadows of the past! Even the underworld's inhabitants are plumper and fuller than you!

This, yes, this is bitterness to my entrails: I can bear you neither naked nor clothed, people of the present!

Everything uncanny in the future, everything that ever made lost birds shudder, is truly more homelike and familiar than your "reality."

For you say, "We are wholly real, without faith or superstition": thus you puff out your chests—ah, even without chests!

Yes, how *could* you believe, brightly speckled ones—paintings of everything ever believed!

You are walking refutations of faith itself, and the limb-breaking of every thought. *Unbelievable*: that is what I call you, real ones!

All ages chatter against one another in your spirits; and all ages' dreams and chatter were more real than your waking!

You are barren: *that* is why you lack faith. But whoever had to create always had prophetic dreams and signs of stars—and believed in believing!—

You are half-open gates where gravediggers wait. And this is *your* reality: "Everything deserves to perish."

Ah, how you stand before me, you barren ones, how lean about the ribs! And many among you have no doubt noticed it themselves.

And said, "Has a God perhaps secretly stolen something from me while I slept? Truly, enough to fashion a little woman from!

"Wonderful is the poverty of my ribs!" So many a person of the present has spoken.

Yes, people of the present, you make me laugh! Especially when you marvel at yourselves!

And woe to me if I could not laugh at your marveling, and had to drink down everything repulsive from your bowls!

But as things are, I will take you more lightly, because I have *heavy things* to carry; and what does it matter if beetles and winged worms settle upon my bundle as well?

Truly, it shall not grow heavier for me because of that! And the great weariness shall not come to me from you, people of the present.—

Ah, where shall I climb now with my longing? From every mountain I look out for fatherlands and motherlands.

But nowhere did I find a home: I am unsettled in every city, a departure at every gate.

The people of the present, toward whom my heart recently drove me, are strange and laughable to me; and I am driven out of fatherlands and motherlands.

So I love only my *children's land*, undiscovered, in the farthest sea: I bid my sails search and search for it.

In my children I will make amends for being my fathers' child—and in all the future, for *this* present!

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Immaculate Knowledge

When the moon rose yesterday, I thought it meant to give birth to a sun: so broad and pregnant it lay upon the horizon.

But with its pregnancy it was a liar to me; I would sooner believe in the man in the moon than the woman.

Of course, there is little man in him either, this shy night wanderer. Truly, with a bad conscience he walks over the roofs.

For he is lustful and jealous, the monk in the moon, lusting after the earth and all lovers' joys.

No, I do not like him, this tomcat upon the roofs! Everyone who steals around half-closed windows disgusts me!

Piously and silently he walks upon carpets of stars—but I do not like any softly treading man's feet upon which not even a spur jingles.

Every honest person's step speaks; but the cat steals over the ground. Look, the moon approaches catlike and dishonestly.—

I give this image to you sensitive hypocrites, you “pure knowers”! I call you—lustful ones!

You too love the earth and earthly things: I have divined you well! But shame and bad conscience are in your love—you resemble the moon!

Your spirit has been persuaded to despise earthly things, but not your entrails: and *they* are the strongest part of you!

And now your spirit is ashamed of doing your entrails' will, and before its own shame it follows paths of stealth and lies.

"This would be highest for me," your lying spirit says to itself: "to look upon life without desire, not like a dog with its tongue hanging out:

"To be happy in looking, with will dead, without selfishness's grasp and greed—cold and ash-gray throughout the body, but with drunken moon eyes!"

"This would be dearest to me," the seduced one seduces himself, "to love the earth as the moon loves it, and touch its beauty with the eye alone.

"And let this be *immaculate* knowledge of all things: that I want nothing from things, except to lie before them like a mirror with a hundred eyes."—

Oh, sensitive hypocrites, lustful ones! You lack innocence in desire: and now you slander desiring because of it!

Truly, you do not love the earth as creators, begetters, those delighting in becoming!

Where is innocence? Where the will to beget is. And whoever wants to create beyond themselves has, to me, the purest will.

Where is beauty? Where I *must will* with all my will; where I want to love and go under so that an image does not remain merely an image.

Loving and going-under have rhymed for eternities. Will to love means being willing for death as well. Thus I speak to you cowards!

But now your emasculated squint wants to be called "contemplation"! And whatever can be touched with cowardly eyes is to be christened "beautiful"!

Oh, you defilers of noble names!

But let this be your curse, immaculate ones, pure knowers: you will never give birth, even if you lie broad and pregnant upon the horizon!

Truly, you fill your mouths with noble words: and we are supposed to believe your hearts overflow, you liars?

But *my* words are small, despised, crooked words: I gladly gather what falls beneath the table at your feast.

With them I can still—tell hypocrites the truth! Yes, my fish bones, shells, and prickly leaves shall—tickle hypocrites' noses!

Bad air always surrounds you and your meals: your lustful thoughts, your lies and secrets are in the air!

First dare to believe yourselves—yourselves and your entrails! Whoever does not believe themselves always lies.

You put on a God's mask before yourselves, you "pure ones": your hideous segmented worm crept into a God's mask.

Truly, you deceive, you "contemplatives"! Zarathustra too was once fooled by your divine skins: he did not divine the coiling serpents with which they were stuffed.

Once I thought I saw a God's soul at play in your games, pure knowers! Once I imagined no finer art than your arts!

Distance concealed serpent filth and foul odor from me, and the lustful cunning of a lizard creeping here.

But I came *close* to you: then day came to me—and now it comes to you. The moon's love affair has ended!

Look! Caught out and pale it stands—before the dawn!

For already she comes, the glowing sun—*her* love for the earth comes! All the sun's love is innocence and desire to create!

Look how impatiently she comes over the sea! Do you not feel the thirst and hot breath of her love?

She wants to suck at the sea and drink its depth up to her height: then the sea's desire rises with a thousand breasts.

It *wants* to be kissed and sucked by the sun's thirst; it *wants* to become air and height and a footpath of light, and light itself!

Truly, like the sun I love life and all deep seas.

And this is what *I* call knowledge: let everything deep rise—up to my height!

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Scholars

While I lay asleep, a sheep ate at the ivy wreath upon my head—ate and said,
“Zarathustra is no scholar anymore.”

So it spoke, and went stiffly and proudly away. A child told me this.

I like lying here where the children play, beside the broken wall, among thistles
and red poppies.

To the children I am still a scholar, and to the thistles and red poppies too.
They are innocent even in their malice.

But to the sheep I am a scholar no longer: so my fate wills—blessed be it!

For this is the truth: I have moved out of the scholars’ house, and slammed the
door behind me as well.

Too long my soul sat hungry at their table; unlike them, I am not trained to
knowing as to cracking nuts.

I love freedom and the air above fresh earth; I would sooner sleep on oxhides
than upon their dignities and respectabilities.

I am too hot and burned by my own thoughts: often they threaten to take my
breath away. Then I must go into the open, away from every dusty room.

But they sit cool in cool shade: in everything they want only to be spectators,
and take care not to sit where the sun burns upon the steps.

Like people standing in the street gaping at passersby, they too wait and gape at
thoughts others have thought.

If one takes hold of them, they scatter dust like sacks of flour, involuntarily: but
who would guess their dust came from grain and the yellow delight of summer
fields?

When they act wise, their little sayings and truths chill me: their wisdom often
smells as if it came from a swamp; and truly, I have heard the frog croak from it
already!

They are skillful, with clever fingers: what is *my* simplicity beside their multi-
plicity! Their fingers understand every threading and knotting and weaving:
thus they knit the stockings of the spirit!

They are good clockworks: only take care to wind them correctly! Then they
show the hour without deceit, making a modest noise.

Like mills and stamping machines they work: only throw them your grain!
They know well how to grind grain small and make white dust from it.
They watch one another's fingers closely and do not entirely trust one another.
Inventive in little stratagems, they wait for those whose knowledge walks on lame feet—like spiders they wait.

I always saw them preparing poison cautiously; and always they put glass gloves upon their fingers.

They also know how to play with loaded dice; and I found them playing so eagerly that they sweated.

We are strangers to one another, and their virtues offend my taste even more than their falsehoods and loaded dice.

And when I lived among them, I lived above them. That made them resent me. They want to hear nothing of someone walking above their heads; so they laid wood and earth and rubbish between me and their heads.

Thus they muffled the sound of my footsteps: and until now the most learned have heard me worst.

They placed all humanity's failings and weaknesses between themselves and me: they call this the "false floor" in their houses.

But despite that, I walk with my thoughts *above* their heads; and even if I wished to walk upon my own failings, I would still be above them and their heads.

For human beings are *not* equal: so justice speaks. And what I will, *they* must not will!

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Poets

"Since I have known the body better," Zarathustra said to one of his disciples, "spirit has become to me spirit only in a manner of speaking; and all that is 'imperishable' is only an image too."

"I heard you say that once before," the disciple answered, "and then you added, 'But poets lie too much.' Why did you say that poets lie too much?"

"Why?" said Zarathustra. "You ask why? I am not one of those whose why may be questioned."

“Is my experience from yesterday? It is long since I lived through the reasons for my opinions.

“Would I not have to be a barrel of memory if I wanted to keep my reasons with me as well?

“It is already too much for me to retain my opinions themselves; and many a bird flies away.

“And sometimes I find a strange creature in my dovecote, flown in from elsewhere, that trembles when I lay my hand upon it.

“But what did Zarathustra once tell you? That poets lie too much? Yet Zarathustra too is a poet.

“Do you now believe he spoke the truth here? Why do you believe that?”

The disciple answered, “I believe in Zarathustra.” But Zarathustra shook his head and smiled.

“Faith does not make me blessed,” he said, “especially not faith in me.

“But suppose someone said in all earnestness that poets lie too much: that person would be right—we lie too much.

“We also know too little and are poor learners: so we have to lie.

“And which of us poets has not adulterated his wine? Many a poisonous mixture has been made in our cellars; many an indescribable thing has been done there.

“And because we know little, we are heartily fond of the poor in spirit, especially when they are young women!

“And we still crave the things old women tell one another in the evening. We ourselves call this the Eternal Feminine within us.

“And as though there were a special secret access to knowledge that becomes *blocked* for those who learn something, we believe in the people and their ‘wisdom.’

“But all poets believe this: whoever lies in the grass or on lonely slopes and pricks up their ears will learn something of the things between heaven and earth.

“And when tender feelings come to them, poets always think nature herself has fallen in love with them:

“And creeps to their ears to whisper secrets and amorous flatteries. For that they puff themselves up before all mortals!

“Ah, there are so many things between heaven and earth that only poets have dreamed of!

“And above all, *above* heaven: for all gods are poets’ images, poets’ deceptions!

“Truly, we are always drawn upward—into the realm of clouds, that is. Upon them we set our bright stuffed skins, and then call them gods and overhumans

—

“They are just light enough for these seats, after all! All these gods and overhumans.

“Ah, how weary I am of everything inadequate that insists on being an event! Ah, how weary I am of poets!”

When Zarathustra spoke thus, his disciple grew angry with him, but said nothing. Zarathustra too fell silent; his eye had turned inward, as though looking into far distances. At last he sighed and drew breath.

“I belong to today and the past,” he said then, “but something in me belongs to tomorrow and the day after and one day to come.

“I have grown weary of poets, old and new: to me they are all superficial and shallow seas.

“They did not think deeply enough: so their feeling never sank to the bottom.

“A little sensual pleasure and a little boredom: that has been their finest reflection.

“To me all their harps’ tinkling is a breath and rustle of ghosts; what have they known until now of the ardor of tones?—

“They are not clean enough for me either: they all muddy their waters to make them seem deep.

“And they gladly present themselves as reconcilers: but to me they remain mediators and mixers, half-and-halves and unclean ones!—

“Ah, I cast my net into their seas, hoping to catch good fish; but I always pulled up an old God’s head.

“Thus the sea gave the hungry man a stone. And perhaps they themselves came from the sea.

“Certainly, one finds pearls in them: all the more they themselves resemble hard shellfish. And instead of a soul, I often found salted slime in them.

“They learned the sea’s vanity from it as well: is the sea not the peacock of peacocks?

“Even before the ugliest buffalo it unrolls its tail, never tiring of its lace fan of silver and silk.

“The buffalo looks on defiantly, close to sand in its soul, closer to the thicket, but closest to the swamp.

“What do beauty and sea and peacock finery mean to it? I tell this image to the poets.

“Truly, their spirit itself is the peacock of peacocks and a sea of vanity!

“The poet’s spirit wants spectators—even if they are buffalo!—

“But I have grown weary of this spirit: and I see the time coming when it grows weary of itself.

“I have already seen poets transformed, their gaze turned against themselves.

“I saw penitents of the spirit coming: they grew out of the poets.”

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Great Events

There is an island in the sea, not far from Zarathustra’s blissful islands, upon which a volcano constantly smokes. The people, especially the old women among them, say it is set like a boulder before the gate of the underworld; through the volcano itself a narrow path leads down to that gate.

At the time when Zarathustra was staying upon the blissful islands, a ship anchored beside the island with the smoking mountain, and its crew went ashore to shoot rabbits. Around noon, when the captain and his men had gathered again, they suddenly saw a man coming toward them through the air, and a voice distinctly said, “It is time! It is high time!” But when the figure came nearest—it flew quickly past like a shadow toward the volcano—they recognized with the greatest consternation that it was Zarathustra. For they had all seen him before, except the captain himself, and loved him as the people love: with love and fear in equal measure.

“Just look!” said the old helmsman. “There goes Zarathustra to hell!”—

At the same time these sailors landed upon the fire island, a rumor spread that Zarathustra had disappeared. When his friends were asked, they said he had boarded a ship at night without saying where he meant to go.

Thus uneasiness arose; after three days the sailors' story was added to it, and now everyone said the devil had fetched Zarathustra. His disciples laughed at this talk; one even said, "I would sooner believe Zarathustra had fetched the devil." But at the bottom of their souls they were all full of worry and longing: so their joy was great when Zarathustra appeared among them on the fifth day.

And this is the account of Zarathustra's conversation with the fire dog.

"The earth," he said, "has a skin; and this skin has diseases. One of these diseases is called, for example, 'humanity.'

"And another of these diseases is called 'fire dog': about *him* human beings have told themselves many lies and let many lies be told to them.

"To fathom this secret I went across the sea: and I have seen truth naked, truly, barefoot up to the neck.

"Now I know what there is to the fire dog, and likewise to all the devils of eruption and upheaval whom not only old women fear.

"Out with you, fire dog, from your depth!' I cried. 'Confess how deep this depth is! Where does what you snort up come from?

"You drink plentifully from the sea: your oversalted eloquence betrays it! Truly, for a dog of the depths, you take your nourishment too much from the surface!

"At most I consider you the earth's ventriloquist: whenever I heard devils of upheaval and eruption speak, I found them like you—salty, lying, and shallow.

"You know how to roar and darken things with ash! You are the finest loud-mouths—have you thoroughly learned the art of boiling mud?

"Where you are, mud must always be nearby, and much that is spongy, hollow, confined: it wants freedom.

"'Freedom' is what you all like best to roar: but I unlearned belief in "great events" whenever much roaring and smoke surround them.

"And believe me, friend Hellish Din! The greatest events are not our loudest hours, but our stillest.

“Not around the inventors of new noise, but around the inventors of new values, the world turns: *inaudibly* it turns.

“And admit it! Little had always happened when your noise and smoke cleared. What does it matter that a city became a mummy, and a statue lies in the mud?

“And I say this word to those who overthrow statues: surely it is the greatest folly to throw salt into the sea and statues into mud.

“The statue lay in the mud of your contempt: but precisely this is its law, that life and living beauty grow again out of contempt!

“Now it rises with more divine features, seductive in its suffering; and truly, it will yet thank you for overthrowing it, you overthrowers!

“But this is my counsel to kings and churches and everything feeble with age and failing in virtue: only let yourselves be overthrown! So that you return to life, and virtue—to you!”—

“So I spoke before the fire dog; then he interrupted gruffly and asked, ‘Church? What is that?’

“‘Church?’ I answered. ‘That is a kind of state, and indeed the most lying kind. But be silent, you hypocritical dog! You surely know your own kind best already!’

“‘The state is a hypocritical dog like yourself; like you it likes speaking with smoke and roaring, to make people believe, like you, that it speaks from the belly of things.

“‘For it insists upon being the most important animal on earth, the state; and people believe it too.’—

“When I said that, the fire dog behaved as though mad with envy. ‘What?’ he cried. ‘The most important animal on earth? And people believe it too?’ So much steam and such dreadful voices came from his throat that I thought he would suffocate with anger and envy.

“At last he grew quieter, and his panting eased; as soon as he was silent, I said, laughing:

“‘You are angry, fire dog: so I am right about you!’

“And so that I remain right, hear of another fire dog: he truly speaks from the earth’s heart.

“His breath exhales gold and golden rain: so his heart wills. What are ash and smoke and hot slime to him now?

“Laughter flutters from him like a bright cloud; he is ill disposed toward your gurgling and spitting and griping entrails!

“But gold and laughter he takes from the earth’s heart: for just so you know—*the earth’s heart is made of gold.*’

“When the fire dog heard this, he could bear listening no longer. Ashamed, he tucked his tail, said timidly, ‘Bow-wow! Bow-wow!’ and crept down into his cave.”—

Thus Zarathustra told his story. But his disciples hardly listened: so great was their desire to tell him of the sailors, the rabbits, and the flying man.

“What am I to think of that?” Zarathustra said. “Am I a ghost?

“But it will have been my shadow. You have probably heard something already about the wanderer and his shadow?

“One thing is certain: I must keep him on a shorter leash—otherwise he will spoil my reputation.”

And again Zarathustra shook his head in wonder. “What am I to think of that?” he said again.

“Why did the ghost cry, ‘It is time! It is high time!’?

“High time—*for what?*”—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

The Soothsayer

“—And I saw a great sadness come over humanity. The best grew weary of their works.

“A teaching went out, with a faith beside it: ‘Everything is empty, everything is the same, everything has been!’

“And from every hill it echoed: ‘Everything is empty, everything is the same, everything has been!’

“We harvested, certainly: but why did every fruit grow rotten and brown for us? What fell from the evil moon last night?

“All labor was in vain; our wine has become poison; an evil eye scorched our fields and hearts yellow.

“We have all grown dry; if fire falls upon us, we scatter like ash—yes, we have wearied fire itself.

“All our wells dried up; even the sea withdrew. All ground wants to split, but the depths will not swallow!

“Ah, where is there still a sea in which one could drown?’ So our lament sounds—across shallow swamps.

“Truly, we have already grown too weary to die; now we stay awake and live on—in burial chambers!”—

Thus Zarathustra heard a soothsayer speak; and the prophecy went to his heart and changed him. He walked sadly and wearily, becoming like those of whom the soothsayer had spoken.

“Truly,” he said to his disciples, “a little while, and this long twilight will come. Ah, how shall I carry my light safely through it?

“Let it not suffocate in this sadness! It must shine for farther worlds and the farthest nights!”

So troubled in his heart Zarathustra walked about; for three days he took neither food nor drink, found no rest, and lost speech. At last he fell into a deep sleep. His disciples sat around him through long night watches, waiting anxiously to see whether he would wake and speak again, recovered from his melancholy.

This is what Zarathustra said when he awoke; but his voice came to his disciples as from a great distance.

“Listen to the dream I dreamed, my friends, and help me divine its meaning!

“It is still a riddle to me, this dream; its meaning lies hidden and imprisoned within it, and does not yet fly above it on free wings.

“I had renounced all life, so I dreamed. I had become a night watchman and grave guardian upon death’s lonely mountain fortress.

“Up there I guarded its coffins: the musty vaults were full of such trophies. From glass coffins, conquered life looked at me.

“I breathed the smell of dusty eternities: sultry and dusty lay my soul. And who could have aired their soul there?

“Midnight brightness always surrounded me; solitude crouched beside it; and third came rattling deathly silence, the worst of my women friends.

“I carried keys, the rustiest of all keys, and knew how to open the most creaking of all gates with them.

“Like a bitterly evil croaking, the sound ran through the long corridors when the gate’s wings rose: this bird cried harshly, reluctant to be awakened.

“But more terrible and heart-constricting still was when it fell silent again, everything around grew still, and I sat alone in that treacherous silence.

“Thus time passed and crept for me, if time still existed: what do I know of that! But at last the thing that woke me happened.

“Three times blows struck the gate like thunder; three times the vaults echoed and howled. Then I went to the gate.

“‘Alpa!’ I cried. ‘Who carries his ashes into the mountains? Alpa! Alpa! Who carries his ashes into the mountains?’

“And I pressed the key and heaved at the gate and struggled. But it was not yet open a finger’s breadth:

“Then a roaring wind tore its wings apart: whistling, shrilling, and piercing, it flung a black coffin toward me.

“And amid the roaring and whistling and shrilling, the coffin burst and spewed forth a thousandfold laughter.

“And from a thousand grimacing faces of children, angels, owls, fools, and child-sized butterflies, laughter and mockery and roaring came against me.

“I was dreadfully frightened: it threw me down. And I screamed in horror as I had never screamed.

“But my own scream woke me—and I came to myself.”—

Thus Zarathustra told his dream and fell silent: for he did not yet know its interpretation. But the disciple he loved most rose quickly, took Zarathustra’s hand, and spoke:

“Your life itself interprets this dream for us, Zarathustra!

“Are you not yourself the shrill-whistling wind that tears open the gates of death’s fortresses?

“Are you not yourself the coffin full of bright malice and life’s angelic grimaces?

“Truly, like a thousandfold children’s laughter, Zarathustra enters every death chamber, laughing at these night watchmen and grave guardians, and whoever else rattles gloomy keys.

“You will terrify and overthrow them with your laughter; fainting and awakening will prove your power over them.

“And even when the long twilight and death-weariness come, you will not set in our sky, advocate of life!

“You let us see new stars and new splendors of night; truly, you stretched laughter itself above us like a bright tent.

“Now children’s laughter will always pour from coffins; now a strong wind will always come victoriously against every weariness of death: you yourself are our pledge and soothsayer of that!

“Truly, *you dreamed them themselves*, your enemies: that was your hardest dream!

“But as you awoke from them and came to yourself, so they themselves shall awake from themselves—and come to you!”—

Thus the disciple spoke; and now all the others crowded around Zarathustra, took his hands, and tried to persuade him to leave his bed and sadness and return to them. But Zarathustra sat upright upon his bed with a strange gaze. Like someone returning home after a long foreign journey, he looked at his disciples and examined their faces; he did not recognize them yet. But when they lifted him and set him on his feet, suddenly his eye changed; he understood everything that had happened, stroked his beard, and said in a strong voice, “Well! That has its time now; but see to it, my disciples, that we have a good meal—and soon! This is how I intend to do penance for bad dreams!

“But let the soothsayer eat and drink beside me: truly, I will yet show him a sea in which he can drown!”

Thus spoke Zarathustra. Afterward, however, he looked long into the face of the disciple who had played the dream interpreter, and shook his head.—

On Redemption

One day, as Zarathustra crossed the great bridge, cripples and beggars surrounded him, and a hunchback spoke:

“Look, Zarathustra! Even the people learn from you and gain faith in your teaching. But for them to believe you entirely, one thing is still needed: first you must persuade us cripples! Here you have a fine selection, and truly an opportunity with more than one forelock! You can heal the blind and make the lame walk; and from someone with too much behind him, perhaps you could take a little away: that, I think, would be the right way to make cripples believe in Zarathustra!”

But Zarathustra answered the speaker: “If one takes the hunchback’s hump, one takes his spirit—so the people teach. And if one gives the blind man his eyes, he sees too many bad things on earth and curses the one who healed him. But whoever makes the lame walk does him the greatest harm: scarcely can he walk before his vices run away with him—so the people teach about cripples. And why should Zarathustra not learn from the people too, when the people learn from Zarathustra?

“But since I have lived among human beings, this has been the least of it: seeing that one lacks an eye, another an ear, a third a leg, while others have lost their tongue or nose or head.

“I see and have seen worse, and many things so hideous I would not speak of all of them, and of some would not even remain silent: people who lack everything except one thing they have too much of—people who are nothing but a great eye, or a great mouth, or a great belly, or something else great. I call them inverse cripples.

“And when I came out of my solitude and crossed this bridge for the first time, I did not trust my eyes. I looked and looked again, and at last said, ‘That is an ear! An ear as large as a human being!’ I looked more closely: indeed, beneath the ear something still moved that was pitifully small, poor, and frail. Truly, the enormous ear sat upon a small, thin stalk—but the stalk was a human being! Someone holding a magnifying glass to their eye could even recognize a little envious face, and a swollen little soul dangling from the stalk. But the people told me the great ear was not only a human being, but a great human being, a

genius. Yet I never believed the people when they spoke of great human beings—and kept my belief that this was an inverse cripple, with too little of everything and too much of one thing.”

When Zarathustra had spoken thus to the hunchback and those for whom he was mouthpiece and advocate, he turned in deep discontent to his disciples and said:

“Truly, my friends, I walk among human beings as among fragments and limbs of human beings!

“What is terrible to my eye is finding humanity shattered and scattered as across a battlefield and slaughter ground.

“And if my eye flees from now to the past, it always finds the same: fragments and limbs and dreadful accidents—but no human beings!

“The now and the past upon earth—ah, my friends—that is *my* most unbearable thing; and I would not know how to live if I were not also a seer of what must come.

“A seer, a willing one, a creator, a future itself and a bridge to the future—and ah, also something like a cripple upon this bridge: all this is Zarathustra.

“And you too have often asked yourselves, ‘Who is Zarathustra to us? What should we call him?’ And like me, you gave yourselves questions for answers.

“Is he a promiser? Or a fulfiller? A conqueror? Or an heir? An autumn? Or a plowshare? A physician? Or a convalescent?

“Is he a poet? Or a truthful one? A liberator? Or a tamer? A good one? Or an evil one?

“I walk among human beings as among fragments of the future—the future I behold.

“And this is all my invention and striving: to compose into one and gather together what is fragment and riddle and dreadful accident.

“And how could I bear being human if the human being were not also poet and riddle solver and the redeemer of chance!

“To redeem those who have gone, and remake every ‘It was’ into a ‘Thus I willed it!’—that alone would I call redemption!

“Will—that is the liberator and bringer of joy: so I taught you, my friends! But now learn this as well: will itself is still a prisoner.

“Willing liberates: but what is the name of that which chains even the liberator?

“‘It was’: that is the name of the will’s gnashing of teeth and loneliest melancholy. Powerless before what has been done, it is an evil spectator of everything past.

“The will cannot will backward; that it cannot break time and time’s desire—that is the will’s loneliest melancholy.

“Willing liberates: what does willing itself devise to escape its melancholy and mock its prison?

“Ah, every prisoner becomes a fool! Foolishly the imprisoned will also redeems itself.

“That time does not run backward is its rage; ‘What was’ is the stone it cannot roll away.

“And so it rolls stones out of rage and discontent, and takes revenge upon whatever does not feel rage and discontent like itself.

“Thus the will, the liberator, became a bringer of pain: upon everything capable of suffering it takes revenge because it cannot go backward.

“This, yes, this alone is *revenge* itself: the will’s ill will against time and its ‘It was.’

“Truly, a great folly dwells in our will; and it became a curse upon everything human that this folly learned to be clever!

“*The spirit of revenge*: my friends, this has been humanity’s finest reflection until now; and wherever suffering was, punishment was always supposed to be.

“‘Punishment’ is what revenge calls itself: with a lying word it feigns a good conscience.

“And because there is suffering in the willing one, since it cannot will backward, willing itself and all life were supposed to be—punishment!

“And now cloud upon cloud rolled over spirit, until at last madness preached, ‘Everything passes away; therefore everything deserves to pass away!’

“And this itself is justice, this law of time that it must devour its children’: so madness preached.

“Things are morally ordered according to justice and punishment. Oh, where is redemption from the flow of things and the punishment “existence”?’ So madness preached.

“Can there be redemption if there is eternal justice? Ah, the stone “It was” cannot be rolled away: every punishment must be eternal too!’ So madness preached.

“No deed can be destroyed: how could punishment make it undone? This, this is what is eternal in the punishment “existence”: that existence must eternally become deed and guilt again!

“Unless the will at last redeemed itself, and willing became not-willing—’: but you know this fable song of madness, my brothers!

“I led you away from these fable songs when I taught you, ‘The will is a creator.’

“Every ‘It was’ is a fragment, a riddle, a dreadful accident—until the creating will says to it, ‘But thus I willed it!’

—Until the creating will says to it, ‘But thus I will it! Thus shall I will it!’

“But has it spoken so already? And when does this happen? Is the will already unharnessed from its own folly?

“Has the will already become its own redeemer and bringer of joy? Has it unlearned the spirit of revenge and all gnashing of teeth?

“And who taught it reconciliation with time, and something higher than all reconciliation?

“The will that is will to power must will something higher than all reconciliation—but how does this happen to it? Who taught it even to will backward?”

But at this point in his speech Zarathustra suddenly stopped, looking just like someone frightened to the utmost. With a startled eye he looked at his disciples; his gaze pierced their thoughts and hidden thoughts like arrows. After a little while, however, he laughed again and said soothingly:

“It is hard to live with human beings, because silence is so hard. Especially for a chatterer.”—

Thus spoke Zarathustra. But the hunchback had listened to the conversation with his face covered. When he heard Zarathustra laugh, he looked up curiously and said slowly:

“But why does Zarathustra speak differently to us than to his disciples?”

Zarathustra answered, “What is there to wonder at? With hunchbacks one may speak hunchbackedly!”

“Good,” said the hunchback. “And with pupils one may tell tales out of school.

“But why does Zarathustra speak differently to his pupils—than to himself?”—

On Prudence among Human Beings

Not the height: the slope is terrible!

The slope where the gaze plunges *downward* and the hand reaches *upward*.
There the heart grows dizzy before its double will.

Ah, friends, do you also divine my heart’s double will?

This, this is *my* slope and my danger: my gaze plunges toward the heights, while my hand wants to hold and support itself—upon the depths!

My will clings to humanity; with chains I bind myself to humanity, because I am torn upward toward the overhuman: for there my other will wants to go.

And *that* is why I live blindly among human beings, as though I did not know them: so that my hand does not entirely lose its faith in firmness.

I do not know you human beings: this darkness and comfort are often spread around me.

I sit at the gateway for every rogue and ask: Who wants to deceive me?

This is my first prudence among human beings: I let myself be deceived, so as not to be on guard against deceivers.

Ah, if I were on guard against humanity, how could humanity be an anchor for my balloon? Too easily I would be torn upward and away!

This providence stands over my fate: I must be without precaution.

And whoever does not want to perish of thirst among human beings must learn to drink from every glass; whoever wants to remain clean among human beings must know how to wash even with dirty water.

Thus I often spoke to comfort myself: “Come! Up! Old heart! A misfortune has failed to strike you: enjoy this as your—good fortune!”

But this is my second prudence among human beings: I spare the *vain* more than the proud.

Is wounded vanity not the mother of every tragedy? But where pride is wounded, something better than pride may yet grow.

For life to be good to watch, its play must be well performed: and for that good actors are needed.

I found all vain people good actors: they perform and want to be watched with pleasure—all their spirit is in this will.

They stage themselves, invent themselves; near them I love watching life—it cures melancholy.

That is why I spare the vain: they are physicians for my melancholy, and keep me fastened to humanity as to a play.

And then: who measures the whole depth of a vain person's modesty? I am fond of him and pity him for his modesty.

From you he wants to learn belief in himself; he feeds upon your looks, eats praise from your hands.

He believes even your lies when you lie well about him: for deep within, his heart sighs, "What am I?"

And if true virtue is the virtue that does not know itself—well, the vain person does not know his modesty!—

But this is my third prudence among human beings: I do not let your timidity spoil my pleasure in the sight of the *evil*.

I am blessed to see the wonders a hot sun hatches: tigers and palms and rattlesnakes.

Among human beings too there is beautiful offspring of a hot sun, and much worth marveling at in the evil.

Certainly, just as your wisest did not seem so wise to me, I also found human malice fell short of its reputation.

And often I asked, shaking my head: Why still rattle, you rattlesnakes?

Truly, there is a future for evil too! And the hottest south has not yet been discovered for humanity.

How much is already called the worst malice that is only twelve feet wide and three months long! But one day greater dragons will come into the world.

For the overhuman must not lack its dragon, the overdragon worthy of it: for that, much hot sun must still glow upon moist primeval forest!

Your wildcats must first become tigers, and your poisonous toads crocodiles: for the good hunter should have a good hunt!

And truly, you good and just ones! There is much to laugh at in you, especially your fear of what has until now been called “devil”!

You are so estranged from greatness in your souls that the overhuman would be *terrible* to you in its goodness!

And you wise and knowing ones would flee from wisdom’s scorching sun, in which the overhuman bathes its nakedness with delight!

You highest human beings my eye has met! This is my doubt about you and my secret laughter: I guess you would call my overhuman—a devil!

Ah, I grew weary of these highest and best: from their “height” I longed upward, outward, away toward the overhuman!

Horror seized me when I saw these best ones naked: then wings grew for me, to soar into distant futures.

Into farther futures, into more southerly souths than any sculptor ever dreamed: where gods are ashamed of all clothes!

But I want to see *you* disguised, neighbors and fellow human beings, well dressed, vain and dignified as “the good and the just”—

And disguised I myself want to sit among you, so that I *misrecognize* you and myself: that is my final prudence among human beings.

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

The Stillest Hour

“What has happened to me, my friends? You see me distraught, driven away, unwillingly obedient, ready to go—ah, to go away from *you*!

“Yes, once more Zarathustra must enter his solitude: but this time the bear returns unwillingly to his *cave*!

“What has happened to me? Who commands this? Ah, my angry mistress wills it; she spoke to me: have I ever told you her name?

"Yesterday toward evening, *my stillest hour* spoke to me: that is the name of my terrible mistress.

"And this is how it happened—for I must tell you everything, so that your hearts do not harden against the one who suddenly leaves!

"Do you know the terror of someone falling asleep? Frightened to the toes because the ground gives way and the dream begins.

"I tell you this as an image. Yesterday, in the stillest hour, the ground gave way beneath me: the dream began.

"The hand moved; the clock of my life drew breath—I had never heard such stillness around me: it frightened my heart.

"Then it spoke to me without a voice: '*You know it, Zarathustra?*'—

"And I cried out in terror at this whisper, and the blood left my face: but I was silent.

"Then it spoke to me again without a voice: 'You know it, Zarathustra, but you do not say it!'—

"And at last I answered defiantly, 'Yes, I know it, but I will not say it!'

"Then it spoke to me again without a voice: 'You *will* not, Zarathustra? Is that true? Do not hide in your defiance!'—

"And I wept and trembled like a child and said, 'Ah, I would, but how can I? Only release me from this! It is beyond my strength!'

"Then it spoke to me again without a voice: 'What do you matter, Zarathustra? Speak your word and break!'—

"And I answered, 'Ah, is it *my* word? Who am I? I await the worthier one; I am not worthy even to break upon it.'

"Then it spoke to me again without a voice: 'What do you matter? You are not humble enough for me yet. Humility has the toughest hide.'—

"And I answered, 'What has the hide of my humility not already borne? I dwell at the foot of my height: how high are my summits? No one has yet told me. But I know my valleys well.'

"Then it spoke to me again without a voice: 'Zarathustra, whoever has mountains to move also moves valleys and lowlands.'—

“And I answered, ‘My word has not yet moved mountains, and what I said did not reach humanity. I went to human beings, certainly, but I have not yet arrived among them.’

“Then it spoke to me again without a voice: ‘What do you know *of that*? Dew falls upon the grass when night is most silent.’—

“And I answered, ‘They mocked me when I found and followed my own way; and truly, my feet trembled then.

““And they said to me: you have forgotten the way; now you will forget how to walk as well!’

“Then it spoke to me again without a voice: ‘What does their mockery matter? You are one who has unlearned obedience: now you must command!

““Do you not know who is most necessary to everyone? The one who commands great things.

““To accomplish great things is hard: but commanding great things is harder.

““This is your most unforgivable thing: you have power, and you do not want to rule.’—

“And I answered, ‘I lack the lion’s voice for all commanding.’

“Then it spoke to me again like a whisper: ‘The stillest words bring the storm. Thoughts that come on doves’ feet guide the world.

““Zarathustra, you must go as a shadow of what must come: thus you will command and go before, commanding.’—

“And I answered, ‘I am ashamed.’

“Then it spoke to me again without a voice: ‘You must still become a child, without shame.

““The pride of youth is still upon you; late you became young: but whoever wants to become a child must overcome youth as well.’—

“And I reflected long and trembled. But at last I said what I had said first: ‘I will not.’

“Then laughter arose around me. Alas, how that laughter tore my entrails and slit my heart!

“And it spoke to me for the last time: ‘Zarathustra, your fruits are ripe, but you are not ripe for your fruits!

“So you must return to solitude: for you must still grow tender.’—

“And again it laughed and fled: then everything around me grew still as with a doubled stillness. But I lay upon the ground, sweat flowing from my limbs.

“Now you have heard everything, and why I must return to my solitude. I have hidden nothing from you, my friends.

“But you have also heard from me *who* is still the most silent of all human beings—and wants to be!

“Ah, my friends! I still have something to tell you; I still have something to give you! Why do I not give it? Am I stingy?”—

But when Zarathustra had spoken these words, the force of pain and the nearness of parting from his friends overcame him, so that he wept aloud; and no one knew how to comfort him. But in the night he went away alone and left his friends.

Part 3



Third Part

“You look upward when you long to be uplifted. And I look down, because I am uplifted.

“Which of you can laugh and be uplifted at once?

“Whoever climbs the highest mountains laughs at all tragic plays and tragic solemnity.”

Zarathustra, On Reading and Writing. (I. p. 53.)

The Wanderer

It was around midnight when Zarathustra took the path across the island's ridge, to reach the other shore early in the morning: there he meant to board a ship. A good anchorage lay there, where foreign ships too gladly dropped anchor; they took many aboard who wished to sail from the blissful islands. As Zarathustra climbed the mountain, he remembered his many solitary wanderings since youth, and how many mountains and ridges and summits he had climbed.

“I am a wanderer and a mountain climber,” he said to his heart. “I do not love plains, and it seems I cannot sit still for long.

“And whatever now comes to me as fate and experience, there will be wandering and mountain climbing in it: in the end one experiences only oneself.

“The time has flowed away when accidents might still befall me; and what *could* fall to me now that was not already mine?

“Only my own self returns; at last it comes home to me, with whatever of it was long abroad, scattered among all things and accidents.

“And one more thing I know: I stand now before my last summit and what has been held back for me longest. Ah, I must climb my hardest path! Ah, I have begun my loneliest wandering!

“But whoever is of my kind does not escape such an hour, the hour that says, ‘Only now do you follow your way to greatness! Summit and abyss are now joined in one!

““You follow your way to greatness: now what was your final danger has become your final refuge!

““You follow your way to greatness: let this now be your best courage—that there is no longer any path behind you!

““You follow your way to greatness: no one shall steal after you here! Your own foot erased the path behind you, and above it is written: Impossibility.

““And if you now lack every ladder, you must know how to climb even upon your own head: how else could you climb upward?

““Upon your own head and beyond your own heart! Now even your gentlest part must become your hardest.

““Whoever has always spared himself much grows sick at last from too much sparing. Praised be what makes hard! I do not praise the land where butter and honey flow!

““One must learn to *look away* from oneself to see *much*: every mountain climber needs this hardness.

““But whoever is intrusive with his eyes as a knower—how could he see more of things than their foregrounds?

““But you, Zarathustra, wanted to see the ground and background of all things: so you must climb beyond yourself—upward, higher, until even your stars lie *beneath* you!

““Yes! To look down upon myself and even upon my stars: that alone would I call my *summit*; that remained for me as my *last* summit!”—

Thus Zarathustra spoke to himself as he climbed, comforting his heart with hard little sayings: for his heart was wounded as never before. When he reached the top of the ridge, the other sea lay spread before him; he stood still and remained silent a long time. Night was cold at that height, clear and bright with stars.

"I recognize my lot," he said sadly at last. "Well! I am ready. My final solitude has just begun.

"Ah, this black, sad sea beneath me! Ah, this pregnant, nocturnal gloom! Ah, fate and sea! To you I must now *descend*!

"I stand before my highest mountain and my longest wandering: that is why I must first descend deeper than I have ever climbed—

"Deeper into pain than I have ever climbed, into its blackest flood! So my fate wills: well! I am ready.

"Where do the highest mountains come from? I once asked. Then I learned that they come from the sea.

"This testimony is written in their rock and upon the walls of their summits. From the deepest, the highest must come to its height."—

Thus Zarathustra spoke upon the cold mountain peak. But when he approached the sea and at last stood alone among the cliffs, the journey had wearied him and made him more full of longing than before.

"Everything still sleeps now," he said. "The sea sleeps too. Sleep-drunk and strange, its eye looks toward me.

"But it breathes warmly; I feel that. And I feel it dreaming too. Dreaming, it twists upon hard pillows.

"Listen! Listen! How it groans with evil memories! Or evil expectations?

"Ah, I am sad with you, dark monster, and angry with myself for your sake.

"Ah, that my hand is not strong enough! Truly, how gladly I would deliver you from bad dreams!"—

As Zarathustra spoke, he laughed at himself with melancholy and bitterness.

"What, Zarathustra!" he said. "Do you mean to sing comfort even to the sea?

"Ah, you loving fool Zarathustra, you over-blessed with trust! But so you have always been: you always approached everything terrible with familiarity.

“You wanted to stroke every monster. A breath of warm air, a little soft shag upon a paw—and immediately you were ready to love and coax it.

“*Love* is the danger of the loneliest, love for everything *if only it lives!* Truly, my folly and modesty in love deserve laughter!”—

Thus Zarathustra spoke and laughed a second time. But then he remembered the friends he had left, and as though he had wronged them with his thoughts, he grew angry at those thoughts. And suddenly the laughing man wept: in anger and longing Zarathustra wept bitterly.

On the Vision and the Riddle

- ¹ When word spread among the sailors that Zarathustra was aboard—for a man from the blissful islands had boarded with him—great curiosity and expectation arose. But Zarathustra was silent for two days, cold and deaf with sadness, answering neither looks nor questions. On the evening of the second day he opened his ears again, though he still said nothing: for much strange and dangerous could be heard aboard this ship, which came from far away and meant to travel farther. Zarathustra was a friend of all who make long journeys and do not wish to live without danger. And at last, through listening, his own tongue loosened and his heart’s ice broke: then he began to speak:

“To you, bold seekers and experimenters, and whoever has embarked with cunning sails upon terrible seas—

“To you, drunk with riddles and glad of twilight, whose souls are lured by flutes into every bewildering gulf—for you will not feel with cowardly hands along a thread, and where you can *divine*, you hate to *deduce*—

“To you alone I tell the riddle I *saw*, the vision of the loneliest.—

“Gloomily I walked lately through corpse-colored twilight, gloomy and hard, with lips pressed tight. More than one sun had set for me.

“A defiant path climbing through rubble, a malicious, lonely path encouraged by neither herb nor shrub: a mountain path crunched beneath my foot’s defiance.

“Stepping silently over the mocking clatter of pebbles, crushing the stone that made it slip: thus my foot forced itself upward.

“Upward—in defiance of the spirit pulling it down, toward the abyss, the spirit of gravity, my devil and archenemy.

“Upward—even though he sat upon me, half dwarf, half mole; lame; laming; pouring lead through my ear, dripping leaden thoughts into my brain.

“‘Zarathustra,’ he whispered mockingly, syllable by syllable, ‘you philosopher’s stone! You hurled yourself high, but every stone that is thrown must—fall!

“‘Zarathustra, you philosopher’s stone, you sling stone, you shatterer of stars! You hurled yourself so high—but every thrown stone must fall!

“‘Condemned to yourself and to your own stoning: Zarathustra, you have indeed thrown the stone far—but upon *you* it will fall back!’

“Then the dwarf was silent for a long time. But his silence weighed upon me; and in such company of two one is truly lonelier than alone!

“I climbed, I climbed, I dreamed, I thought—but everything weighed upon me. I was like a sick man wearied by his cruel torment, whom a worse dream wakes again from falling asleep.—

“But something within me I call courage: until now it has struck down every discouragement. At last this courage bade me stand still and speak: ‘Dwarf! You! Or I!’—

“For courage is the best killer, courage that *attacks*: for in every attack there is ringing music.

“But the human being is the most courageous animal: thus it overcame every animal. With ringing music it overcame every pain as well; but human pain is the deepest pain.

“Courage also kills dizziness at abysses: and where does the human being not stand at abysses? Is seeing not itself—seeing abysses?

“Courage is the best killer: courage kills pity too. But pity is the deepest abyss: as deeply as humanity looks into life, so deeply it looks into suffering.

“But courage is the best killer, courage that attacks: it kills even death, for it says, ‘Was *that* life? Well then! Once more!’

“But in such a saying there is much ringing music. Whoever has ears, let them hear.—

² “Stop, dwarf!’ I said. ‘I! Or you! But I am the stronger of us two: you do not know my abyssal thought! *That* you could not bear!’—

“Then something happened that made me lighter: the dwarf sprang from my shoulder, the curious one! He crouched upon a stone before me. A gateway stood precisely where we had stopped.

“Look at this gateway, dwarf!’ I continued. ‘It has two faces. Two paths meet here: no one has yet followed either to its end.

“This long lane backward lasts an eternity. And that long lane outward is another eternity.

“These paths contradict one another; they collide head-on—and here at this gateway they meet. The gateway’s name is written above: “Moment.”

“But if someone followed one of them onward, ever onward and farther away, do you believe, dwarf, these paths would contradict one another eternally?’—

“Everything straight lies,’ the dwarf murmured contemptuously. ‘All truth is crooked; time itself is a circle.’

“You spirit of gravity!’ I said angrily. ‘Do not make it too easy for yourself! Or I will leave you crouching where you crouch, clubfoot—and I carried you *high*!

“Look,’ I continued, ‘at this moment! From this gateway Moment a long eternal lane runs *backward*: behind us lies an eternity.

“Must not everything that *can* run have already run along this lane once? Must not everything that *can* happen have already happened, been done, passed by?

“And if everything has already been here: what do you think of this moment, dwarf? Must this gateway too not already have been here?

“And are all things not so firmly knotted that this moment draws *all* things to come after it? *Therefore*—itself as well?

“For everything that *can* run must also run once more *outward* along this long lane—it *must*!—

“And this slow spider creeping in the moonlight, and this moonlight itself, and I and you at the gateway, whispering together of eternal things—must we not all have been here already?

“And return and run in that other lane, outward, before us, in this long dreadful lane—must we not return eternally?’—

“So I spoke, ever more softly: for I feared my own thoughts and hidden thoughts. Then suddenly I heard a dog *howling* nearby.

“Had I ever heard a dog howl like that? My thought ran backward. Yes! When I was a child, in earliest childhood—

“Then I heard a dog howl like that. And saw it too, bristling, head raised, trembling in the stillest midnight, when even dogs believe in ghosts—

“So that I pitied it. For the full moon had just passed over the house in deathly silence, had just stopped, a round glow, still upon the flat roof as though upon someone else’s property—

“That was what terrified the dog then: for dogs believe in thieves and ghosts. And when I heard such howling again, I pitied it again.

“Where was the dwarf now? And the gateway? And the spider? And all the whispering? Was I dreaming? Had I awoken? Suddenly I stood among wild cliffs, alone, desolate, in the most desolate moonlight.

“*But there lay a human being!* And there! The *dog*, leaping, bristling, whining—now it saw me coming, now it howled again, now it *screamed*: had I ever heard a dog scream so for help?

“And truly, what I saw was like nothing I had ever seen. I saw a young shepherd writhing, choking, convulsing, his face distorted, with a heavy black serpent hanging from his mouth.

“Had I ever seen so much disgust and pale horror upon one face? Had he been asleep? Then the serpent had crawled into his throat and bitten fast.

“My hand tugged and tugged at the serpent—in vain! It could not wrench the serpent from his throat. Then a cry broke from me: ‘Bite! Bite!

“‘Bite its head off! Bite!’ So the cry broke from me; my horror, my hatred, my disgust, my pity, all my good and bad cried out of me in one cry.—

“You bold ones around me! You seekers, experimenters, and those who have embarked with cunning sails upon unexplored seas! You who delight in riddles!

“Divine for me the riddle I saw then; interpret for me the vision of the loneliest!

“For it was a vision and a foreseeing: *what* did I see then in an image? And *who* is the one who must yet come?

“*Who* is the shepherd into whose throat the serpent crawled? *Who* is the human being into whose throat everything heaviest and blackest will crawl?

“But the shepherd bit as my cry counseled him; he bit with a good bite! Far away he spat the serpent’s head—and sprang up.—

“No longer shepherd, no longer human—a transformed one, surrounded by light, who *laughed*! Never yet on earth had a human being laughed as *he* laughed!

“Oh, my brothers, I heard a laughter that was no human laughter—and now a thirst gnaws at me, a longing that is never stilled.

“My longing for this laughter gnaws at me: oh, how do I bear living on? And how could I bear dying now?”—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Blessedness against the Will

With such riddles and bitterness in his heart, Zarathustra traveled over the sea. But when he was four days’ journey from the blissful islands and his friends, he had overcome all his pain: victorious and sure-footed, he stood upon his fate again. Then Zarathustra spoke to his rejoicing conscience:

“I am alone again, and wish to be, alone with clear sky and free sea; and once again afternoon surrounds me.

“In the afternoon I first found my friends, and in the afternoon a second time—at the hour when all light grows stiller.

“For whatever happiness still travels between heaven and earth now seeks a bright soul for shelter: *with happiness* all light has now grown stiller.

“Oh, afternoon of my life! Once *my* happiness too descended into the valley to seek shelter: there it found these open, hospitable souls.

“Oh, afternoon of my life! What did I not give up to have this one thing: this living plantation of my thoughts and this morning light of my highest hope!

“Once the creator sought companions and children of *his* hope: and it turned out that he could not find them unless he first created them himself.

“Thus I am in the midst of my work, going to my children and returning from them: for his children’s sake Zarathustra must perfect himself.

“For at heart one loves only one’s child and work; and where there is great self-love, it is the sign of pregnancy: so I found.

“My children still stand green in their first spring, close together and shaken by the winds together, the trees of my garden and finest soil.

“And truly! Where such trees stand together, there *are* blissful islands!

“But one day I will transplant them and set each alone, so that it learns solitude and defiance and caution.

“Knotted and twisted, with supple hardness, each shall then stand beside the sea for me, a living lighthouse of unconquerable life.

“There, where storms plunge into the sea and the mountain’s trunk drinks water, each shall one day keep its day and night watches, for *its own* testing and knowledge.

“Each shall be known and tested: whether it is of my kind and descent, master of a long will, silent even in speaking, and yielding in such a way that in giving it *takes*—

“So that one day it becomes my companion, a fellow creator and celebrant with Zarathustra, one who writes my will upon my tablets for me, toward the fuller perfection of all things.

“And for its sake and its like, I myself must perfect *myself*: that is why I now avoid my happiness and offer myself to every misfortune—for *my* final testing and knowledge.

“And truly, it was time to go: the wanderer’s shadow, the longest boredom, and the stillest hour all urged me, ‘It is high time!’

“The wind blew through my keyhole and said, ‘Come!’ The door sprang cunningly open and said, ‘Go!’

“But I lay chained to love of my children: desire laid this snare for me, the desire for love, so that I became my children’s prey and lost myself to them.

“Desiring already means to me having lost myself. *I have you, my children!* In this having let everything be certainty and nothing desire.

“But the sun of my love lay brooding upon me; Zarathustra cooked in his own juices—then shadows and doubts flew over me.

“Already I longed for frost and winter: ‘Oh, if frost and winter would make me crack and crunch again!’ I sighed. Then icy mists rose from me.

“My past broke open its graves; many a pain buried alive awoke—it had merely slept its fill, hidden in burial clothes.

“Thus everything cried to me in signs, ‘It is time!’ But I did not hear, until at last my abyss stirred and my thought bit me.

“Ah, abyssal thought, you who are *my* thought! When shall I find the strength to hear you digging and tremble no more?

“My heart pounds up to my throat when I hear you digging! Even your silence threatens to choke me, you abyssally silent one!

“I have never yet dared to call you *up*: enough that I carried you with me! I was not yet strong enough for the lion’s final high spirits and daring.

“Your weight has always been terrible enough for me: but one day I shall find the strength and the lion’s voice that calls you up!

“Once I have overcome myself in this, I will overcome myself in greater things as well; and a *victory* shall be the seal of my perfection!—

“Meanwhile I still drift upon uncertain seas; chance, the smooth-tongued one, flatters me. Forward and backward I look—but I see no end yet.

“The hour of my final battle has not yet come—or is it coming now? Truly, sea and life gaze around me with treacherous beauty!

“Oh, afternoon of my life! Oh, happiness before evening! Oh, harbor on the high seas! Oh, peace amid uncertainty! How I mistrust you all!

“Truly, I mistrust your treacherous beauty! I am like the lover who mistrusts an all-too-velvety smile.

“As the jealous lover pushes the most beloved away, tender even in his hardness, so I push this blessed hour away.

“Away with you, blessed hour! With you came a blessedness against my will! Here I stand willing for my deepest pain—you came at the wrong time!

“Away with you, blessed hour! Find shelter instead with my children! Hurry, and before evening bless them with *my* happiness!

“Already evening approaches: the sun sinks. Away—my happiness!”—

Thus spoke Zarathustra. And all night he waited for his misfortune, but waited in vain. The night remained bright and still, and happiness itself came ever closer. Toward morning Zarathustra laughed to his heart and said mockingly, "Happiness runs after me. That comes of my not running after women. But happiness is a woman."

Before Sunrise

Oh, sky above me, pure one! Deep one! Abyss of light! Looking at you, I tremble with divine desires.

To cast myself into your height—that is *my* depth! To hide myself in your purity—that is *my* innocence!

Beauty veils the God: thus you conceal your stars. You do not speak: *thus* you reveal your wisdom to me.

Silent above the roaring sea, you have risen for me today; your love and modesty speak revelation to my roaring soul.

That you came to me beautiful, veiled in your beauty; that you speak silently to me, revealed in your wisdom:

Oh, how could I fail to divine everything modest in your soul! Before the sun you came to me, the loneliest.

We have been friends from the beginning: we share grief and horror and ground; we share even the sun.

We do not speak to one another because we know too much: we keep silence together, smiling our knowledge to one another.

Are you not the light to my fire? Have you not the sister soul to my insight?

Together we learned everything; together we learned to rise above ourselves toward ourselves and smile cloudlessly—

To smile cloudlessly downward from bright eyes and miles of distance, while beneath us constraint and purpose and guilt steam like rain.

And when I wandered alone, *for whom* did my soul hunger on nights and lost paths? When I climbed mountains, whom did I ever seek upon them if not you?

And all my wandering and mountain climbing were only necessity and the helpless one's expedient: my whole will wants only to *fly*, to fly into *you*!

And whom did I hate more than passing clouds and everything that stains you?
I hated even my own hatred, because it stained you!

I resent the passing clouds, those stealthy predatory cats: they take from you
and me what we share—the immense, unbounded saying of Yes and Amen.

We resent these mediators and mixers, the passing clouds, these half-and-halves
who have learned neither to bless nor to curse to the core.

I would sooner sit in a barrel beneath a closed sky, sooner sit without a sky in
the abyss, than see you, light-filled sky, stained by passing clouds!

And often I longed to pin them fast with jagged golden wires of lightning, so
that like thunder I might beat the drum upon their kettle bellies—

An angry drummer, because they rob me of your Yes and Amen, sky above me,
pure one! Bright one! Abyss of light! Because they rob you of *my* Yes and
Amen.

For I would sooner have noise and thunder and storm curses than this deliber-
ate, doubtful feline calm; and among human beings too I hate above all the
soft-steppers and half-and-halves and doubting, hesitant passing clouds.

And “Whoever cannot bless should *learn* to curse!” This bright teaching fell to
me from a bright sky; this star stands in my sky even on black nights.

But I am a blesser and a Yes-sayer whenever you surround me, pure one! Bright
one! Abyss of light! Then into every abyss I carry my blessing Yes.

I have become a blesser and a Yes-sayer: for that I struggled long and was a
wrestler, so that one day my hands might be free to bless.

But this is my blessing: to stand above each thing as its own sky, its rounded
roof, its azure bell and eternal certainty; blessed is whoever blesses thus!

For all things are baptized at eternity’s spring and beyond good and evil; but
good and evil themselves are only intervening shadows, damp sorrows, and
passing clouds.

Truly, it is blessing and not blasphemy when I teach: “Above all things stands
the sky Chance, the sky Innocence, the sky Accident, the sky High Spirits.”

“By accident”—that is the world’s oldest nobility, which I restored to all things,
redeeming them from bondage to purpose.

This freedom and heavenly serenity I set like an azure bell above all things when I taught that no “eternal will” wills above them or through them.

This high-spiritedness and folly I put in that will’s place when I taught: “In everything, one thing is impossible—rationality!”

A *little* reason, certainly, a seed of wisdom scattered from star to star: this heaven is mixed into all things; for folly’s sake wisdom is mixed into all things!

A little wisdom is indeed possible; but I found this blessed certainty in all things: they would sooner *dance* upon the feet of chance.

Oh, sky above me, pure one! High one! This is your purity to me now: there is no eternal spider of reason and no spiderwebs—

You are a dance floor for divine accidents, a gods’ table for divine dice and dice players!—

But you blush? Did I speak the unspeakable? Did I blaspheme when I wanted to bless you?

Or is it the modesty of two together that made you blush? Do you bid me go and be silent because now—the *day* comes?

The world is deep, deeper than day has ever thought. Not everything may have words before day. But day comes: so let us part!

Oh, sky above me, modest one! Glowing one! Oh, my happiness before sunrise! Day comes: so let us part!—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Diminishing Virtue

- ¹ When Zarathustra returned to the mainland, he did not go straight toward his mountain and cave, but followed many paths and questions, investigating this and that, so that he said of himself in jest, “Look, a river flowing back to its source in many windings!” For he wanted to discover what had meanwhile happened to *humanity*: whether it had grown greater or smaller. Once he saw a row of new houses; he wondered and said:

“What do these houses mean? Truly, no great soul set them here as its image!

“Did a foolish child take them from its toy box? If only another child would put them back!

“And these rooms and chambers: can *men* go in and out of them? They seem made for silken dolls, or for little greedy cats who let themselves be nibbled too.”

And Zarathustra stood still and reflected. At last he said sadly, “*Everything* has grown smaller! Everywhere I see lower doorways: someone of *my* kind may still pass through, but must stoop!

“Oh, when shall I return to my homeland, where I no longer have to stoop—no longer stoop *before the small!*” And Zarathustra sighed and gazed into the distance.—

On that same day he gave his discourse on the diminishing virtue.

² “I pass through these people and keep my eyes open: they do not forgive me for not envying their virtues.

“They snap at me because I tell them small virtues are needed for small people—and because I find it hard to accept that small people are needed!

“I am still like the cock in a strange farmyard, at whom even the hens peck; but I bear these hens no ill will for that.

“I am courteous to them as to every little annoyance: to bristle against little things seems to me a wisdom for hedgehogs.

“They all speak of me when they sit around the fire at evening—they speak of me, but no one thinks of me!

“This is the new stillness I learned: their noise around me spreads a cloak over my thoughts.

“They clamor among themselves, ‘What does this gloomy cloud want with us? Let us see that it brings us no plague!’ And lately a woman snatched back her child as it tried to approach me: ‘Take the children away!’ she cried. ‘Such eyes scorch children’s souls.’

“They cough when I speak: they think coughing an objection to strong winds—they divine nothing of my happiness’s roaring!

“‘We have no time for Zarathustra yet,’ they object. But what does a time matter that ‘has no time’ for Zarathustra?

“And even when they praise me, how could I fall asleep upon *their* praise? Their praise is a belt of thorns: it scratches me even when I take it off.

“And this too I learned among them: the praiser acts as though repaying, but truly wants to receive more gifts!

“Ask my foot whether it likes their tunes of praise and enticement! Truly, to such beat and ticktock it wishes neither to dance nor stand still.

“They would entice and praise me toward a small virtue; they would persuade my foot to the ticktock of a small happiness.

“I pass through these people and keep my eyes open: they have grown *smaller* and grow smaller still—*their teaching of happiness and virtue causes this*.

“For even in virtue they are modest, because they want comfort. But only modest virtue agrees with comfort.

“They too learn, in their fashion, to stride and stride forward: I call it their *limping*. Thus they become a stumbling block to everyone in haste.

“And many go forward looking backward, with necks stiff: I gladly run into them.

“Feet and eyes should not lie, nor give one another the lie. But there is much lying among small people.

“Some of them will, but most are merely willed. Some are genuine, but most are bad actors.

“There are unwitting actors among them and unwilling actors; the genuine are always rare, especially genuine actors.

“There is little manhood here: that is why their women grow mannish. For only someone man enough will *redeem woman herself* in woman.

“And this hypocrisy I found worst among them: even those who command feign the virtues of those who serve.

“‘I serve, you serve, we serve’: thus even the rulers’ hypocrisy prays here—and woe if the first lord is *only* the first servant!

“Ah, my eye’s curiosity strayed even into their hypocrisies; and I divined well all their fly-happiness and buzzing about sunny windowpanes.

“So much goodness, so much weakness I see. So much justice and pity, so much weakness.

“They are round and fair and kind toward one another as grains of sand are round and fair and kind toward grains of sand.

“To embrace a little happiness modestly—that they call ‘submission’! And already they modestly squint toward another little happiness.

“At bottom they simply want one thing most: that no one hurt them. So they anticipate everyone and do them good.

“But this is *cowardice*, even though it is called ‘virtue.’—

“And when these small people speak roughly, *I* hear only their hoarseness: every draft makes them hoarse.

“They are clever; their virtues have clever fingers. But they lack fists; their fingers do not know how to hide behind fists.

“To them virtue is whatever makes modest and tame: with it they made the wolf a dog and humanity itself humanity’s best domestic animal.

“‘We set our chair in the *middle*,’ their smirk tells me, ‘equally far from dying gladiators and contented swine.’

“But this is *mediocrity*, even though it is called moderation.—

³ “I pass through these people and drop many a word: but they know neither how to take nor to retain.

“They wonder that I did not come to slander pleasures and vices; and truly, I did not come to warn against pickpockets either!

“They wonder that I am unwilling to make their cleverness still wittier and sharper: as though they did not already have enough clever fellows whose voices scratch me like slate pencils!

“And when I cry, ‘A curse upon all the cowardly devils within you, who would gladly whine and fold their hands and worship,’ they cry, ‘Zarathustra is godless!’

“Especially their teachers of submission cry it—but precisely into their ears I love to shout: Yes! *I am* Zarathustra the godless!

“These teachers of submission! Like lice they crawl everywhere things are small and sick and scabby; only my disgust keeps me from cracking them.

“Well! This is my sermon for *their* ears: I am Zarathustra the godless, who says, ‘Who is more godless than I, that I may rejoice in his teaching?’

“I am Zarathustra the godless: where do I find my equals? All who give themselves their own will and cast off all submission are my equals.

“I am Zarathustra the godless: I cook every accident in *my* pot. Only when it is cooked through do I welcome it as *my* food.

“And truly, many an accident came imperiously to me: but my *will* spoke more imperiously still—and there it lay on its knees, begging—

“Begging to find shelter and a heart with me, coaxing flatteringly, ‘Look, Zarathustra, how friend comes to friend!’—

“But why speak where no one has *my* ears? So I will cry it out to every wind:

“You grow smaller and smaller, small people! You crumble away, comfortable ones! You will yet perish—

“Through your many little virtues, your many little omissions, your many little submissions!

“Too sparing, too yielding: such is your soil! But for a tree to grow *great*, it wants to strike hard roots around hard rocks!

“Even what you leave undone weaves the fabric of all human future; even your nothing is a spiderweb and a spider living on the future’s blood.

“And when you take, it is like stealing, you small virtuous ones; but even among rogues *honor* says, ‘One should steal only where one cannot rob.’

“‘It will all come of itself’: that too is a teaching of submission. But I tell you, comfortable ones: it *takes for itself*, and will take ever more from you!

“Ah, if only you would cast off all *half*-willing and become resolute in idleness as in action!

“Ah, if only you understood my word: ‘Do whatever you will—but first become those who *can will*!’

“‘Love your neighbor as yourselves—but first become those who *love themselves*—

“‘Who love with great love, with great contempt!’ Thus speaks Zarathustra the godless.—

“But why speak where no one has *my* ears? Here I am still an hour too early.

“Among these people I am my own forerunner, my own cockcrow through dark streets.

“But *their* hour comes! And mine comes too! Hour by hour they grow smaller, poorer, more barren—poor growth! Poor soil!

“And *soon* they shall stand before me like dry grass and steppe, truly weary of themselves, thirsting for *fire* more than water!

“Oh, blessed hour of lightning! Oh, secret before noon! One day I will make running fires of them and heralds with tongues of flame—

“One day with tongues of flame they shall proclaim: He comes, he is near, *the great noon!*”

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Mount of Olives

Winter, a harsh guest, sits at home with me; my hands are blue from his friendly handshake.

I honor this harsh guest, but gladly leave him sitting alone. Gladly I run away from him; and if one runs *well*, one escapes him!

With warm feet and warm thoughts I run where the wind stands still—to the sunny corner of my Mount of Olives.

There I laugh at my stern guest, and am fond of him for catching the flies at home and stilling much small noise.

For he will not tolerate a gnat singing, much less two; he even makes the street so lonely that moonlight grows frightened there at night.

He is a hard guest—but I honor him, and do not pray like the delicate ones to the potbellied fire idol.

Better a little chattering of teeth than worship of idols! Such is my nature. And especially I resent all lustful, steaming, stifling fire idols.

Those I love, I love better in winter than summer; I mock my enemies better and more heartily now that winter sits in my house.

Heartily indeed, even when I *creep* into bed: there my hidden happiness still laughs and plays; my lying dream still laughs.

I—a creeper? Never in life have I crawled before the powerful; if ever I lied, I lied out of love. That is why I am joyful even in my winter bed.

A poor bed warms me more than a rich one, for I am jealous of my poverty. In winter it is most faithful to me.

I begin each day with a malicious act: I mock winter with a cold bath; at that my stern housemate growls.

I also like tickling him with a little wax candle, so that at last he releases the sky from ash-gray twilight.

For I am especially malicious in the morning, in the early hour when the bucket rattles at the well and horses neigh warmly through gray streets—

Impatiently I wait for the bright sky to rise at last, the snow-bearded winter sky, the old man and white head—

The winter sky, the silent one, which often keeps even its sun silent!

Did I learn the long bright silence from him? Or did he learn it from me? Or did each of us invent it ourselves?

The origin of all good things is a thousandfold; all good, high-spirited things spring joyfully into existence: why should they always do so only once?

A good, high-spirited thing too is long silence, and looking like the winter sky from a bright, round-eyed face—

Keeping one's sun silent like him, and one's unbending sun-will: truly, this art and winter playfulness I learned *well*!

My dearest malice and art is that my silence learned not to betray itself through silence.

Rattling words and dice, I outwit the solemn watchers: my will and purpose shall slip away from all these stern observers.

So that no one looks down into my depths and final will, I invented long bright silence for myself.

I found many a clever person who veiled his face and muddied his water so that no one could see through him and down.

But precisely to him came the cleverer mistrusters and nutcrackers: precisely from him they fished out his most hidden fish!

Instead, the bright, brave, transparent ones are the cleverest keepers of silence to me: their depths are so *deep* that even the clearest water does not betray them.—

You snow-bearded, silent winter sky, round-eyed white head above me! Oh, heavenly image of my soul and its high spirits!

And *must* I not hide myself like someone who has swallowed gold, lest they slit open my soul?

Must I not wear stilts, so that they *overlook* my long legs, all these envious ones and lovers of suffering around me?

These smoky, room-warm, worn-out, greenish, embittered souls—how *could* their envy bear my happiness!

So I show them only the ice and winter upon my summits—and *not* that my mountain still winds every belt of sunshine around itself!

They hear only my winter storms whistling—and *not* that I also sail over warm seas like longing, heavy, hot south winds.

They still pity my mishaps and accidents—but *my* word is: ‘Let chance come to me: it is innocent as a little child!’

How *could* they bear my happiness if I did not wrap mishaps and winter troubles and polar-bear caps and snowy-sky coverings around it!

If I did not myself take pity on their *pity*, the pity of these envious ones and lovers of suffering!

If I did not myself sigh and shiver before them and patiently *let* them wrap me in their pity!

This is my soul’s wise playfulness and goodwill: it *does not hide* its winter and frosty storms; it does not hide its chilblains either.

One person’s solitude is the sick person’s flight; another’s solitude is flight from the sick.

Let all these poor, squinting rogues around me *bear* me shiver and sigh with winter cold! With such sighing and chattering I still escape their heated rooms.

Let them pity me and sigh with me over my chilblains: ‘He will yet *freeze* to death upon the ice of knowledge!’ they lament.

Meanwhile, with warm feet I run back and forth upon my Mount of Olives: in its sunny corner I sing and mock all pity.—

Thus sang Zarathustra.

On Passing By

Thus, slowly walking through many peoples and many kinds of cities, Zarathustra returned by roundabout ways toward his mountain and cave. And unexpectedly he came to the gate of the *great city*: here a foaming fool sprang toward him with outstretched hands and blocked his way. This was the fool the people called “Zarathustra’s ape”: for he had picked up something of his phrasing and cadence, and gladly borrowed from the treasure of his wisdom as well. The fool spoke to Zarathustra:

“Zarathustra, here is the great city: here you have nothing to seek and everything to lose.

“Why would you wade through this mud? Have pity on your foot! Spit instead upon the city gate and turn back!

“Here is hell for hermits’ thoughts: here great thoughts are boiled alive and cooked small.

“Here all great feelings rot: here only dry little feelings may rattle!

“Do you not already smell spirit’s slaughterhouses and cookshops? Does this city not steam with the vapor of slaughtered spirit?

“Do you not see souls hanging like limp, dirty rags? And they make newspapers from these rags!

“Do you not hear how spirit here has become a play on words? It vomits repulsive verbal dishwater! And they make newspapers from this verbal dishwater.

“They chase one another and do not know where! They inflame one another and do not know why! They jingle their tin and ring their gold.

“They are cold and seek warmth in distilled spirits; they are heated and seek coolness in frozen spirits; they are all sick and addicted to public opinions.

“All pleasures and vices are at home here; but there are virtuous people here too, much capable, employed virtue—

“Much capable virtue with writing fingers and tough flesh for sitting and waiting, blessed with little stars upon the breast and padded, rump-less daughters.

“There is much piety here too, much faithful spittle-licking and flattery-baking before the God of Hosts.

“From ‘above’ drip the star and gracious spittle; every starless breast longs upward.

“The moon has its court, and the court its mooncalves: but the begging people and all capable begging virtue pray to everything that comes from court.

“‘I serve, you serve, we serve’: thus all capable virtue prays upward to the prince, so that the earned star may at last fasten to its narrow breast!

“But the moon still revolves around everything earthly: so the prince too revolves around the most earthly thing of all—the merchants’ gold.

“The God of Hosts is no God of gold bars; the prince proposes, but the merchant—disposes!

“By everything bright and strong and good in you, Zarathustra! Spit upon this city of merchants and turn back!

“Here all blood flows rotten and lukewarm and frothy through every vein: spit upon the great city, the great refuse heap where all scum foams together!

“Spit upon the city of flattened souls and narrow breasts, pointed eyes and sticky fingers—

“Upon the city of intruders, shameless ones, scribblers and shouters, overheated climbers—

“Where everything tainted, disreputable, lustful, gloomy, overripe, ulcerous, conspiratorial festers together—

“Spit upon the great city and turn back!” —

But here Zarathustra interrupted the foaming fool and covered his mouth.

“Stop at last!” Zarathustra cried. “Your speech and manner have long disgusted me!

“Why did you live beside the swamp so long that you had to become a frog and toad yourself?

“Does rotten, frothy swamp blood not flow through your own veins now, that you learned to croak and slander like this?

“Why did you not go into the forest? Or plow the earth? Is the sea not full of green islands?

“I despise your despising; and if you warned me, why did you not warn yourself?

“From love alone let my contempt and my warning bird take flight—not from the swamp!—

"They call you my ape, foaming fool: but I call you my grunting pig—with your grunting you spoil even my *praise* of folly.

"What first set you grunting? That no one *flattered* you enough: that is why you sat beside this rubbish, to have reason to grunt much—

"To have reason for much *revenge*! Revenge, vain fool, is all your foaming: I have divined you well!

"But your foolish word harms *me*, even where you are right! And even if Zarathustra's word *were* right a hundred times over, *you* would always *do* wrong with my word!"

Thus spoke Zarathustra; he looked upon the great city, sighed, and was silent a long time. At last he spoke:

"I am disgusted with this great city too, not only this fool. Neither here nor there is anything to make better or worse.

"Woe to this great city! If only I already saw the pillar of fire in which it will burn!

"For such pillars of fire must precede the great noon. But this has its time and its own fate.—

"This teaching, however, I give you in farewell, fool: where one can no longer love, one should—*pass by!*"—

Thus spoke Zarathustra, and passed by the fool and the great city.

On the Apostates

- ¹ "Ah, does everything already lie withered and gray that so recently stood green and bright upon this meadow? And how much honey of hope I carried from here into my hives!

"These young hearts have all grown old already—

"Not even old! Only tired, common, comfortable—

"They call it, 'We have become pious again.'

"Only lately I saw them running out early upon brave feet: but their feet of knowledge grew weary, and now they slander even their morning courage!

“Truly, many once lifted their legs like dancers; the laughter in my wisdom beckoned them—then they reconsidered. Just now I saw one bent over, crawling toward the cross.

“Once they fluttered around light and freedom like gnats and young poets. A little older, a little colder: already they are darkeners and whisperers and hearth-sitters.

“Did their hearts fail because solitude swallowed me like a whale? Did their ears perhaps listen long and yearningly *in vain* for me, my trumpets and herald cries?

“Ah! There are always only a few whose hearts have long courage and high spirits; in them spirit too remains patient. But the rest are *cowardly*.

“The rest: that is always the great majority, the everyday, the surplus, the all-too-many—all these are cowardly!—

“Whoever is of my kind will meet experiences of my kind along the way: his first companions must be corpses and jesters.

“But his second companions will call themselves his *believers*: a living swarm, much love, much folly, much beardless reverence.

“Whoever is of my kind among human beings must not bind his heart to these believers; whoever knows humanity’s fleeting, cowardly nature must not believe in these springs and bright meadows!

“If they *could* do otherwise, they would *will* otherwise. Half-and-halves spoil everything whole. That leaves wither—what is there to lament?

“Let them go and fall, Zarathustra, and do not lament! Better blow among them with rustling winds—

“Blow among these leaves, Zarathustra, so that everything *withered* runs away from you faster still!—

- ² “‘We have become pious again,’ these apostates confess; and some are still too cowardly even to confess it.

“I look them in the eye; I tell them to their faces and to their blushing cheeks: you are people who *pray* again!

“But praying is a disgrace! Not for everyone, but for you and me and whoever has a conscience in the head as well. For *you* praying is a disgrace!

“You know it well: your cowardly devil within, who would like to fold hands and lay them in the lap and be more comfortable—this cowardly devil persuades you, ‘There *is* a God!’

“But then you belong to the light-shunning kind, whom light never leaves in peace: now you must daily bury your head deeper in night and mist!

“And truly, you chose the hour well: for the night birds are flying out again. The hour has come for all light-shunning folk, their evening hour of rest, when they do not ‘rest.’

“I hear and smell it: their hour has come for hunting and procession—not a wild hunt, certainly, but a tame, lame, sniffing hunt of soft-steppers and soft-prayers—

“A hunt for soulful sneaks: all the heart’s mousetraps are set again! Wherever I lift a curtain, a little moth tumbles out.

“Was it crouching there with another little moth? Everywhere I smell small hidden congregations; wherever there are little chambers, there are new praying brothers and the fumes of praying brothers.

“They sit together through long evenings and say, ‘Let us become like little children again and say “dear God”!’—mouth and stomach spoiled by pious confectioners.

“Or through long evenings they watch a cunning, lurking cross-marked spider preaching cleverness even to spiders, teaching, ‘It is good spinning beneath crosses!’

“Or by day they sit with fishing rods beside swamps and think themselves *deep* for it; but whoever fishes where there are no fish is not even superficial to me!

“Or piously and gladly they learn to play the harp from a songwriter who would gladly harp his way into young women’s hearts: for he grew weary of old women and their praises.

“Or they learn to shudder from a learned half-madman waiting in dark rooms for spirits to come—while spirit runs away altogether!

“Or they listen to an old, much-traveled humming, growling piper who learned melancholy tones from melancholy winds: now he whistles with the wind and preaches sadness in sad tones.

“And some have even become night watchmen: they now know how to blow horns and roam at night and wake old things long asleep.

“Last night beside the garden wall I heard five sayings about old things: they came from such old, sad, dried-up night watchmen.

“For a father, he does not care enough about his children: human fathers do it better!’—

“He is too old! He no longer cares about his children at all,’ the other night watchman answered.

“Does he *have* children? No one can prove it unless he proves it himself. I have long wished he would prove it thoroughly for once.’

“Prove it? As though *he* had ever proved anything! Proving comes hard to him; he sets great store by being *believed*.’

“Yes! Yes! Faith makes him blessed, faith in him. That is how old people are! It is the same with us!’—

“Thus the two old night watchmen and light-shunners spoke together, then blew sadly into their horns: so it happened last night beside the garden wall.

“But my heart twisted with laughter, wanted to break, did not know where to go—and sank into my diaphragm.

“Truly, this will yet be my death: suffocating with laughter when I see drunken donkeys and hear night watchmen doubt God like this.

“Is it not *long* over, even for such doubts? Who may wake such old, sleeping, light-shunning things?

“The old gods ended long ago—and truly, they had a good, joyful gods’ end!

“They did not ‘twilight’ themselves to death—that is a lie! Rather, once they *laughed* themselves to death!

“That happened when the most godless word came from a God himself: ‘There is one God! You shall have no other God beside me!’—

“An old grim-bearded God, a jealous one, forgot himself like that—

“And all the gods laughed then and rocked upon their chairs and cried, ‘Is this not precisely divinity: that there are gods, but no God?’

“Whoever has ears, let them hear.”—

Thus Zarathustra spoke in the town he loved, called the Motley Cow. From here he had only two more days’ journey to reach his cave and his animals; but his soul rejoiced continually at the nearness of his homecoming.—

The Homecoming

Oh, solitude! My *homeland*, solitude! Too long I lived wild in a wild foreign land not to return to you in tears!

Now threaten me with your finger as mothers threaten; smile at me as mothers smile; say, “And who was it who once stormed away from me like a whirlwind?

—

“Who cried as he left: I sat too long with solitude and forgot how to be silent! Have you learned *that* now?

“Zarathustra, I know everything: even that among the many you were *more forsaken*, solitary one, than ever with me!

“Forsakenness is one thing, solitude another: *that* you have now learned! And that among human beings you will always be wild and foreign—

“Wild and foreign even when they love you: for first of all they want to be *spared*!

“But here you are at home with yourself; here you can speak everything out and pour out every reason; here nothing is ashamed of hidden, hardened feelings.

“Here all things come caressingly to your speech and flatter you: they want to ride upon your back. Here you ride upon every image to every truth.

“Here you may speak uprightly and frankly to all things: truly, it sounds like praise to their ears when someone speaks straight with everything!

“But being forsaken is another thing. For do you remember, Zarathustra? When your bird cried above you as you stood in the forest, unsure where to go, unknowing, beside a corpse—

“When you said, ‘May my animals guide me! I found life more dangerous among human beings than among animals’—that was forsakenness!

“And do you remember, Zarathustra? When you sat upon your island, a spring of wine among empty buckets, giving and giving away, pouring gifts and drink among the thirsty—

“Until at last you sat thirsty and alone among the drunken, lamenting at night, ‘Is receiving not more blessed than giving? And stealing more blessed still than receiving?’—*that* was forsakenness!

“And do you remember, Zarathustra? When your stillest hour came and drove you away from yourself, whispering wickedly, ‘Speak and break!’—

“When it made all your waiting and silence painful and discouraged your humble courage: *that* was forsakenness!”—

Oh, solitude! My homeland, solitude! How blessedly and tenderly your voice speaks to me!

We do not question or complain to one another; we walk openly together through open doors.

For with you everything is open and bright; even the hours run upon lighter feet here. In darkness, time weighs more heavily than in light.

Here the words and word-shrines of all being spring open for me: here all being wants to become word; all becoming wants to learn speech from me.

But down there all speech is in vain! There forgetting and passing by are the finest wisdom: *that* I have now learned!

Whoever wanted to grasp everything among human beings would have to touch everything. But my hands are too clean for that.

I do not even want to breathe their breath; ah, that I lived so long amid their noise and foul breath!

Oh, blessed stillness around me! Oh, pure scents around me! Oh, how this stillness draws pure breath from a deep chest! Oh, how it listens, this blessed stillness!

But down there everything speaks and everything goes unheard. One may ring wisdom in with bells: the merchants in the marketplace will outjingle it with pennies!

Everything among them speaks; no one knows how to understand anymore. Everything falls into water; nothing falls into deep wells anymore.

Everything among them speaks; nothing succeeds and reaches completion. Everything cackles, but who still wants to sit quietly upon the nest and hatch eggs?

Everything among them speaks; everything is talked to pieces. And what yesterday was too hard even for time and its tooth hangs today scraped and gnawed from the mouths of today's people.

Everything among them speaks; everything is betrayed. What once was called secret and the privacy of deep souls belongs today to street trumpeters and other butterflies.

Oh, human existence, you strange thing! You noise in dark streets! Now you lie behind me again: my greatest danger lies behind me!

My greatest danger always lay in sparing and pitying; and all human existence wants to be spared and pitied.

With truths held back, with a fool's hand and an infatuated heart, rich in little lies of pity: thus I always lived among human beings.

Disguised I sat among them, ready to misrecognize *myself* so that I could bear *them*, gladly persuading myself, "You fool, you do not know humanity!"

One unlearns humanity when living among human beings: there is too much foreground in everyone—what use *there* are far-seeing, far-longing eyes!

And when they misrecognized me, I fool spared them more than myself: accustomed to hardness toward myself, often avenging myself upon myself for this sparing.

Pierced by poisonous flies and hollowed like stone by many drops of malice, I sat among them and still told myself, "Everything small is innocent of its smallness!"

Especially those who call themselves "the good" I found the most poisonous flies: they sting in all innocence, lie in all innocence; how *could* they be just toward me!

Whoever lives among the good is taught to lie by pity. Pity makes stifling air for every free soul. For the stupidity of the good is unfathomable.

To hide myself and my riches—*that* I learned down there: for I found everyone poor in spirit. This was my pity's lie: with everyone I knew—

I saw and smelled in everyone what was spirit *enough*, and what was already *too much* spirit!

Their stiff sages I called wise, not stiff: thus I learned to swallow words. Their gravediggers I called researchers and investigators: thus I learned to exchange words.

Gravediggers dig up diseases for themselves. Foul vapors rest beneath old rubble. One should not stir up the mire. One should live upon mountains.

With blessed nostrils I breathe mountain freedom again! At last my nose is delivered from the smell of all human existence!

Tickled by sharp airs as by foaming wines, my soul *sneezes*—sneezes and cries joyfully to itself: Health!

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Three Evils

- ¹ In a dream, my last morning dream, I stood today upon a headland beyond the world, holding scales and *weighing* the world.

Oh, dawn came too early: the jealous one glowed me awake! She is always jealous of the fires of my morning dreams.

Measurable for one with time, weighable for a good weigher, reachable by strong wings, divivable for divine nutcrackers: thus my dream found the world —

My dream, a bold sailor, half ship and half whirlwind, silent as butterflies, impatient as noble falcons: what patience and leisure it had today for weighing the world!

Did my wisdom secretly encourage it, my laughing, waking daylight wisdom that mocks all “infinite worlds”? For she says, “Where force is, *number* becomes mistress too: it has more force.”

How surely my dream looked upon this finite world, neither curious nor greedy for old things, neither fearing nor begging—

As though a full apple offered itself to my hand, a ripe golden apple with cool, soft, velvety skin: thus the world offered itself to me—

As though a tree beckoned, broad-branched and strong-willed, bent into a backrest and even a footstool for the weary traveler: thus the world stood upon my headland—

As though delicate hands carried a shrine toward me, a shrine open to the delight of modest, revering eyes: thus the world offered itself to me today—

Not riddle enough to frighten human love away, not solution enough to lull human wisdom to sleep: a humanly good thing was the world to me today, this world so evilly spoken of!

How grateful I am to my morning dream that I weighed the world so early today! This dream and comforter of hearts came to me as a humanly good thing!

And to do likewise by day and learn its best from it, I will now place the three most evil things upon the scales and weigh them humanly well.—

Whoever taught blessing also taught cursing: what are the world's three most thoroughly cursed things? These I will place upon the scales.

Sensual pleasure, lust for domination, selfishness: until now these three have been most thoroughly cursed, most evilly slandered and lied about—these three I will weigh humanly well.

Come! Here is my headland, and there the sea: *it* rolls toward me, shaggy and flattering, the faithful old hundred-headed dog-monster I love.

Come! Here above the rolling sea I will hold the scales; and I choose a witness to watch—you, solitary tree, strong-scented and broadly arched, whom I love!

—

Upon what bridge does now cross toward one day? By what constraint does the high compel itself toward the low? And what commands even the highest—to grow upward?—

Now the scales stand level and still: three heavy questions I cast into them; three heavy answers the other pan carries.

- ² Sensual pleasure: the thorn and stake of all hair-shirted despisers of the body, cursed as “world” by all believers in other worlds: for it mocks and fools all teachers of confusion and error.

Sensual pleasure: the slow fire upon which the rabble burns; the ready furnace of heat and seething for all worm-eaten wood and stinking rags.

Sensual pleasure: innocent and free for free hearts, the earth's garden happiness, all the future's overflowing gratitude toward now.

Sensual pleasure: a cloying poison only for the withered, but for the lion-willed the great strengthening of the heart, the reverently preserved wine of wines.

Sensual pleasure: the great happiness in an image of higher happiness and highest hope. For marriage is promised to much, and more than marriage—

To many things more foreign to one another than man and woman—and who has fully understood *how foreign* man and woman are to one another!

Sensual pleasure—but I want fences around my thoughts and words as well, lest swine and enthusiasts break into my gardens!—

Lust for domination: the glowing scourge of the hardest-hearted; the dreadful torment reserved for the cruelest themselves; the dark flame of living pyres.

Lust for domination: the malicious bridle set upon the vainest peoples; the mocker of all uncertain virtue, riding every horse and every pride.

Lust for domination: the earthquake that breaks and breaks open everything rotten and hollow; the rolling, rumbling, punishing shatterer of whitewashed tombs; the flashing question mark beside premature answers.

Lust for domination: before whose gaze the human being creeps and crouches and toils in bondage, becoming lower than serpent and swine, until at last great contempt cries out—

Lust for domination: the terrible teacher of great contempt, preaching into the faces of cities and kingdoms, “Away with you!” until they themselves cry, “Away with *me!*”

Lust for domination: which also climbs alluringly toward the pure and solitary and upward to self-sufficient heights, glowing like a love that enticingly paints purple blessedness upon earthly skies.

Lust for domination: yet who would call it a *craving* when the high longs downward for power! Truly, there is nothing sick or addicted in such longing and descent!

That the solitary height not remain eternally solitary and self-satisfied; that the mountain come to the valley and the winds of the heights to the lowlands— Oh, who could find the right baptismal name and name of virtue for such longing! “Giving virtue”—thus Zarathustra once named the unnameable.

And then it also happened—and truly, for the first time!—that his word called *selfishness* blessed, the whole, healthy selfishness springing from a mighty soul —

From a mighty soul to which belongs the high body, beautiful, victorious, refreshing, around which each thing becomes a mirror—

The supple, persuasive body, the dancer, whose image and epitome is the self-delighting soul. The self-delight of such bodies and souls calls itself “virtue.”

With its words of good and bad, such self-delight shields itself as with sacred groves; with its happiness’s names it banishes everything contemptible.

It banishes everything cowardly; it says, bad—*that means* cowardly! Contemptible to it is the ever-worried, sighing, lamenting one, and whoever gathers even the smallest advantages.

It also despises all suffering-blessed wisdom: for truly, there is wisdom that blooms in darkness, a nightshade wisdom always sighing, “Everything is vanity!”

It thinks little of timid mistrust and everyone who wants oaths instead of looks and hands; likewise of all excessively mistrustful wisdom, for that is the nature of cowardly souls.

Still less does it value the quickly obliging, the doglike one who immediately lies upon his back, the humble one; there is also wisdom that is humble and doglike and pious and quickly obliging.

It hates and loathes whoever never wants to defend themselves, whoever swallows poisonous spittle and evil glances, the all-too-patient, all-enduring, all-contented: for that is the servile nature.

Whether someone is servile before gods and divine kicks, or before human beings and dull human opinions, this blessed selfishness spits upon *every* servile nature!

Bad: that is its name for everything bent and stingily servile, unfree blinking eyes, oppressed hearts, and that false yielding nature that kisses with broad, cowardly lips.

And counterfeit wisdom: that is its name for all the witticisms of servants and old men and the weary, especially all that evil, absurd, over-clever priestly folly!

But the counterfeit wise, all priests, the world-weary, and those whose souls are womanish or servile—oh, how their game has always played selfishness false!

And precisely *that*, playing selfishness false, was supposed to be virtue and be called virtue! And “selfless” is how all these world-weary cowards and cross-marked spiders wanted themselves—with good reason!

But for them all comes day, transformation, the sword of judgment, *the great noon*: then much shall be revealed!

And whoever declares the I whole and holy and selfishness blessed, truly, speaks what he knows as a prophet: “*Look, he comes, he is near, the great noon!*”

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On the Spirit of Gravity

¹ My mouth belongs to the people: I speak too roughly and heartily for silken hares. Stranger still my word sounds to all ink-fish and pen-foxes.

My hand is a fool’s hand: woe to every table and wall and whatever still has room for fool’s ornament, fool’s scribbling!

My foot is a horse’s hoof; with it I tramp and trot over stick and stone, criss-crossing the fields, devilish with delight in every swift run.

My stomach is perhaps an eagle’s stomach? For it loves lamb best of all. But certainly it is a bird’s stomach.

Fed upon innocent things and little food, ready and impatient to fly, to fly away—that is my nature now: how could there not be something birdlike in it!

And especially my enmity toward the spirit of gravity is birdlike: truly, mortal enmity, arch-enmity, primal enmity! Oh, where has my enmity not already flown and strayed!

I could sing a song of that—and *will* sing it, even though I am alone in an empty house and must sing to my own ears.

There are other singers, certainly, whose throats grow supple only in a full house, whose hands grow eloquent, eyes expressive, hearts awake: I am not like them.—

- 2 Whoever one day teaches humanity to fly will have moved every boundary stone; all the boundary stones themselves will fly into the air for him; he will baptize earth anew as “the light one.”

The ostrich runs faster than the fastest horse, yet even it thrusts its head heavily into heavy earth: so does the human being who cannot yet fly.

Earth and life seem heavy to that person: the spirit of gravity *wills* it so! But whoever wants to become light and a bird must love themselves—so I teach.

Not, certainly, with the love of the sick and addicted: for in them even self-love stinks!

One must learn to love oneself—so I teach—with a whole, healthy love, so that one can endure being with oneself and not roam about.

Such roaming calls itself “love of the neighbor”: with this word people have lied and dissembled most thoroughly until now, especially those who weighed heavily upon everyone.

And truly, *learning* to love oneself is no commandment for today and tomorrow. Rather, of all arts, this is the subtlest, cleverest, last, and most patient.

For everything one’s own is well hidden from its owner; of all treasure pits, one’s own is dug out last—so the spirit of gravity contrives.

Almost in the cradle we are given heavy words and values: “good” and “evil” are the names of this dowry. For their sake we are forgiven for living.

And that is why they let little children come to them: to prevent them in good time from loving themselves—so the spirit of gravity contrives.

And we faithfully haul what we are given, upon hard shoulders and over rough mountains! And if we sweat, they tell us, “Yes, life is hard to bear!”

But only humanity is hard for itself to bear! That comes from dragging too much foreign matter upon its shoulders. Like the camel, it kneels and lets itself be well laden.

Especially the strong, enduring person in whom reverence dwells loads too many *foreign* heavy words and values upon himself—and now life seems a desert!

And truly, much that is *one's own* is hard to bear too! Much within humanity resembles the oyster: disgusting, slippery, hard to grasp—

So that a noble shell with noble ornament must plead for it. But this art too must be learned: to *have* a shell, beautiful appearance, and clever blindness!

Again, much in humanity deceives because some shells are poor and sad and too much shell. Much hidden goodness and strength is never divined; the choicest morsels find no tasters!

Women know this, the choicest ones: a little fatter, a little thinner—oh, how much fate lies in so little!

Humanity is hard to discover, and hardest for itself; often spirit lies about the soul. So the spirit of gravity contrives.

But whoever says, “This is *my* good and evil,” has discovered themselves: thus they have silenced the mole and dwarf who says, “Good for everyone, evil for everyone.”

Truly, I do not like those either who call everything good and this world the very best. These I call the all-contented.

Contentment with everything, a taste for everything, is not the finest taste! I honor the stubborn, choosy tongues and stomachs that learned to say “I” and “Yes” and “No.”

But to chew and digest everything—that is truly swinish! Always to say “hee-haw,” Yes—that only the donkey learned, and whoever shares its spirit!—

Deep yellow and hot red: that is what *my* taste wants, mixing blood into every color. But whoever whitewashes his house betrays a whitewashed soul to me.

Some love mummies, others ghosts, and both are equally hostile to all flesh and blood—oh, how both offend my taste! For I love blood.

And I will not live and linger where everyone spits and spews: that is *my* taste. I would sooner live among thieves and perjurers. No one carries gold in their mouth.

But more repulsive still to me are all lickspittles; and the most repulsive human animal I found, I christened parasite: it wanted not to love and yet to live upon love.

I call unhappy all who have only one choice: to become evil beasts or evil beast tamers. Among such people I would build no hut.

Unhappy too I call those who must always *wait*—they offend my taste: all customs collectors and merchants and kings and other keepers of lands and shops. Truly, I learned waiting too, and thoroughly—but only waiting for *myself*. Above all, I learned standing and walking and running and leaping and climbing and dancing.

But this is my teaching: whoever wants to learn to fly must first learn standing and walking and running and climbing and dancing—one does not fly into flying!

With rope ladders I learned to climb many windows; with nimble legs I climbed high masts. To sit upon high masts of knowledge seemed no small blessedness—

To flicker like little flames upon high masts: a little light, certainly, but a great comfort to storm-tossed sailors and the shipwrecked!—

By many ways and methods I came to my truth; not upon one ladder did I climb to the height where my eye roams into my distance.

And I always asked for paths unwillingly—it offended my taste! I preferred asking and testing the paths themselves.

All my walking was a testing and questioning—and truly, one must also *learn* to answer such questioning! But that is my taste:

Neither good nor bad, but *my* taste, which I no longer hide or feel ashamed of.

“That is *my* way—where is yours?” I answered those who asked me “the way.”

For *the* way does not exist!

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

On Old and New Tablets

- ¹ Here I sit and wait, old broken tablets around me, and new tablets half inscribed. When will my hour come?

The hour of my descent, my going-under: for once more I want to go to human beings.

That is what I await: first the signs must come that it is *my* hour—the laughing lion with the flock of doves.

Meanwhile, like someone with time, I speak to myself. No one tells me anything new: so I tell myself to myself.—

² When I came to human beings, I found them sitting upon an old conceit: they all thought they had long known what was good and evil for humanity.

All talk of virtue seemed to them an old, tired matter; whoever wanted sound sleep spoke of “good” and “evil” before going to bed.

I roused this sleepiness when I taught: what is good and evil, *no one yet knows*, except the creator!

But that is the one who creates humanity’s goal and gives the earth its meaning and future: this one alone *creates* the fact *that* something is good and evil.

And I bade them overthrow their old teaching chairs and whatever else that old conceit had sat upon; I bade them laugh at their great masters of virtue and saints and poets and world redeemers.

I bade them laugh at their gloomy sages and whoever had ever sat warningly like a black scarecrow upon life’s tree.

Beside their great road of graves I sat, even among carrion and vultures—and I laughed at all their past and its crumbling, decaying splendor.

Truly, like preachers of repentance and fools, I shouted anger and outcry over all their great and small things: how very small their best is! How very small their worst is! Thus I laughed.

Thus my wise longing cried and laughed from me, born upon mountains, truly a wild wisdom—my great longing with rushing wings.

And often it tore me away and upward and off, in the midst of laughter: then I flew shuddering, an arrow, through sun-drunk rapture—

Out into distant futures no dream has yet seen, into hotter souths than sculptors ever dreamed: where gods in dancing are ashamed of all clothes—

For I speak in images and limp and stammer like poets; and truly, I am ashamed that I must still be a poet!—

Where all becoming seemed to me gods' dance and gods' play, and the world loose and unbridled and fleeing back to itself—

As many gods eternally fleeing and seeking one another again, blessedly contradicting one another, hearing one another again, belonging to one another again —

Where all time seemed a blessed mockery of moments, where necessity was freedom itself, blessedly playing with freedom's sting—

Where I also found my old devil and archenemy again, the spirit of gravity and everything it created: constraint, ordinance, necessity, consequence, purpose, will, good, and evil—

For must there not be something over which to dance, to dance away? Must there not, for the light and lightest ones' sake, be moles and heavy dwarfs?— —

- 3 There too I picked up the word “overhuman” from the path, and that the human being is something that must be overcome—

That the human being is a bridge and not an end, blessing itself for its noon and evening as a way toward new dawns—

Zarathustra's word of the great noon, and whatever else I hung above humanity like purple second sunsets.

Truly, I showed them new stars and new nights; and above clouds and day and night I stretched laughter like a bright tent.

I taught them all *my* invention and striving: to compose into one and gather together what is fragment and riddle and dreadful accident in humanity—

As poet, riddle solver, and redeemer of chance, I taught them to create the future, and creatively redeem everything that *was*.

To redeem the past in humanity and remake every “It was,” until the will says, “But thus I willed it! Thus shall I will it”—

This I called redemption to them; this alone I taught them to call redemption.

— —

Now I await *my* redemption, to go to them for the last time.

For once more I want to go to humanity: *among* them I want to go under; dying, I want to give them my richest gift!

I learned this from the sun when it descends, the overflowing one: then from inexhaustible wealth it pours gold into the sea—

So that even the poorest fisherman rows with a *golden* oar! Once I saw this, and could not weep enough while watching.— —

Like the sun, Zarathustra too wants to go under: now he sits here and waits, old broken tablets around him, and new tablets half inscribed.

- ⁴ Look, here is a new tablet: but where are my brothers to carry it with me into the valley and into hearts of flesh?—

Thus my great love of the farthest demands: *do not spare your neighbor!* The human being is something that must be overcome.

There are many ways and methods of overcoming: see to that *yourself!* But only a jester thinks, “The human being can also be *leaped over.*”

Overcome yourself even in your neighbor: and a right you can seize for yourself, you must not let yourself be given!

What you do, no one can do back to you. Look, there is no repayment.

Whoever cannot command himself should obey. And many *can* command themselves, but are still far from obeying themselves!

- ⁵ Thus noble souls’ nature wills it: they want nothing *for nothing*, least of all life. Whoever belongs to the rabble wants to live for nothing; but we others, to whom life gave itself, always ponder *what* we can best give *in return!*

And truly, this is a noble saying: “What life promises *us*, *we* will keep for life!”

One should not want enjoyment where one gives none. And one should not *want* enjoyment!

For enjoyment and innocence are the most modest things: neither wants to be sought. One should *have* them—but one should sooner *seek* guilt and pain!—

- ⁶ Oh, my brothers, whoever is a firstborn is always sacrificed. But now we are firstborn.

We all bleed upon secret sacrificial tables; we all burn and roast in honor of old idols.

Our best is still young; that tempts old palates. Our flesh is tender; our skin is only lambskin—how could we fail to tempt old idolatrous priests!

Within ourselves he still dwells, the old idolatrous priest who roasts our best for his feast. Ah, my brothers, how could firstborns fail to be sacrifices!

But such is our nature; and I love those who do not want to preserve themselves. Those going under I love with all my love: for they cross over.—

- 7 To be truthful—few *can* do that! And those who can still do not want to! Least of all can the good.

Oh, these good people! *Good people never speak the truth*: for the spirit, being good in this fashion is a sickness.

They yield, these good people; they submit; their hearts repeat; their depths obey: but whoever obeys *does not hear himself*!

Everything the good call evil must come together for one truth to be born: oh, my brothers, are you evil enough for *this* truth?

Daring risk, long mistrust, the cruel No, weariness, cutting into living flesh—how rarely *these* come together! But from such seed truth is begotten!

Beside bad conscience all *knowledge* has grown until now! Break, break the old tablets for me, you knowers!

- 8 When water has beams, when bridges and railings leap across the river, truly, no one believes the person who says, “Everything is in flux.”

Even blockheads contradict him. “What?” they say. “Everything in the river? But beams and railings are *above* the river!” “*Above* the river everything is fixed: all things’ values, bridges, concepts, everything ‘good’ and ‘evil’—all that is *fixed*!”—

And when hard winter comes, the tamer of rivers, even the wittiest learn mistrust; truly, not only blockheads then say, “Should everything not—*stand still*?”

“At bottom everything stands still”: that is a true winter teaching, good for barren times, a good comfort for hibernators and hearth-sitters.

“At bottom everything stands still”—but *against* this the thawing wind preaches!

The thawing wind, a bull that is no plowing bull, a raging bull, a destroyer breaking ice with angry horns! But ice—*breaks bridges*!

Oh, my brothers, is everything not *now in flux*? Have all railings and bridges not fallen into the water? Who would still *hold fast* to “good” and “evil”?

“Woe to us! Hail to us! The thawing wind blows!” Thus preach for me, my brothers, through every street!

- 9 There is an old delusion called good and evil. Around soothsayers and astrologers the wheel of this delusion has turned until now.

Once people *believed* in soothsayers and astrologers, and *therefore* believed, “Everything is fate: you shall, because you must!” Then they mistrusted all soothsayers and astrologers, and *therefore* believed, “Everything is freedom: you can, because you will!”

Oh, my brothers, until now people have only conjectured about stars and future, not known: and *therefore* they have only conjectured about good and evil, not known!

- 10 “You shall not rob! You shall not kill!” Such words were once called holy; before them people bent knees and heads and took off their shoes.

But I ask you: where have there ever been better robbers and killers in the world than such holy words?

Is there not robbing and killing in all life itself? And by calling such words holy, was *truth* itself not killed?

Or was it a preaching of death to call holy what contradicted and counseled against all life? Oh, my brothers, break, break the old tablets for me!

- 11 This is my pity for everything past: I see that it is abandoned—

Abandoned to the mercy, spirit, and madness of every generation that comes and reinterprets everything that was as its bridge!

A great tyrant might come, a cunning monster who with his favor and disfavor compelled and compressed everything past until it became his bridge and omen and herald and cockcrow.

But this is the other danger and my other pity: whoever belongs to the rabble remembers back to the grandfather—but with the grandfather time ends.

Thus everything past is abandoned: for one day the rabble might become master and drown all time in shallow waters.

That is why, my brothers, a *new nobility* is needed, opposed to all rabble and all tyranny, writing the word “noble” anew upon new tablets.

For many nobles and many kinds of nobles are needed *for nobility to exist!* Or, as I once said in an image: “This is precisely divinity: there are gods, but no God!”

12 Oh, my brothers, I consecrate and direct you toward a new nobility: become begetters and cultivators and sowers of the future for me—

Truly, not a nobility you could buy like merchants with merchants’ gold: for everything with a price has little value.

Henceforth let your honor come not from where you come from, but where you go! Your will and your foot that wants to go beyond yourselves—let that be your new honor!

Truly, not that you served a prince—what do princes matter now!—or became a bulwark for what stands, so that it might stand more firmly!

Not that your lineage grew courtly at courts, and you learned, bright as flamingos, to stand long hours in shallow pools.

For being *able* to stand is a merit among courtiers; and all courtiers believe that blessedness after death includes being *allowed* to sit!—

Nor that a spirit they call holy led your ancestors into promised lands that *I* do not praise: for where the worst of all trees grew, the cross, there is nothing to praise in that land! And truly, wherever this “holy spirit” led its knights, goats and geese and cross and crooked heads always went *ahead* upon such expeditions!—

Oh, my brothers, let your nobility look not backward, but *outward*! Be exiles from all fatherlands and ancestral lands!

Love your *children's land*: let this love be your new nobility—the undiscovered land in the farthest sea! I bid your sails search and search for it!

In your children *make amends* for being your fathers' children: *thus* redeem everything past! I set this new tablet above you!

- 13 “Why live? Everything is vanity! Living means threshing straw; living means burning oneself without growing warm.”—

Such ancient chatter still passes for “wisdom”; it is old and smells musty, and *that is why* it is honored more. Even mold ennobles.—

Children might speak like that: they *fear* fire because it burned them! There is much childishness in old books of wisdom.

And whoever always “threshes straw,” how could he be entitled to slander threshing? Such a fool's mouth ought to be tied shut!

They sit at the table and bring nothing, not even a good hunger—and now they slander, “Everything is vanity!”

But eating and drinking well, my brothers, is truly no vain art! Break, break the tablets of the never-joyful for me!

- 14 “To the pure everything is pure,” the people say. But I tell you: to swine everything becomes swinish!

That is why enthusiasts and head-hangers whose hearts hang low too preach, “The world itself is a filthy monster.” All these are unclean in spirit, especially those who find neither rest nor peace unless they see the world *from behind*—the otherworld believers!

To *them* I say it to their faces, though it does not sound lovely: the world resembles humanity in having a backside—*that much* is true!

There is much filth in the world: *that much* is true! But that does not make the world itself a filthy monster!

There is wisdom in much of the world smelling foul: disgust itself creates wings and powers of divining springs!

Even the best has something disgusting; and the best is still something that must be overcome!—

Oh, my brothers, there is much wisdom in there being much filth in the world!

—

- 15 I heard pious otherworld believers speak such sayings to their consciences, truly without malice or deceit—though nothing in the world is more deceitful or malicious.

“Let the world be the world! Do not raise even one finger against it!”

“Let whoever wishes strangle and stab and cut and scrape people: do not raise even one finger against it! Thus they will learn to renounce the world.” “And your own reason—you must gag and strangle it yourself, for it is a reason of this world: thus you yourself will learn to renounce the world.”—

Break, break these old tablets of the pious for me, my brothers! Shatter with speech the sayings of the world’s slanderers!

- 16 “Whoever learns much unlearns all violent desire,” people whisper today in every dark street.

“Wisdom makes weary; nothing is worthwhile; you must not desire!” I found this new tablet hanging even in open marketplaces.

Break this *new* tablet too for me, my brothers! The world-weary hung it there, and the preachers of death, and the jailers too: for look, it is also a preaching of servitude!—

That they learned badly and not the best, everything too early and too quickly; that they *ate* badly—from this came their spoiled stomach—

For their spirit is a spoiled stomach: it counsels death! Truly, my brothers, spirit *is* a stomach!

Life is a spring of delight: but for anyone through whom a spoiled stomach speaks, the father of melancholy, every spring is poisoned.

Knowing is *delight* for the lion-willed! But whoever has grown weary is only “willed” themselves, played with by every wave.

And this is always the nature of weak people: they lose themselves upon their paths. At last even their weariness asks, “Why did we ever follow paths? It is all the same!”

To *them* it sounds lovely when someone preaches, “Nothing is worthwhile! You must not will!” But this is a preaching of servitude.

Oh, my brothers, Zarathustra comes as a fresh roaring wind to everyone weary of the road: he will yet make many noses sneeze!

My free breath blows even through walls, into prisons and imprisoned spirits!

Willing liberates, for willing is creating: so I teach. And *only* for creating should you learn!

And even learning, good learning, you must first *learn* from me! Whoever has ears, let them hear!

- 17 There stands the boat; perhaps it takes one across into the great nothing—but who wants to board this “perhaps”?

None of you wants to board the boat of death! How then can you be *weary of the world*!

World-weary! You have not even become detached from earth! I always found you still lusting for earth, still in love with your own weariness of earth!

Not for nothing your lip hangs down: a little earthly wish still sits upon it! And in your eye—is there not a small cloud of unforgotten earthly delight?

There are many good inventions on earth, some useful, others pleasant: for their sake the earth deserves love.

And there are many things so well invented that they resemble a woman’s breast: useful and pleasant at once.

But you world-weary, earth-lazy ones! You should be struck with switches! Switch strokes should give you lively legs again.

For unless you are sick, worn-out wretches of whom the earth is weary, you are cunning sloths or greedy, hidden pleasure-cats. And if you will not *run* joyfully again, then pass away!

One should not want to be a physician to the incurable: so Zarathustra teaches—so pass away!

But ending takes more *courage* than adding a new verse: all physicians and poets know that.—

- 18 Oh, my brothers, there are tablets created by exhaustion, and tablets created by laziness, rotten laziness: though they speak alike, they want to be heard differently.—

Look at this languishing man! He is only a span from his goal, but in weariness he has defiantly lain down here in the dust, this brave man!

In weariness he yawns at path and earth and goal and himself: not one step farther will he take, this brave man!

Now the sun burns upon him, and dogs lick at his sweat: but he lies there in defiance and would sooner perish—

Perish a span from his goal! Truly, you will yet have to drag him by his hair into his heaven, this hero!

Better leave him where he has lain down, so that sleep, the comforter, may come with cooling, murmuring rain:

Leave him until he wakes by himself, until by himself he recants all weariness and whatever weariness taught through him!

Only, my brothers, drive the dogs from him, the lazy prowlers, and all the swarming vermin—

All the swarming vermin of the “cultured” who feast upon every hero’s sweat!

—

- 19 I draw circles and sacred boundaries around myself; ever fewer climb ever higher mountains with me—I build a mountain range from ever holier mountains.—

But wherever you climb with me, my brothers, take care that no *parasite* climbs with you!

Parasite: a creeping, clinging worm that wants to grow fat in your sick, wounded corners.

And *this* is its art: to divine where ascending souls grow weary. In your grief and discontent, in your tender shame, it builds its disgusting nest.

Where the strong is weak, the noble all too gentle, there it builds its disgusting nest: the parasite dwells where greatness has little wounded corners.

What is the highest kind of all being, and what the lowest? The parasite is the lowest kind; but whoever is of the highest kind nourishes the most parasites.

The soul with the longest ladder, able to descend deepest: how could the most parasites not sit upon it?—

The most expansive soul, able to run and stray and roam farthest within itself; the most necessary, plunging joyfully into chance—

The soul that is, plunging into becoming; the possessing soul that *wants* to enter willing and desire—

The soul fleeing itself, catching itself upon the widest circle; the wisest soul, to which folly speaks most sweetly—

The soul loving itself most, in which all things have their streaming and return, ebb and flood: oh, how could *the highest soul* not have the worst parasites?

- 20 Oh, my brothers, am I cruel? But I say: whatever falls should also be pushed! Everything of today falls, decays: who would hold it up? But I—I *will* push it too!

Do you know the sensual pleasure that rolls stones into steep depths? These people of today: look how they roll into my depths!

I am a prelude to better players, my brothers! An example! *Follow* my example!

And those you do not teach to fly, teach—to *fall faster*!—

- 21 I love the brave: but being a swordsman is not enough—one must also look carefully at *whom* one strikes!

And often there is more bravery in restraining oneself and passing by, *so as* to save oneself for the worthier enemy!

You should have only enemies to hate, not enemies to despise: you must be proud of your enemy—so I taught once before.

Save yourselves for the worthier enemy, my friends: that is why you must pass by much—

Especially much rabble clamoring into your ears about the people and peoples.

Keep your eyes pure of their For and Against! There is much right, much wrong: whoever looks on grows angry.

Looking in and striking in are one there: so go into the forests and lay your sword to sleep!

Follow *your* paths! Let the people and peoples follow theirs—dark paths, truly, upon which not one hope flashes anymore!

Let the merchant rule where everything still shining is merchants' gold! It is no longer the age of kings: what now calls itself a people deserves no kings.

Look how these peoples now behave like merchants themselves: they glean the smallest advantages from every rubbish heap!

They lie in wait for one another, seeking to wrest something from each other: this they call "good neighborliness." Oh, blessed distant age when a people said, "I will be *master* over peoples!"

For, my brothers, the best should rule; the best also *wants* to rule! And where the teaching says otherwise, there the best is *missing*.

- 22 If *they* had bread for nothing, alas! What would *they* cry for? Their livelihood is their true pastime: let it be hard for them!

They are beasts of prey: in their "working" there is still robbing; in their "earning" there is still outwitting! That is why it should be hard for them!

Thus they should become better beasts of prey, subtler, cleverer, *more human-like*: for the human being is the finest beast of prey.

Humanity has already robbed every animal of its virtues: that is because, of all animals, humanity has had the hardest time.

Only birds are still above it. And if humanity learned to fly, alas! *How high* its appetite for plunder would fly!

- 23 Thus I want man and woman: the one fit for war, the other fit for giving birth, but both fit for dancing with head and legs.

Let the day be lost to us when we have not danced even once! And let every truth be called false that was not accompanied by at least one laugh!

24 Your concluding a marriage: take care it is not a bad *conclusion*! You concluded too quickly: so what *follows* is adultery!

Better breaking marriage than bending marriage, lying marriage! A woman said to me, "I broke my marriage, certainly, but first the marriage broke me!" I always found the badly paired the worst seekers of revenge: they make the whole world pay for their no longer going singly.

That is why I want honest people to say to one another, "We love each other: let us *see to it* that we keep loving! Or should our promise be a mistake?"

"Give us a term and a little marriage, to see whether we are fit for the great marriage! Being two forever is a great thing!"

Thus I counsel all honest people; what would my love of the overhuman and everything to come be if I counseled and spoke otherwise!

To propagate not merely onward, but *upward*—for that, my brothers, may the garden of marriage help you!

25 Whoever has grown wise about old origins, look, will at last seek springs of the future and new origins.—

Oh, my brothers, before long *new peoples* will spring up, and new springs rush down into new depths.

For the earthquake buries many wells and causes much thirst: it also brings inner powers and secrets to light.

The earthquake reveals new springs. In the earthquake of old peoples, new springs break out.

And around whoever cries, "Look, here is one spring for many thirsty ones, one heart for many longing ones, one will for many instruments," a *people* gathers—that is, many experimenters.

Who can command, who must obey—*that is tested there*! Ah, with what long searching and divining and failing and learning and renewed experimenting!

Human society is an experiment, so I teach, a long search: but it seeks the commander!—

An experiment, my brothers, and *not* a "contract"! Break, break such a word of the soft-hearted and half-and-halves for me!

26 Oh, my brothers! Where lies the greatest danger to all humanity's future? Is it not with the good and the just?—

With those who say and feel in their hearts, "We already know what is good and just; we possess it too; woe to those still seeking here!"

Whatever harm the evil may do, the harm of the good is the most harmful harm!

And whatever harm the world's slanderers may do, the harm of the good is the most harmful harm.

Oh, my brothers, someone once looked into the hearts of the good and the just and said, "They are the Pharisees." But no one understood him.

The good and the just themselves were not permitted to understand him: their spirit is imprisoned in their good conscience. The stupidity of the good is unfathomably clever.

But this is the truth: the good *must* be Pharisees—they have no choice!

The good *must* crucify whoever invents his own virtue! That *is* the truth!

But the second discoverer of their land, the land, heart, and soil of the good and the just, was the one who asked, "Whom do they hate most?"

The *creator* they hate most: whoever breaks tablets and old values, the breaker—they call him lawbreaker.

For the good *cannot* create: they are always the beginning of the end—

They crucify whoever writes new values upon new tablets; they sacrifice the future to *themselves*—they crucify all humanity's future!

The good have always been the beginning of the end.—

27 Oh, my brothers, did you understand this word too? And what I once said about "the last human being"?

Where lies the greatest danger to all humanity's future? Is it not with the good and the just?

Break, break the good and the just for me! Oh, my brothers, did you understand this word too?

28 You flee from me? You are frightened? You tremble before this word?

Oh, my brothers, only when I bade you break the good and the tablets of the good did I set humanity upon its high seas.

And only now come the great terror, the great looking around, the great sickness, the great disgust, the great seasickness.

The good taught you false shores and false securities; in the lies of the good you were born and sheltered. Everything is lied and bent to its foundation by the good.

But whoever discovered the land “humanity” also discovered the land “human future.” Now be sailors for me, brave and patient!

Walk upright in good time, my brothers; learn to walk upright! The sea rages: many want to stand upright again by leaning on you.

The sea rages: everything is in the sea. Come! Up! You old sailors’ hearts!

What fatherland! *There* our helm points, where our *children’s land* is! Out there, stormier than the sea, our great longing storms!—

29 “Why so hard?” the kitchen coal once said to the diamond. “Are we not close kin?”—

Why so soft? Oh, my brothers, thus *I* ask you: are you not my brothers?

Why so soft, so yielding and giving way? Why so much denial and disowning in your hearts? So little fate in your gaze?

And if you will not be fates and inexorable ones, how could you conquer with me?

And if your hardness will not flash and divide and cut, how could you one day create with me?

For creators are hard. And it must seem blessedness to press your hand upon millennia as upon wax—

Blessedness to write upon the will of millennia as upon bronze, harder than bronze, nobler than bronze. Only the noblest is wholly hard.

This new tablet, my brothers, I set above you: *become hard!*—

30 Oh, my will! You turning of all need, you *my* necessity! Preserve me from every little victory!

You dispensation of my soul, whom I call fate! You within me! Above me!
Preserve and reserve me for one great fate!

And save your final greatness, my will, for your final task: to be inexorable *in*
your victory! Ah, who has not succumbed to victory!

Ah, whose eye did not darken in this drunken twilight! Ah, whose foot did not
stagger and forget how to stand in victory!—

Let me one day be ready and ripe at the great noon: ready and ripe as glowing
bronze, a lightning-pregnant cloud, a swelling milk udder—

Ready for myself and my most hidden will: a bow ardent for its arrow, an arrow
ardent for its star—

A star ready and ripe at its noon, glowing, pierced, blessed by annihilating
arrows of sunlight—

A sun itself and an inexorable sun-will, ready to annihilate in victory!

Oh, will, turning of all need, you *my* necessity! Reserve me for one great victo-
ry!— —

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

The Convalescent

- ¹ One morning, not long after returning to his cave, Zarathustra sprang from his bed like a madman, cried in a terrible voice, and behaved as though someone else lay upon the bed, unwilling to rise. Zarathustra's voice rang so powerfully that his animals came in terror, and from every cave and hiding place near his cave all creatures darted away—flying, fluttering, crawling, leaping, according to the kind of foot and wing they had been given. But Zarathustra spoke these words:

“Up, abyssal thought, out of my depths! I am your rooster and dreadful dawn, sleepy worm: up! Up! My voice shall crow you awake!

“Unbind your ears' fetters: listen! For I want to hear you! Up! Up! Here is thunder enough to teach even graves to listen!

“And wipe sleep and everything dull and blind from your eyes! Hear me with your eyes too: my voice is a remedy even for those born blind.

“And once awake, you shall remain awake for me forever. It is not *my* way to wake great-grandmothers merely to bid them—sleep on!

“You stir, stretch, gasp? Up! Up! Do not gasp—speak to me! Zarathustra the godless calls you!

“I, Zarathustra, advocate of life, advocate of suffering, advocate of the circle—I call you, my most abyssal thought!

“Hail to me! You come—I hear you! My abyss *speaks*; I have turned my final depth into the light!

“Hail to me! Come! Give me your hand—ha! Let go!

“Ha-ha! Disgust, disgust, disgust—woe to me!”

² Scarcely had Zarathustra spoken these words when he fell like a dead man and lay a long time as though dead. But when he came to himself again, he was pale and trembling, and remained lying down, unwilling for a long time to eat or drink. This condition lasted seven days; his animals left him neither day nor night, except when the eagle flew out for food. Whatever it gathered and plundered it laid upon Zarathustra’s bed, until at last he lay among yellow and red berries, grapes, rose apples, fragrant herbs, and pinecones. At his feet lay two lambs the eagle had stolen from their shepherds with difficulty.

At last, after seven days, Zarathustra sat up in bed, took a rose apple, smelled it, and found its scent lovely. Then his animals believed the time had come to speak to him.

“Zarathustra,” they said, “you have lain like this seven days now, with heavy eyes: will you not stand upon your feet again at last?

“Step out of your cave: the world awaits you like a garden. The wind plays with heavy fragrances that want to reach you; all brooks would like to run after you.

“All things long for you, because you remained alone seven days—step out of your cave! All things want to be your physicians!

“Did some new knowledge come to you, sour and heavy? Like leavened dough you lay; your soul rose and swelled over every edge.” —

“Oh, my animals,” Zarathustra answered, “go on chattering like that and let me listen! Your chatter refreshes me: where there is chatter, the world already lies before me like a garden.

“How lovely that words and tones exist: are words and tones not rainbows and illusory bridges between things eternally separated?

“To every soul belongs another world; for every soul, every other soul is another world beyond.

“Precisely between the most alike, appearance lies most beautifully: for the smallest gulf is hardest to bridge.

“For me—how could there be an outside-me? There is no outside! But we forget that with every tone; how lovely that we forget!

“Were names and tones not given to things so that human beings might refresh themselves with things? Speaking is a beautiful folly: with it humanity dances over all things.

“How lovely are all speech and all the lying of tones! With tones our love dances upon bright rainbows.”—

“Zarathustra,” the animals then said, “for those who think as we do, all things dance themselves: they come and join hands and laugh and flee—and come back.

“Everything goes, everything returns; eternally the wheel of being rolls. Everything dies, everything blooms again; eternally the year of being runs.

“Everything breaks, everything is joined anew; eternally the same house of being builds itself. Everything parts, all things greet one another again; eternally the ring of being remains faithful to itself.

“In every instant being begins; around every Here the sphere There rolls. The center is everywhere. Crooked is eternity’s path.”—

“Oh, you mischievous fools and barrel organs!” Zarathustra answered, smiling again. “How well you know what had to be fulfilled in seven days—

“And how that monster crawled into my throat and choked me! But I bit off its head and spat it away.

“And you have already made a hurdy-gurdy song of it? But now I lie here, still weary of this biting and spitting away, still sick from my own redemption.

“And you watched all that? Oh, my animals, are you cruel too? Did you want to watch my great pain as human beings do? For humanity is the cruelest animal.

“At tragedies, bullfights, and crucifixions it has until now felt happiest on earth; and when it invented hell, look, that was its heaven on earth.

“When the great human being cries out, the small one runs up at once, tongue hanging from the throat with lust. But he calls it his ‘pity.’

“The small human being, especially the poet—how eagerly he accuses life in words! Listen, but do not fail to hear the pleasure in every accusation!

“Such accusers of life, life overcomes with a blink. ‘You love me?’ the impudent one says. ‘Wait a little longer; I have no time for you yet.’

“Humanity is the cruelest animal toward itself; and in everything called ‘sinner’ and ‘cross-bearer’ and ‘penitent,’ do not fail to hear the sensual pleasure in this complaining and accusing!

“And I myself—do I want to accuse humanity with this? Ah, my animals, this alone I have learned until now: humanity needs its worst for its best—

*“That everything worst is its best *strength* and the hardest stone for the highest creator; and that humanity must grow better *and* more evil. I was not nailed to *this* stake of torment, knowing humanity is evil; rather, I cried as no one has yet cried:*

“‘Ah, that its worst is so very small! Ah, that its best is so very small!’

“The great weariness of humanity—that choked me and crawled into my throat; and what the soothsayer foretold: ‘Everything is the same, nothing is worthwhile, knowledge chokes.’

“A long twilight limped before me, a death-weary, death-drunk sadness speaking with yawning mouth.

“‘Eternally returns the human being you are weary of, the small human being’: thus my sadness yawned, dragging its foot, unable to sleep.

“The human earth became a cave to me; its breast sank inward; everything living became human mold and bones and rotten past.

“My sighing sat upon every human grave and could no longer rise; my sighing and questioning croaked and choked and gnawed and lamented day and night:

“‘Ah, humanity returns eternally! The small human being returns eternally!’—

“Once I had seen both naked, the greatest and the smallest human being: all too similar—even the greatest all too human!

“The greatest all too small! That was my weariness of humanity! And eternal recurrence even of the smallest! That was my weariness of all existence!

“Ah, disgust! Disgust! Disgust!” Thus spoke Zarathustra, sighing and shuddering, for he remembered his sickness. But his animals would not let him speak further.

“Speak no more, convalescent!” his animals answered. “Go out instead, where the world awaits you like a garden.

“Go out to the roses and bees and flocks of doves! Especially to the songbirds, to learn *singing* from them!

“For singing is for convalescents; the healthy may speak. And even if the healthy want songs, they want different songs from the convalescent.”

“Oh, mischievous fools and barrel organs, be silent!” Zarathustra answered, smiling at his animals. “How well you know what comfort I invented for myself in seven days!

“That I must sing again—*that* comfort I invented, and *this* recovery: will you immediately make a hurdy-gurdy song of that too?”

“Speak no more,” his animals answered again. “Rather, convalescent, first prepare a lyre for yourself, a new lyre!

“For look, Zarathustra! Your new songs need new lyres.

“Sing and overflow, Zarathustra; heal your soul with new songs, so that you may bear your great fate, which has never yet been a human being’s fate!

“For your animals know well who you are and must become: look, *you are the teacher of eternal recurrence*—that is now *your* fate!

“That you must be the first to teach this teaching—how could this great fate not also be your greatest danger and sickness!

“Look, we know what you teach: all things return eternally, and we ourselves with them; we have already been here eternally many times, and all things with us.

“You teach that there is a great year of becoming, a monstrous great year: like an hourglass, it must turn itself over again and again to run down and run out anew—

“So that all these years are identical to one another, in greatest and smallest alike; so that in each great year we ourselves are equal to ourselves, in greatest and smallest alike.

“And if you wanted to die now, Zarathustra, look, we also know how you would speak to yourself—but your animals ask you not to die yet!

“You would speak without trembling, rather breathing freely in blessedness: for a great weight and stifling heat would have been taken from you, most patient one!—

“‘Now I die and vanish,’ you would say, ‘and in an instant I am nothing. Souls are as mortal as bodies.

“But the knot of causes in which I am entangled returns—it will create me again! I myself belong to the causes of eternal recurrence.

“I return with this sun, this earth, this eagle, this serpent—*not* to a new or better or similar life:

“I return eternally to this same and selfsame life, in greatest and smallest alike, to teach again the eternal recurrence of all things—

“To speak again the word of the great noon of earth and humanity, to proclaim the overhuman to humanity again.

“I spoke my word; I break upon my word: so my eternal lot wills—as a herald I perish!

“The hour has now come for the one going under to bless himself. Thus *ends* Zarathustra’s going-under.” — —

When the animals had spoken these words, they fell silent and waited for Zarathustra to say something. But Zarathustra did not hear their silence. He lay still with closed eyes, like someone sleeping, though he was not asleep: for he was conversing with his soul. Finding him so silent, the serpent and eagle honored the great stillness around him and carefully withdrew.

On the Great Longing

Oh, my soul, I taught you to say “Today” like “One day” and “Once,” and dance your round beyond every Here and There and Over There.

Oh, my soul, I delivered you from every corner; I swept dust, spiders, and twilight from you.

Oh, my soul, I washed petty shame and corner virtue from you, persuading you to stand naked before the sun’s eyes.

With the storm called “spirit” I blew across your surging sea; I blew every cloud away, strangled even the strangler called “sin.”

Oh, my soul, I gave you the right to say No like the storm and Yes like the open sky: still as light you now stand and walk through negating storms.

Oh, my soul, I restored your freedom over the created and uncreated: who knows as you know the sensual delight of what is to come?

Oh, my soul, I taught you contempt that does not come like a worm’s gnawing, the great, loving contempt that loves most where it despises most.

Oh, my soul, I taught you to persuade so well that you persuade even the grounds of things toward you, like the sun persuading even the sea to its height.

Oh, my soul, I took from you all obeying, kneeling, and calling someone master; I gave you yourself the names “Turning of Need” and “Fate.”

Oh, my soul, I gave you new names and bright playthings; I called you “Fate” and “Compass of Compasses” and “Umbilical Cord of Time” and “Azure Bell.”

Oh, my soul, I gave your soil all wisdom to drink, all new wines and all the unimaginably ancient strong wines of wisdom.

Oh, my soul, I poured upon you every sun and every night, every silence and every longing: then you grew for me like a vine.

Oh, my soul, over-rich and heavy you stand now, a vine with swelling udders and crowded clusters of brown-gold grapes—

Crowded and pressed by your happiness, waiting in abundance and still ashamed of your waiting.

Oh, my soul, nowhere now is there a soul more loving, more embracing, more expansive! Where would future and past be closer together than with you?

Oh, my soul, I gave you everything, and all my hands have emptied themselves upon you—and now! Now, smiling and full of melancholy, you say to me, “Which of us must give thanks?—

“Must the giver not thank the receiver for receiving? Is giving not a need? Is receiving not—mercy?”—

Oh, my soul, I understand the smile of your melancholy: your very over-richness now stretches out longing hands!

Your fullness gazes over roaring seas, seeking and waiting; the longing of over-fullness looks from the smiling heaven of your eyes!

And truly, my soul! Who could see your smile without melting into tears? The angels themselves melt into tears at the overflowing goodness of your smile.

Your goodness and overflowing goodness refuse to complain and weep: yet, my soul, your smile longs for tears and your trembling mouth for sobs.

“Is all weeping not complaining? And all complaining not accusing?” Thus you speak to yourself, and that is why, my soul, you would rather smile than pour out your suffering—

Pour out in falling tears all your suffering over your fullness and all the vine’s yearning for the vintner and vintner’s knife!

But if you will not weep, not weep out your purple melancholy, then you must *sing*, my soul! Look, I smile myself as I foretell this to you:

Sing with a roaring song until all seas grow still to listen to your longing—

Until over still, longing seas floats the boat, the golden wonder, around whose gold all good, bad, wondrous things leap—

Many great and small creatures too, and everything with light, wondrous feet that can run upon violet-blue paths—

Toward the golden wonder, the willing boat and its master: but that is the vintner waiting with a diamond vintner’s knife—

Your great liberator, my soul, the nameless one, for whom only future songs will find names! And truly, already your breath smells of future songs—

Already you glow and dream, already you drink thirstily from every deep, resounding well of comfort; already your melancholy rests in the blessedness of future songs!— —

Oh, my soul, now I gave you everything, even my last, and all my hands have emptied themselves upon you: *that I bade you sing*, look, that was my last gift! That I bade you sing—now speak, speak: *which* of us must give thanks? Better still: sing to me, sing, my soul! And let me give thanks!—
Thus spoke Zarathustra.

The Other Dance Song

- ¹ “Into your eye I looked lately, Life: I saw gold glitter in your night-eye—my heart stood still at that delight:
“A golden boat I saw glitter upon night waters, sinking, drinking, beckoning again, a golden rocking boat!
“Toward my dance-mad foot you cast a glance, a laughing, questioning, melting, rocking glance:
“Only twice you shook your rattle with small hands—and already my foot rocked with dance-madness.—
“My heels reared, my toes listened to understand you: for the dancer carries his ear in his toes!
“Toward you I leaped: you fled back from my leap, and the tongue of your fleeing, flying hair flickered toward me!
“Away from you and your serpents I leaped: already you stood half turned, your eye full of desire.
“With crooked glances you teach me crooked paths; upon crooked paths my foot learns tricks!
“Near, I fear you; far, I love you. Your flight entices me; your seeking checks me: I suffer—but what would I not gladly suffer for you!
“She whose coldness kindles, whose hatred seduces, whose flight binds, whose mockery moves—
“Who has not hated you, great binder and entwiner, temptress, seeker, finder! Who has not loved you, innocent, impatient, wind-swift, child-eyed sinner!
“Where are you drawing me now, you paragon and unbridled one? And now you flee me again, sweet wild thing, ungrateful one!

"I dance after you, follow even your faintest trace. Where are you? Give me your hand! Or only a finger!

"Here are caves and thickets: we shall lose our way! Stop! Stand still! Do you not see owls and bats whirring?

"You owl! You bat! You mean to fool me? Where are we? You learned this howling and yapping from dogs.

"You bare your little white teeth sweetly at me; your evil eyes leap toward me from a little curling mane!

"This is a dance over stick and stone: I am the hunter—will you be my dog or my chamois?

"Now beside me! Quickly, malicious leaper! Now upward! And across! Alas! I myself fell in leaping!

"Oh, see me lying here, high-spirited one, begging for mercy! Gladly I would walk lovelier paths with you—

"Love's paths through still, bright bushes! Or there along the lake, where goldfish swim and dance!

"Are you tired now? There are sheep and sunsets over there: is it not beautiful to sleep when shepherds play their flutes?

"Are you so terribly tired? I will carry you there; only let your arms fall! And if you thirst, I might have something—but your mouth will not drink it!—

"Oh, this cursed, swift, supple serpent and elusive witch! Where have you gone? But upon my face I feel two taps and red blotches from your hand!

"I am truly weary of always being your sheepish shepherd! Witch, if I have sung to you until now, now *you* shall scream for me!

"To the beat of my whip you shall dance and scream! Have I forgotten the whip? No!"—

² Then Life answered me, covering her delicate ears:

"Zarathustra! Do not crack your whip so terribly! You know: noise murders thoughts—and such tender thoughts are coming to me just now.

“We are both genuine do-no-goods and do-no-evils. Beyond good and evil we found our island and green meadow, we two alone! So we must be fond of one another!

“And even if we do not love each other to the core, must people resent each other when they do not love to the core?

“And you know I am fond of you, often too fond: the reason is that I am jealous of your Wisdom. Ah, that mad old fool of a Wisdom!

“If your Wisdom once ran away from you, ah! My love too would quickly run away.” —

Then Life looked thoughtfully behind and around her and said softly, “Zarathustra, you are not faithful enough to me!

“You do not love me nearly as much as you say; I know you are thinking of leaving me soon.

“There is an old heavy, heavy booming bell: at night it booms up to your cave —

“When you hear this bell strike the hour at midnight, between one and twelve you think—

“You think, Zarathustra, I know it, that you want to leave me soon!”

“Yes,” I answered hesitantly, “but you know it too—” And I whispered something into her ear, amid her tangled, yellow, foolish locks.

“You *know* that, Zarathustra? No one knows that.” — —

And we looked at one another and at the green meadow over which the cool evening was passing, and wept together. But then Life was dearer to me than all my wisdom had ever been.—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

³ *One!*

Human being! Attend!

Two!

What does deep midnight say?

Three!

“I slept, I slept—

Four!

“From deepest dream I woke:—

Five!

“The world is deep,

Six!

“Deeper than day has thought.

Seven!

“Deep is its woe—

Eight!

“Joy—deeper than heartache:

Nine!

“Woe says: Pass away!

Ten!

“But all joy wants eternity—

Eleven!

“Wants deep, deep eternity!”

Twelve!

The Seven Seals

(Or: The Yes-and-Amen Song.)

- ¹ If I am a soothsayer, full of that prophetic spirit that walks upon a high ridge
between two seas—
Between past and future, like a heavy cloud, hostile to sultry lowlands and
everything weary that can neither die nor live:

Ready for lightning in its dark breast and for the redeeming ray of light, pregnant with lightning that says Yes! Laughs Yes! With prophetic lightning bolts—
But blessed is the one thus pregnant! Truly, whoever shall one day kindle the future's light must hang long upon the mountain like a heavy storm!—

Oh, how could I not be ardent for eternity and for the wedding ring of rings—the ring of recurrence!

Never yet have I found the woman from whom I wanted children, except this woman I love: for I love you, eternity!

For I love you, eternity!

- ² If my anger ever broke graves, moved boundary stones, and rolled old broken tablets into steep depths:

If my mockery ever blew away rotten words, and I came like a broom to cross-marked spiders and like a sweeping wind to old musty burial chambers:

If ever I sat rejoicing where old gods lie buried, blessing the world, loving the world, beside the monuments of old slanderers of the world—

For I love even churches and gods' tombs once the sky looks with pure eyes through their broken roofs; gladly I sit like grass and red poppies upon broken churches—oh, how could I not be ardent for eternity and for the wedding ring of rings—the ring of recurrence?

Never yet have I found the woman from whom I wanted children, except this woman I love: for I love you, eternity!

For I love you, eternity!

- ³ If ever a breath of the creative breath came to me, and of that heavenly need that compels even accidents to dance starry rounds:

If ever I laughed with the creative lightning's laughter, followed by the long thunder of the deed, rumbling but obedient: if ever I played dice with gods upon the gods' table of earth, so that earth shook and broke and snorted up rivers of fire—

For earth is a gods' table, trembling with creative new words and gods' dice throws—

Oh, how could I not be ardent for eternity and for the wedding ring of rings—
the ring of recurrence?

Never yet have I found the woman from whom I wanted children, except this
woman I love: for I love you, eternity!

For I love you, eternity!

- ⁴ If ever I drank deeply from that foaming cup of spice and mixture in which all
things are well mixed:

If ever my hand poured the farthest into the nearest, fire into spirit, joy into
suffering, and the worst into the kindest:

If I myself am a grain of that redeeming salt that makes all things mix well in
the mixing cup—

For there is a salt that binds good with evil; and even the worst is worthy as sea-
soning and for the final overflowing—

Oh, how could I not be ardent for eternity and for the wedding ring of rings—
the ring of recurrence?

Never yet have I found the woman from whom I wanted children, except this
woman I love: for I love you, eternity!

For I love you, eternity!

- ⁵ If I am fond of the sea and everything sea-like, fondest when it contradicts me
angrily:

If that searching delight is within me that drives sails toward the undiscovered,
if a sailor's delight lives within my delight:

If ever my rejoicing cried, "The shore has vanished—now my last chain has
fallen—

"The boundless roars around me; far out space and time shine for me. Come!
Up! Old heart!"—

Oh, how could I not be ardent for eternity and for the wedding ring of rings—
the ring of recurrence?

Never yet have I found the woman from whom I wanted children, except this
woman I love: for I love you, eternity!

For I love you, eternity!

6 If my virtue is a dancer's virtue, and I often leaped with both feet into golden-emerald rapture: if my malice is a laughing malice, at home among rose slopes and lily hedges—

For in laughter all evil is together, but made holy and absolved by its own blessedness—

And if this is my A and O, that everything heavy become light, every body a dancer, every spirit a bird—and truly, this is my A and O!—

Oh, how could I not be ardent for eternity and for the wedding ring of rings—the ring of recurrence!

Never yet have I found the woman from whom I wanted children, except this woman I love: for I love you, eternity!

For I love you, eternity!

7 If ever I spread still skies above me and flew with my own wings into my own skies:

If playfully I swam in deep distances of light, and my freedom gained bird wisdom—

For thus speaks bird wisdom: “Look, there is no above, no below! Cast yourself around, outward, backward, light one! Sing! Speak no more!

“Were all words not made for the heavy? Do all words not lie to the light one? Sing! Speak no more!”—

Oh, how could I not be ardent for eternity and for the wedding ring of rings—the ring of recurrence?

Never yet have I found the woman from whom I wanted children, except this woman I love: for I love you, eternity!

For I love you, eternity!

Part 4



Fourth and Final Part

Ah, where in the world have greater follies occurred than among the pitying?
And what in the world has caused more suffering than the follies of the pitying?

Woe to all lovers who have no height above their pity!

Once the devil said to me, “Even God has his hell: it is his love for human beings.”

And lately I heard him say, “God is dead; God died of his pity for humanity.”

Thus Spoke Zarathustra 2 p. 12.

The Honey Offering

Again months and years passed over Zarathustra’s soul, unnoticed by him; but his hair grew white. One day, sitting upon a stone before his cave and gazing silently outward—there one looks over the sea and beyond winding abysses—his animals walked thoughtfully around him and finally stood before him.

“Zarathustra,” they said, “are you looking out for your happiness?” “What does happiness matter?” he answered. “I have long ceased striving for happiness; I strive for my work.” “Zarathustra,” the animals said again, “you speak like someone with more than enough good things. Do you not lie in a sky-blue lake of happiness?” “You mischievous fools,” Zarathustra answered, smiling, “how

well you chose your image! But you also know my happiness is heavy, not like a flowing wave of water: it presses upon me and will not leave me, behaving like melted pitch.”—

Then the animals walked thoughtfully around him again and stood before him once more. “Zarathustra,” they said, “is *that* why you yourself grow yellower and darker, although your hair wants to look white and flaxen? Look, you sit in your pitch!” “What are you saying, my animals?” Zarathustra said, laughing. “Truly, I slandered when I spoke of pitch. What happens to me happens to all ripening fruits. It is the *honey* in my veins that thickens my blood and stills my soul.” “So it must be, Zarathustra,” the animals answered, pressing against him. “But will you not climb a high mountain today? The air is clear; today one sees more of the world than ever.” “Yes, my animals,” he answered, “you counsel well and according to my heart: today I will climb a high mountain! But see that honey is at hand there, yellow, white, good, ice-fresh golden honey from the comb. For know this: up there I mean to make the honey offering.”—

But when Zarathustra stood upon the heights, he sent home the animals that had accompanied him, finding himself alone: then he laughed with his whole heart, looked around, and spoke:

“My talk of sacrifices and honey offerings was only a trick of speech, and truly a useful folly! Up here I may speak more freely than before hermits’ caves and hermits’ domestic animals.

“What sacrifice! I squander what I am given, a squanderer with a thousand hands: how could I still call that sacrifice!

“And when I desired honey, I desired only bait and sweet sap and slime, at which even growling bears and strange, grumpy, evil birds lick their tongues—

“The best bait hunters and fishermen need. For if the world resembles a dark forest of beasts, a pleasure garden for all wild hunters, to me it seems still more, and more gladly, an abyssal, abundant sea—

“A sea full of bright fish and crabs, which might tempt even gods to become fishermen and net-casters: so rich is the world in strange things, great and small!

“Especially the human world, the human sea: into that I now cast my golden fishing rod and say, Open, human abyss!

“Open, and throw me your fish and glittering crabs! With my finest bait I bait the strangest human fish today!

“I cast my happiness itself into every breadth and distance, between sunrise, noon, and sunset, to see whether many human fish learn to tug and wriggle at my happiness.

“Until, biting upon my sharp hidden hooks, the brightest bottom-dwelling fish of the abyss must rise to *my* height, to the most malicious of all human fishers.

“For *that* is what I am from the ground and beginning: drawing, attracting, drawing upward, rearing, a drawer and cultivator and disciplinarian who once told himself not for nothing, ‘Become who you are!’

“So now let human beings come *up* to me: for I still await the signs that it is time for my descent; I do not yet go under among human beings myself, as I must.

“For that I wait here, cunning and mocking upon high mountains, neither impatient nor patient, rather someone who has unlearned patience too—because he no longer ‘endures.’

“For my fate leaves me time: perhaps it has forgotten me? Or sits behind a great stone in the shade, catching flies?

“And truly, I am fond of my eternal fate for not hounding and pressing me, but leaving me time for pranks and malice: so that today I climbed this high mountain to fish.

“Has anyone ever caught fish upon high mountains? And even if what I want and do up here is folly, better this than growing solemn down there with waiting, green and yellow—

“A puffed-up snorter of rage from waiting, a holy howling storm out of the mountains, an impatient one crying into the valleys, ‘Listen, or I will lash you with God’s scourge!’

“Not that I resent such angry ones for it: they are good enough to laugh at! They must be impatient, these great noisy drums that speak today or never!

“But I and my fate speak neither to today nor to never: for speaking we have patience and time and more than time. For one day he must come, and must not pass by.

“Who must come one day and must not pass by? Our great Hazar, our great distant human kingdom, Zarathustra’s thousand-year kingdom—

“How distant may such ‘distance’ be? What is that to me? Yet it stands no less firmly for me; with both feet I stand surely upon this ground—

“Upon eternal ground, hard primeval rock, this highest and hardest ancient mountain range, where all winds come as to the weather’s divide, asking Where? From where? Toward where?

“Here laugh, laugh, my bright, whole malice! From high mountains cast down your glittering, mocking laughter! With your glitter bait the finest human fish for me!

“And whatever in all seas belongs to *me*, my in-and-for-me in all things, fish *that* out for me; bring *that* up to me: that is what I await, the most malicious of all fishermen.

“Out, out, my hook! Inward, downward, bait of my happiness! Drip your sweetest dew, honey of my heart! Bite, my hook, into the belly of all black melancholy!

“Out, out, my eye! Oh, so many seas around me, so many dawning human futures! And above me—what rose-red stillness! What cloudless silence!”

The Cry of Distress

The next day Zarathustra sat again upon his stone before the cave while his animals roamed the world for new food and new honey: for Zarathustra had used up and squandered every last grain of the old honey. Sitting thus with a stick in hand, tracing his figure’s shadow upon the earth, reflecting—and truly not upon himself and his shadow—he suddenly started in fright: for beside his shadow he saw another. Looking quickly around and rising, he found the soothsayer beside him, the same one he had once fed and given drink at his table, the herald of great weariness who taught, “Everything is the same, nothing is worthwhile, the world is without meaning, knowledge chokes.” But meanwhile his face had changed; when Zarathustra looked into his eyes, his heart was frightened again: so many evil proclamations and ash-gray flashes crossed this face.

The soothsayer, noticing what happened in Zarathustra's soul, passed his hand across his face as though wiping it away; Zarathustra did likewise. When both had silently composed and strengthened themselves, they shook hands to signify their willingness to recognize one another again.

"Welcome," said Zarathustra. "Soothsayer of great weariness, you shall not have been my table companion and guest-friend in vain. Eat and drink with me today too, and forgive a cheerful old man for sitting at table with you!" "A cheerful old man?" the soothsayer answered, shaking his head. "Whoever you are or want to be, Zarathustra, you have been it up here long enough: soon your boat will no longer sit upon dry land!" "Am I sitting upon dry land?" Zarathustra asked, laughing. "The waves around your mountain," the soothsayer answered, "rise and rise, waves of great distress and melancholy: soon they will lift your boat and carry you away." Zarathustra fell silent in wonder. "Do you hear nothing yet?" the soothsayer continued. "Does nothing rush and roar up from the depths?" Zarathustra was silent again and listened: then he heard a long, long cry that the abysses tossed to one another and passed along, for none wanted to keep it: so dreadful it sounded.

"Evil herald," Zarathustra said at last, "that is a cry of distress, a human being's cry; it may well come from a black sea. But what does human distress matter to me? My final sin, reserved for me—do you know its name?"

"*Pity!*" the soothsayer answered from an overflowing heart, raising both hands. "Zarathustra, I come to tempt you to your final sin!"—

Scarcely were these words spoken when the cry rang out again, longer and more fearful than before, much nearer already. "Do you hear? Do you hear, Zarathustra?" the soothsayer cried. "The cry is for you, calling you: come, come, come, it is time, it is high time!"—

Zarathustra fell silent, confused and shaken; at last, like someone hesitating within himself, he asked, "And who is calling me there?"

"But you know it," the soothsayer answered vehemently. "Why hide yourself? It is *the higher human being* who cries for you!"

"The higher human being?" Zarathustra cried, seized with horror. "What does *he* want? What does *he* want? The higher human being! What does he want here?" Sweat covered his skin.

But the soothsayer did not answer Zarathustra's fear; he listened and listened toward the depths. When silence lasted a long time, he turned back and saw Zarathustra standing and trembling.

"Zarathustra," he began sadly, "you do not stand like someone made dizzy by happiness: you will have to dance to keep from falling!

"But even if you danced before me and leaped all your sideways leaps, no one should be allowed to tell me, 'Look, here dances the last joyful human being!'

"Anyone seeking *him* here would come to this height in vain: caves and caves beyond caves he might find, hiding places for hidden ones, but not shafts of happiness and treasure chambers and new veins of happiness's gold.

"Happiness—how could one find happiness among such buried ones and hermits! Must I seek the last happiness still upon blissful islands, far among forgotten seas?

"But everything is the same, nothing is worthwhile, no searching helps, and there are no blissful islands anymore!"— —

Thus the soothsayer sighed; but at his final sigh Zarathustra grew bright and sure again, like someone emerging from a deep chasm into light. "No! No! Three times No!" he cried strongly, stroking his beard. "*That* I know better! There are still blissful islands! Be silent *about that*, you sighing sack of sorrow!

"Stop splashing *about that*, raincloud in the morning! Am I not already standing here wet with your melancholy, drenched like a dog?

"Now I shake myself and run away to grow dry again: you must not wonder at that! Do I seem discourteous? But here is *my* court.

"As for your higher human being, well! I will seek him at once in those forests: *from there* his cry came. Perhaps an evil beast harasses him.

"He is within *my* domain: there he shall not come to harm! And truly, there are many evil beasts with me."—

With these words Zarathustra turned to go. Then the soothsayer said, "Zarathustra, you are a rogue!

"I know already: you want to be rid of me! You would rather run into the forests and hunt evil beasts!

"But how does it help you? In the evening you will have me again; in your own cave I shall sit, patient and heavy as a block—and wait for you!"

"So be it!" Zarathustra called back as he left. "Whatever is mine in my cave is yours as well, my guest-friend!

"But if you find honey there, go on, lick it up, growling bear, and sweeten your soul! For in the evening we both mean to be of good cheer—

"Of good cheer and glad this day has ended! You yourself shall dance to my songs as my dancing bear.

"You do not believe it? You shake your head? Come! Up! Old bear! But I too am a soothsayer."

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

Conversation with the Kings

- ¹ Zarathustra had traveled less than an hour through his mountains and forests when he suddenly saw a strange procession. Along the very path he meant to descend came two kings, adorned with crowns and purple belts, bright as flamingos, driving a laden donkey before them. "What do these kings want in my kingdom?" Zarathustra said in astonishment to his heart, quickly hiding behind a bush. But when the kings reached him, he said half aloud, like someone speaking only to himself, "Strange! Strange! How does this fit together? I see two kings—and only one donkey!"

Then both kings stopped, smiled, looked toward the voice, and afterward into each other's faces. "People think such things among us too," said the king on the right, "but do not say them aloud."

The king on the left shrugged and answered, "Perhaps it is a goatherd. Or a hermit who has lived too long among rocks and trees. No company at all spoils good manners too."

"Good manners?" the other king retorted bitterly and indignantly. "What are we avoiding? Is it not 'good manners'? Our 'good society'?"

“Better, truly, to live among hermits and goatherds than with our gilded, false, painted-over rabble, though it calls itself ‘good society’—

“Though it calls itself ‘nobility.’ But everything there is false and rotten, especially the blood, thanks to old bad diseases and worse healers.

“The best and dearest person to me today is still a healthy farmer, rough, cunning, stubborn, enduring: that is the noblest kind today.

“The farmer is the best today, and the farmer’s nature should rule! But it is the kingdom of the rabble—I will be deceived no longer. Rabble means mishmash.

“Rabble-mishmash: everything mingled with everything, saint and scoundrel and squire and Jew and every beast from Noah’s ark.

“Good manners! Everything among us is false and rotten. No one knows how to revere anymore: *that* is precisely what we flee. They are cloying, intrusive dogs; they gild palm leaves.

“This disgust chokes me: we kings ourselves have become false, draped and disguised in old, yellowed ancestral pomp, display coins for the stupidest and cleverest and everyone now trafficking in power!

“We *are* not the first—and yet must *signify* it: at last we have grown sick and disgusted with this deception.

“We avoided the rabble, all these loudmouths and scribbling blowflies, the merchant stench, the wriggling ambition, the foul breath—ugh, living among the rabble—

“Ugh, signifying the first among the rabble! Ah, disgust! Disgust! Disgust! What do we kings matter now?”—

“Your old sickness assails you,” the king on the left said. “Disgust assails you, my poor brother. But you know someone is listening.”

At once Zarathustra, who had opened his eyes and ears to this speech, rose from hiding, approached the kings, and began:

“The one listening, who gladly listens to you, kings, is called Zarathustra.

“I am Zarathustra, who once said, ‘What do kings matter now!’ Forgive me: I rejoiced when you said to each other, ‘What do we kings matter!’

“But here is *my* kingdom and dominion: what might you seek in my kingdom? Perhaps on the way you *found* what *I* seek: the higher human being.”

When the kings heard this, they beat their breasts and spoke with one voice:
“We are recognized!

“With the sword of this word you cut through our hearts’ thickest darkness.
You have discovered our distress: look, we travel to find the higher human being

—

“The human being higher than ourselves, though we are kings. To him we
bring this donkey. For the highest human being should also be the highest lord
on earth.

“There is no harder misfortune in all human fate than when earth’s powerful
are not also its foremost human beings. Then everything becomes false and
crooked and monstrous.

“And when they are the last, more beast than human, the rabble rises and rises
in value, until even rabble virtue says, ‘Look, I alone am virtue!’” —

“What have I just heard?” Zarathustra answered. “What wisdom among kings!
I am delighted, and truly already tempted to make a rhyme upon it—

“Even if it becomes a rhyme unfit for everyone’s ears. I long ago unlearned con-
sideration for long ears. Come! Up!”

(Here the donkey too found its voice: clearly and with ill will it said, “Hee-
haw.”)

Once—I believe in salvation’s year one—

The Sibyl, drunk without wine, cried:

“Woe, now all goes awry!

“Decline! Decline! The world never sank so low!

“Rome sank to whore and brothel,

“Rome’s Caesar sank to beast; God himself became a Jew!”

² The kings feasted upon Zarathustra’s rhymes; but the king on the right said,
“Zarathustra, how well we did to set out to see you!

“For your enemies showed us your image in their mirror: there you looked out
with a devil’s grimace and mocking laughter, so that we feared you.

“But what did it help? Again and again your sayings pierced our ears and hearts. At last we said: what does it matter how he looks?

“We must *hear* him, who teaches, ‘Love peace as a means to new wars, and a short peace more than a long one!’

“No one ever spoke such warlike words: ‘What is good? Being brave is good. The good war sanctifies every cause.’

“Zarathustra, our fathers’ blood stirred within our bodies at such words: it was like spring speaking to old wine casks.

“When swords ran among one another like red-spotted serpents, our fathers became fond of life; the sun of every peace seemed faint and lukewarm to them, and long peace brought shame.

“How our fathers sighed when they saw bright-polished, dried-up swords upon the wall! Like those swords, they thirsted for war. For a sword wants to drink blood and glitters with desire.” — —

As the kings spoke and chattered so eagerly about their fathers’ happiness, Zarathustra felt no small desire to mock their enthusiasm: for plainly he saw very peaceable kings before him, with old and fine faces. But he restrained himself. “Well!” he said. “The path leads there; there lies Zarathustra’s cave; and this day shall have a long evening! But now a cry of distress calls me urgently away from you.

“It honors my cave if kings wish to sit and wait within it: but you will certainly have to wait long!

“Well then! What does it matter? Where does one learn waiting better today than at courts? And all the kings’ virtue that remains to them—is it not now called being *able to wait*?”

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

The Leech

Zarathustra walked thoughtfully onward and downward, through forests and past marshy ground; and as happens to anyone pondering difficult things, he unexpectedly stepped upon a human being. Suddenly a cry of pain, two curses,

and twenty foul insults flew into his face: in fright he raised his stick and struck the man he had stepped upon as well. Immediately he came to his senses, and his heart laughed at the folly he had just committed.

"Forgive me," he said to the man, who had risen furiously into a sitting position. "Forgive me, and first hear an image.

"A wanderer dreaming of distant things unexpectedly stumbles upon a sleeping dog along a lonely road, a dog lying in the sun—

"Both start up and snarl at each other like mortal enemies, these two frightened almost to death: so it happened to us.

"And yet! Yet how little was needed for them to caress each other, this dog and this solitary man! For both are solitary!"

"Whoever you may be," the man said, still furious, "you come too close with your image as well as your foot!

"Look, am I a dog?" And the seated man rose, drawing his bare arm from the swamp. At first he had lain stretched upon the ground, hidden and unrecognizable like someone stalking marsh game.

"But what are you doing?" Zarathustra cried in fright, seeing much blood flow over the bare arm. "What happened to you? Did some evil beast bite you, unfortunate man?"

The bleeding man laughed, still angry. "What is that to you?" he said, trying to walk on. "Here I am at home and in my domain. Whoever likes may question me: but I will hardly answer a blockhead."

"You are mistaken," Zarathustra said pityingly, holding him fast. "Here you are not in your own place, but in my kingdom, where no one shall come to harm.

"But call me whatever you like: I am who I must be. I call myself Zarathustra.

"Well! Up there the path leads to Zarathustra's cave, not far away: will you not tend your wounds with me?

"Life has treated you badly, unfortunate man: first the beast bit you, then humanity stepped upon you!" — —

But hearing Zarathustra's name, the man changed. "What is happening to me?" he cried. "*Who* concerns me in this life except this one human being, Zarathustra, and that one blood-living animal, the leech?

“For the leech I lay here beside this swamp like a fisherman; already my dangling arm had been bitten ten times when a finer hedgehog bit at my blood—Zarathustra himself!

“Oh, happiness! Oh, wonder! Praised be this day that lured me into this swamp! Praised be the finest, liveliest cupping glass now alive; praised be the great conscience-leech Zarathustra!”—

Thus spoke the man Zarathustra had stepped upon; and Zarathustra rejoiced in his words and their delicate, reverent manner. “Who are you?” he asked, offering his hand. “Much remains to be clarified and brightened between us: but already, I think, clear daylight is coming.”

“I am *the conscientious in spirit*,” the man answered. “In matters of spirit, hardly anyone is stricter, narrower, harder than I, except the one from whom I learned it, Zarathustra himself.

“Better to know nothing than half-know much! Better a fool on one’s own account than a sage at another’s dictate! I go to the bottom—

“What does it matter whether it is great or small? Whether called swamp or sky? A hand’s breadth of ground is enough, if only it is truly ground and foundation!

“A hand’s breadth of ground: one can stand upon that. In true scientific conscientiousness there is nothing great and nothing small.”

“Then perhaps you are the knower of the leech?” Zarathustra asked. “You follow the leech down to its final foundations, conscientious one?”

“Zarathustra,” the man answered, “that would be an enormous undertaking: how could I presume upon it!

“But what I master and know is the leech’s *brain*: that is *my* world!

“And it is a world too! Forgive my pride speaking here: in this I have no equal. That is why I said, ‘Here I am at home.’

“How long I have pursued this one thing, the leech’s brain, so that slippery truth no longer slips away here! Here is *my* kingdom!

“For that I cast everything else away; for that everything else became indifferent to me. Beside my knowledge lies my black ignorance.

“My conscience of spirit demands that I know one thing and otherwise know nothing: all half-spiritedness disgusts me, everything hazy, hovering, rapturous. “Where my honesty ends, I am blind and wish to be blind. But where I want to know, I also want honesty: hardness, strictness, narrowness, cruelty, inexorability.

“That *you* once said, Zarathustra, ‘Spirit is life that itself cuts into life,’ led and lured me to your teaching. Truly, with my own blood I increased my own knowledge!”

“As the evidence shows,” Zarathustra interrupted: for blood still flowed down the conscientious man’s bare arm. Ten leeches had bitten fast into it.

“Strange fellow, how much this evidence teaches me—you yourself! And perhaps I must not pour all of it into your strict ears!

“Well! Here let us part! But I would gladly find you again. Up there is the path to my cave: tonight you shall be my dear guest!

“Gladly I would make amends to your body too for Zarathustra’s trampling you: I shall think about it. But now a cry of distress calls me urgently away.”

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

The Magician

- ¹ As Zarathustra rounded a rock, he saw a man upon the same path not far below him, flinging his limbs like a madman and finally falling face down upon the earth. “Wait!” Zarathustra said to his heart. “That must be the higher human being; that dreadful cry of distress came from him—I will see whether help is possible.” But running to where the man lay, he found a trembling old man with staring eyes. However hard Zarathustra tried to raise him to his feet, it was in vain. The unfortunate man seemed unaware that anyone was nearby; instead, he kept looking around with touching gestures, like someone forsaken and abandoned by the whole world. At last, after much trembling, twitching, and curling in upon himself, he began to lament:

“Who warms me, who still loves me?

Give hot hands!

Give braziers for the heart!
Stretched out, shuddering,
Like one half dead whose feet they warm—
Shaken, ah, by unknown fevers,
Trembling before sharp icy frost arrows,
Hunted by you, Thought!
Nameless! Veiled! Terrible!
You hunter behind clouds!
Struck down by your lightning,
You mocking eye that looks from darkness:
Thus I lie,
Bending, writhing, tormented
By every eternal torture,
Struck
By you, cruelest hunter,
You unknown—*God* ...

“Strike deeper!
Strike once more!
Pierce, break this heart!
Why this torment
With blunt-toothed arrows?
Why look again,
Unwearied by human pain,
With gloating divine lightning eyes?
You do not want to kill,
Only torture, torture?
Why torture *me*,
You gloating unknown God?—

“Ha-ha!
You creep near

At such a midnight? ...
What do you want?
Speak!
You press me, crush me—
Ha! Already much too close!
You hear me breathing,
You listen to my heart,
Jealous one!
Jealous of what?
Away! Away!
Why the ladder?
Will you climb *inside*,
Into my heart,
Into my most secret
Thoughts?
Shameless! Unknown! Thief!
What will you steal?
What will you overhear?
What will you torture out,
You torturer!
You—executioner-God!
Or shall I, like a dog,
Roll before you,
Devoted, inspired, beside myself,
Wagging love to you!

“In vain!
Keep stabbing,
Cruellest thorn!
No dog—only your quarry am I,
Cruellest hunter!
Your proudest captive,
Robber behind clouds ...
Speak at last,
Lightning-veiled! Unknown! Speak!
What, ambusher, do you want—from me? ...

“What?
Ransom?
What ransom do you want?
Demand much—my pride counsels it!
And speak briefly—my other pride counsels it!

“Ha-ha!
Me—you want? Me?
Me—entirely? ...

“Ha-ha!
And you torment me, fool that you are,
Torture my pride?
Give me *love*—who still warms me?
Who still loves me? —
Give hot hands,
Give braziers for the heart,
Give to me, the loneliest,
Whom ice, ah, sevenfold ice
Teaches to long even for enemies,
To yearn for enemies,
Give, yes surrender,

Cruellest enemy,
To me—*yourself*!— —

“Away!
There he himself fled,
My only companion,
My great enemy,
My unknown one,
My executioner-God! ...

“No!
Come back!
With all your tortures!
All my tears run
Their course toward you!
And my heart’s final flame—
For *you* it flares!
Oh, come back,
My unknown God! My *pain*!
My final happiness!”

- ² But here Zarathustra could restrain himself no longer: he took his stick and struck the lamenting man with all his strength. “Stop!” he cried with furious laughter. “Stop, actor! Counterfeiter! Liar to the core! I recognize you well! “I will warm your legs for you, evil magician: I know how to put the heat on people like you!”
- “Enough!” the old man said, springing from the ground. “Strike no more, Zarathustra! I did it only as a performance!
- “Such things belong to my art: I wanted to test you by giving you this sample! And truly, you saw through me well!
- “But you too gave me no small sample of yourself: you are *hard*, wise Zarathustra! Hard you strike with your ‘truths’; your cudgel forces *this* truth from me!”

“Do not flatter,” Zarathustra answered, still agitated and dark-eyed. “Actor to the core! You are false: why speak of truth!

“You peacock of peacocks, sea of vanity, *what* were you performing before me, evil magician? In *whom* was I to believe when you lamented in that shape?”

“*The penitent of the spirit*,” the old man said. “*That* is what I performed: you yourself once invented this phrase—

“The poet and magician who at last turns his spirit against himself, the transformed one who freezes at his evil knowledge and conscience.

“And admit it: it took a long time, Zarathustra, before you saw through my art and lie! You *believed* in my distress when you held my head in both hands—

“I heard you lament, ‘He has been loved too little, loved too little!’ My malice rejoiced within at having deceived you so far.”

“You may have deceived subtler people than I,” Zarathustra said harshly. “I am not on guard against deceivers; I *must* be without precaution: so my fate wills.

“But you *must* deceive: that much I know of you! You must always have two, three, four, five meanings! Even what you now confessed was nowhere near true or false enough for me!

“Evil counterfeiter, how could you do otherwise? You would paint over even your sickness when showing yourself naked to your physician.

“Thus you just painted your lie before me when you said, ‘I did it *only* as a performance!’ There was *earnestness* in it too: you *are* something of a penitent of the spirit!

“I divine you well: you became everyone’s enchanter, but for yourself you have no lie or trick left—you yourself are disenchanted with yourself!

“You harvested disgust as your one truth. No word of yours is genuine anymore, but your mouth is: the disgust clinging to your mouth.”

“Who are you!” the old magician cried defiantly. “Who may speak like this to *me*, the greatest alive today?” A green flash shot from his eye toward Zarathustra. But immediately he changed and said sadly:

“Zarathustra, I am weary; my arts disgust me; I am not *great*—why pretend! But you know I sought greatness!

"I wanted to portray a great human being and persuaded many: but this lie surpassed my strength. I break upon it.

"Zarathustra, everything in me is a lie; but that I break—this breaking of mine is *genuine!*"—

"It honors you," Zarathustra said darkly, looking down and aside, "it honors you that you sought greatness, but also betrays you. You are not great.

"Evil old magician, *this* is your best and most honest part, which I honor: you grew weary of yourself and said, 'I am not great.'

"*In that* I honor you as a penitent of the spirit: even if only for a breath and a flash, in that one moment you were genuine.

"But tell me, what do you seek here among *my* forests and rocks? And if you placed yourself in *my* path, what sample did you want from me—

"What were you testing *me* for?"—

Thus spoke Zarathustra, his eyes glittering. The old magician was silent a while, then said, "Testing you? I seek only.

"Zarathustra, I seek someone genuine, true, simple, unambiguous, a human being of complete honesty, a vessel of wisdom, a saint of knowledge, a great human being!

"Do you not know it, Zarathustra? *I seek Zarathustra.*"

A long silence arose between them; Zarathustra sank deeply within himself, closing his eyes. Then, returning to his companion, he took the magician's hand and spoke with perfect courtesy and cunning:

"Well! Up there the path leads; there lies Zarathustra's cave. Within it you may seek whoever you wish to find.

"And ask my animals for counsel, my eagle and serpent: they shall help you seek. My cave is large.

"But I myself have never yet seen a great human being. Today even the subtlest have a crude eye for greatness. It is the kingdom of the rabble.

"I have found many who stretched and swelled themselves, while the people cried, 'Look, a great human being!' But what use are all bellows? At last the wind escapes.

“At last a frog bursts when it has inflated itself too long: then the wind escapes. To prick a swollen one’s belly—that I call a fine pastime. Hear it, boys!

“This today belongs to the rabble: who still *knows* what is great or small? Who could successfully seek greatness? Only a fool: fools have luck.

“You seek great human beings, strange fool? Who *taught* you that? Is today the time for it? Evil seeker, why do you test me?” — —

Thus spoke Zarathustra, comforted at heart, and went laughing upon his way.

Out of Service

Not long after freeing himself from the magician, Zarathustra saw someone else sitting beside his path: a tall man in black with a gaunt, pale face. *He* greatly displeased him. “Alas,” he said to his heart, “there sits disguised melancholy, seemingly of the priestly kind: what do *they* want in my kingdom?

“What! Scarcely have I escaped that magician, and another practitioner of black arts must cross my path—

“Some sorcerer with laying-on of hands, a dark miracle worker by God’s grace, an anointed slanderer of the world, whom the devil may fetch!

“But the devil is never where he would be useful: always he comes too late, that accursed dwarf and clubfoot!” —

Thus Zarathustra cursed impatiently in his heart, considering how to slip past the man in black with his eyes averted. But things went otherwise: at that very moment the seated man had already seen him, and like someone meeting unexpected happiness, sprang up and approached.

“Whoever you are, wanderer,” he said, “help someone lost and searching, an old man who may easily come to harm here!

“This world is foreign and remote to me; I also heard wild beasts howling; and the one who could have sheltered me is himself no more.

“I sought the last pious human being, a holy hermit who alone in his forest had heard nothing of what the whole world knows today.”

“*What* does the whole world know today?” Zarathustra asked. “That the old God in whom everyone once believed no longer lives?”

“You have said it,” the old man answered sadly. “And I served this old God until his final hour.

“But now I am out of service, without a master and yet not free, no longer joyful for even an hour except in memories.

“That is why I climbed these mountains: to make myself a festival again at last, as befits an old pope and church father—for know that I am the last pope! A festival of pious memories and divine services.

“But now he too is dead, the most pious man, that holy one in the forest who constantly praised his God with singing and growling.

“When I found his hut, I found him no longer—but two wolves within, howling over his death, for all animals loved him. Then I ran away.

“Had I come to these forests and mountains in vain? Then my heart resolved to seek another, the most pious of all who do not believe in God—to seek Zarathustra!”

Thus spoke the old man, looking sharply at the one before him; but Zarathustra took the old pope’s hand and contemplated it long in admiration.

“Look, venerable one,” he said then, “what a beautiful, long hand! The hand of someone who has always distributed blessings. But now it holds the one you seek: me, Zarathustra.

“I am he, godless Zarathustra, who says: who is more godless than I, that I may rejoice in his teaching?”—

Thus spoke Zarathustra, piercing the old pope’s thoughts and hidden thoughts with his gaze. At last the pope began:

“Whoever loved and possessed him most has now lost him most as well—

“Look, perhaps of us two I am now the more godless? But who could rejoice in that!”—

“You served him to the end,” Zarathustra asked thoughtfully after a deep silence. “Do you know *how* he died? Is what people say true, that pity choked him—

“That he saw *humanity* hanging upon the cross and could not bear it, that love of humanity became his hell and finally his death?”—

But the old pope did not answer; shyly he looked aside with a painful, gloomy expression.

“Let him go,” Zarathustra said after long reflection, still looking straight into the old man’s eye.

“Let him go: he is gone. Though it honors you to speak only well of this dead one, you know as well as I *who* he was, and how strangely he walked.”

“Speaking among three eyes,” the old pope said more cheerfully—for he was blind in one eye—“in God’s affairs I am more enlightened than Zarathustra himself, and may be.

“My love served him many years; my will followed all his will. But a good servant knows everything, including much the master hides from himself.

“He was a hidden God, full of secrecy. Truly, even a son came to him only by secret paths. At the door of his faith stands adultery.

“Whoever praises him as a God of love does not think highly enough of love itself. Did this God not also want to be judge? But the lover loves beyond reward and retribution.

“When he was young, this God from the East, he was hard and vengeful, and built himself a hell to delight his favorites.

“But at last he grew old and soft and tender and pitying, more like a grandfather than a father, but most like a tottering old grandmother.

“There he sat, withered, in his corner beside the stove, grieving over his weak legs, weary of world and will, until one day he suffocated upon his all-too-great pity.”

“Old pope,” Zarathustra interrupted, “did you see *that* with your own eyes? It could have happened so—so *and* otherwise. When gods die, they always die many kinds of death.

“But well! This way or that, this way and that—he is gone! He offended the taste of my ears and eyes; I would say nothing worse of him.

“I love everything that looks brightly and speaks honestly. But he—you know, old priest, there was something of your kind in him, something priestly—he had many meanings.

“He was unclear too. How he raged at us, that snorter of anger, for understanding him badly! But why did he not speak more clearly?

“And if our ears were at fault, why did he give us ears that heard him badly? If there was mud in our ears, well, who put it there?

“Too much went wrong for him, this potter who had not learned his craft! But taking revenge upon his pots and creatures because they turned out badly—that was a sin against *good taste*.

“There is good taste even in piety: at last it said, ‘Away with *such* a God! Better no God, better making fate on one’s own account, better a fool, better oneself God!’”

“What do I hear!” the old pope said, pricking up his ears. “Zarathustra, with such unbelief you are more pious than you think! Some God within you converted you to your godlessness.

“Is it not your piety itself that no longer lets you believe in a God? Your overflowing honesty will yet lead you even beyond good and evil!

“Look, what has been reserved for you? You have eyes and hand and mouth destined from eternity to bless. One does not bless with the hand alone.

“Near you, though you would be the most godless, I scent a secret fragrance of consecration and long blessings: it brings me joy and pain.

“Let me be your guest for one night, Zarathustra! Nowhere on earth would I feel better than with you!”—

“Amen! So be it!” Zarathustra said in great wonder. “Up there the path leads; there lies Zarathustra’s cave.

“Truly, I would gladly lead you there myself, venerable one, for I love all pious people. But now a cry of distress urgently calls me away.

“In my domain no one shall come to harm; my cave is a good harbor. Above all I would like to set every sad person back upon firm land and firm legs.

“But who could lift *your* melancholy from your shoulder? I am too weak for that. Long indeed we might wait for someone to wake your God again.

“For this old God no longer lives: he is thoroughly dead.”—

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

The Ugliest Human Being

Again Zarathustra's feet ran through mountains and forests, his eyes searching and searching; but nowhere could he see the one they wished to see, the great sufferer crying in distress. Yet throughout the journey his heart rejoiced and was grateful. "What good things," he said, "this day has given me in return for beginning badly! What strange companions in conversation I found!

"Long I will chew their words like good grain; my teeth shall grind and crush them small until they flow like milk into my soul!"—

But when the path turned around another rock, the landscape suddenly changed, and Zarathustra entered a kingdom of death. Black and red cliffs rose starkly here: no grass, no tree, no bird's voice. It was a valley all animals avoided, even beasts of prey, except that a kind of ugly, fat, green serpent came here when old to die. So the shepherds called this valley Serpents' Death.

Zarathustra sank into a black memory, for he felt he had stood in this valley before. Many heavy things settled upon his mind; he walked slowly, ever more slowly, and finally stopped. Opening his eyes, he saw something beside the path, shaped like a human being and scarcely like one, something unspeakable. At one stroke great shame assailed Zarathustra for having looked at such a thing: blushing to his white hair, he turned his gaze aside and lifted his foot to leave this dreadful place. But then the dead waste grew loud: from the ground rose gurgling and rattling, like water gurgling and rattling through clogged pipes at night; at last it became a human voice and human speech, saying:

"Zarathustra! Zarathustra! Solve my riddle! Speak, speak! What is *revenge upon the witness*?

"I lure you back: here is smooth ice! Take care, take care that your pride does not break its legs here!

"You think yourself wise, proud Zarathustra! Then solve the riddle, hard nut-cracker—the riddle that I am! Speak: who am I?"

But when Zarathustra heard these words, what do you think happened to his soul? *Pity assailed him*; suddenly he sank like an oak that has long resisted many woodcutters—heavily, abruptly, terrifying even those who wanted to fell it. But already he rose again, his face hardening.

"I recognize you well," he said in a bronze voice. "*You are God's murderer!* Let me go.

"You could not *bear* the one who saw *you*, who always saw you through and through, ugliest human being! You took revenge upon this witness!"

Thus spoke Zarathustra, meaning to leave; but the unspeakable one caught a corner of his robe and began gurgling again, searching for words. "Stay!" he said at last—

"Stay! Do not pass by! I divined the ax that struck you down: hail to you, Zarathustra, for standing again!

"You divined, I know well, how the one who killed him feels, God's murderer. Stay! Sit beside me: it will not be for nothing.

"To whom would I go except you? Stay, sit! But do not look at me! Thus honor my ugliness!

"They pursue me: now *you* are my last refuge. *Not* with their hatred, *not* with their pursuers—oh, I would mock such persecution and be proud and glad!

"Has success not always favored the well-persecuted? And whoever pursues well easily learns to *follow*: after all, he is already behind! But it is their *pity*—

"Their pity I flee, taking refuge with you. Zarathustra, protect me, my last refuge, the only one who divined me—

"You divined how the one who killed *him* feels. Stay! And if you want to go, impatient one, do not take the way I came. *That* path is bad.

"Are you angry because I have babbled and mangled speech too long? Because I already offer you counsel? But know that I am the ugliest human being—

"The one with the greatest and heaviest feet too. Where *I* went, the path is bad. I trample every path to death and disgrace.

"But that you passed me silently, that you blushed—I saw it well: by that I recognized you as Zarathustra.

"Anyone else would have thrown me alms, his pity, with look and speech. But for that I am not beggar enough: you divined it—

"For that I am too *rich*, rich in greatness, in terror, in the ugliest and most unspeakable! Your shame, Zarathustra, *honored* me!

“Only with difficulty did I escape the crowd of the pitying to find the one person now teaching, ‘Pity is intrusive’—you, Zarathustra!

“Whether a God’s pity or human pity, pity offends modesty. And unwillingness to help can be nobler than the virtue that leaps to help.

“But *that*, pity, all small people now call virtue itself: they have no reverence for great misfortune, great ugliness, great failure.

“I look beyond them all, as a dog looks over the backs of swarming sheep herds. They are small, benevolent, well-meaning gray people. As a heron looks contemptuously over shallow ponds with head drawn back, I look beyond the swarm of gray little waves and wills and souls.

“Too long they have been conceded the right, these small people: at last they were given power too. Now they teach, ‘Only what small people call good is good.’

“And ‘truth’ today means what the preacher said, who himself came from them, that strange holy man and advocate of small people who testified of himself, ‘I am the truth.’

“This immodest one has long made small people’s crests swell high—he who taught no small error when he taught, ‘I am the truth.’

“Was an immodest person ever answered more courteously? But you, Zarathustra, passed him by and said, ‘No! No! Three times No!’

“You warned against his error; you first warned against pity—not everyone, not no one, but yourself and your kind.

“You feel shame at the great sufferer’s shame; truly, when you say, ‘From pity comes a great cloud: take care, human beings!’—

“When you teach, ‘All creators are hard; all great love stands above its pity’: Zarathustra, how well taught in weather signs you seem to me!

“But you yourself—warn yourself against *your* pity too! For many are traveling toward you, many suffering, doubting, despairing, drowning, freezing—

“I warn you against me too. You divined my finest, worst riddle, myself and what I did. I know the ax that fells you.

“But he *had* to die: he saw with eyes that saw *everything*—the human being’s depths and foundations, all concealed disgrace and ugliness.

“His pity knew no shame: he crawled into my dirtiest corners. This most curious, over-intrusive, over-pitying one had to die.

“He always saw *me*: upon such a witness I wanted revenge—or not to live myself.

“The God who saw everything, *even humanity*: this God had to die! Humanity *cannot bear* such a witness living.”

Thus spoke the ugliest human being. But Zarathustra rose and prepared to leave, for he was chilled into his entrails.

“Unspeakable one,” he said, “you warned me against your path. In thanks I commend mine to you. Look, up there lies Zarathustra’s cave.

“My cave is large and deep and has many corners; the most hidden will find a hiding place there. Close by are a hundred hiding places and secret paths for creeping, fluttering, leaping creatures.

“Outcast who cast yourself out, you do not want to live among human beings and human pity? Well, do as I do! Thus you learn from me too; only the doer learns.

“And speak first and foremost with my animals! The proudest and cleverest animals might be the right counselors for us both!”

Thus spoke Zarathustra and went his way, more thoughtfully and slowly than before: for he asked himself much and could not easily answer.

“How poor humanity is!” he thought in his heart. “How ugly, how rattling, how full of hidden shame!

“They tell me humanity loves itself: ah, how great this self-love must be! How much contempt it faces!

“This one too loved himself as he despised himself: to me he is a great lover and a great despiser.

“I have found no one who despised himself more deeply: even *that* is height. Alas, was *he* perhaps the higher human being whose cry I heard?

“I love the great despisers. But the human being is something that must be overcome.” — —

The Voluntary Beggar

After leaving the ugliest human being, Zarathustra felt cold and lonely: much that was cold and solitary passed through his mind, chilling his limbs as well. But as he climbed onward, upward and downward, passing green pastures and wild beds of stone where an impatient brook had once perhaps lain down, his mind suddenly grew warmer and more cheerful.

“What has happened to me?” he asked himself. “Something warm and living refreshes me; it must be nearby.

“Already I am less alone; companions and brothers unknown to me roam around me; their warm breath touches my soul.”

But when he looked around for the comforters of his solitude, he found cows standing together upon a rise: their nearness and scent had warmed his heart. The cows seemed eagerly listening to a speaker and paid no attention to the approaching man. When Zarathustra came close, he distinctly heard a human voice speaking among them; plainly they had all turned their heads toward the speaker.

Then Zarathustra sprang eagerly up and pushed the animals apart, fearing someone had suffered harm that cows’ pity could hardly remedy. But he was mistaken: there sat a man upon the ground, apparently urging the animals not to fear him, a peaceable man and preacher upon mountains, from whose eyes goodness itself preached. “What do you seek here?” Zarathustra cried in surprise.

“What do I seek here?” he answered. “The same thing you seek, disturber of peace: happiness upon earth.

“But for that I would learn from these cows. For half the morning I have been speaking to them, and they were just about to answer. Why disturb them?

“Unless we turn and become like cows, we shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. We should learn one thing from them: chewing the cud.

“And truly, though humanity gained the whole world but did not learn this one thing, chewing the cud, what would it help? It would not escape its melancholy—

“Its great melancholy, now called *disgust*. Whose heart, mouth, and eyes are not full of disgust today? Yours too! Yours too! But look at these cows!”—

Thus spoke the mountain preacher, then turned his gaze toward Zarathustra—for until now it had clung lovingly to the cows. Suddenly he changed. “Who is this I speak to?” he cried in fright, springing up.

“This is the human being without disgust; this is Zarathustra himself, conqueror of great disgust; this is Zarathustra’s own eye and mouth and heart.”

As he spoke, he kissed the hands of the man he addressed, his eyes overflowing, behaving like someone upon whom a precious gift and jewel suddenly falls from heaven. The cows watched everything and wondered.

“Do not speak of me, strange, lovable man!” Zarathustra said, resisting his tenderness. “Speak first of yourself! Are you not the voluntary beggar who once cast away great wealth—

“Who was ashamed of his wealth and the rich, and fled to the poorest to give them his abundance and heart? But they did not receive him.”

“But they did not receive me,” said the voluntary beggar. “You know it. So at last I went to the animals and these cows.”

“There you learned,” Zarathustra interrupted, “that giving rightly is harder than receiving rightly, and good giving is an *art*, goodness’s final, cleverest master art.”

“Especially today,” the voluntary beggar answered, “now that everything low has become rebellious and wary and proud in its fashion—the rabble’s fashion.

“For the hour has come, as you know, for the great, evil, long, slow revolt of rabble and slaves: it grows and grows!

“Now all beneficence and little gifts offend the lowly; let the over-rich be on guard!

“Those who drip today like potbellied bottles from all-too-narrow necks—people gladly break such bottles’ necks today.

“Lustful greed, bilious envy, embittered vengeance, rabble pride: all leaped into my face. It is no longer true that the poor are blessed. But the kingdom of heaven is among cows.”

“And why not among the rich?” Zarathustra asked, testing him, while holding back cows that trustingly breathed upon the peaceable man.

“Why test me?” he answered. “You know better than I. What drove me to the poorest, Zarathustra? Was it not disgust with our richest—

“With wealth’s convicts, gleaned advantage from every rubbish heap, cold-eyed, lewd-minded, this rabble stinking to heaven—

“With this gilded, falsified rabble whose fathers were pickpockets or vultures or ragpickers, with women compliant, lustful, forgetful—for none of them is far from being a whore—

“Rabble above, rabble below! What now is ‘poor’ and ‘rich’? I unlearned that distinction, then fled farther and farther until I reached these cows.”

Thus spoke the peaceable man, himself panting and sweating with his words, so that the cows wondered again. Zarathustra kept smiling into his face as he spoke so harshly, silently shaking his head.

“You force yourself, mountain preacher, when you use such hard words. Your mouth and eye did not grow for such hardness.

“Nor, I think, did your stomach itself: *it* rejects all such rage and hatred and overflowing. Your stomach wants gentler things: you are no butcher.

“Rather, you seem a man of plants and roots. Perhaps you grind grain. Certainly you dislike fleshly pleasures and love honey.”

“You divined me well,” the voluntary beggar answered, his heart relieved. “I love honey, and grind grain too: for I sought what tastes pleasant and makes pure breath—

“Also what takes a long time, a day’s work for the mouth of gentle idlers and time-wasters.

“These cows have certainly gone farthest: they invented chewing the cud and lying in the sun. They also abstain from all heavy thoughts that bloat the heart.”

“Well!” Zarathustra said. “You should see *my* animals too, my eagle and serpent: their equals are nowhere upon earth today.

“Look, there is the path to my cave: be their guest tonight. Speak with my animals about animals’ happiness—

“Until I myself come home. For now a cry of distress calls me urgently away. You will also find new honey with me, ice-fresh golden honey from the comb: eat it!

“But now take quick leave of your cows, strange, lovable man, though it may be hard. For they are your warmest friends and teachers!”—

“Except one whom I love still more,” the voluntary beggar answered. “You yourself are good, better even than a cow, Zarathustra!”

“Away, away with you, wicked flatterer!” Zarathustra cried maliciously. “Why spoil me with such praise and honeyed flattery?”

“Away, away from me!” he cried again, swinging his stick toward the tender beggar: but the man ran swiftly away.

The Shadow

Scarcely had the voluntary beggar run away and Zarathustra become alone again when he heard a new voice behind him: “Stop, Zarathustra! Wait! It is I, Zarathustra, your shadow!” But Zarathustra did not wait, for sudden irritation seized him at all the pressing and crowding in his mountains. “Where has my solitude gone?” he said.

“Truly, this is too much: these mountains swarm; my kingdom is no longer of *this* world; I need new mountains.

“My shadow calls me? What does my shadow matter! Let it run after me—I run away from it.”

Thus Zarathustra spoke to his heart and ran. But the one behind followed, so that soon three runners went one after another: first the voluntary beggar, then Zarathustra, third and last his shadow. Before long Zarathustra recognized his folly and shook off all irritation and weariness in one movement.

“What!” he said. “Have the most ridiculous things not always happened among us old hermits and holy men?

“Truly, my folly has grown tall in the mountains! Now I hear six old fools’ legs clattering after one another!

“But may Zarathustra fear a shadow? Besides, I think his legs are longer than mine.”

Thus Zarathustra spoke, laughing with eyes and entrails, stopped, and turned quickly. He almost knocked his follower and shadow to the ground: so closely it followed upon his heels, and so weak it was. Examining it, he was frightened as by a sudden ghost: so thin, darkish, hollow, and worn-out this follower looked.

“Who are you?” Zarathustra asked sharply. “What are you doing here? Why call yourself my shadow? I do not like you.”

“Forgive me,” the shadow answered, “for being myself; and if you do not like me, well, Zarathustra, I praise you and your good taste for that.

“I am a wanderer who has long followed upon your heels, always traveling, but without goal or home, so that truly I lack little of being the Wandering Jew, except that I am not eternal, and not a Jew.

“What? Must I always travel? Whirled by every wind, unsettled, driven away? Oh, earth, you have become too round for me!

“I have sat upon every surface, slept like weary dust upon mirrors and window-panes: everything takes from me, nothing gives; I grow thin—almost like a shadow.

“But after you, Zarathustra, I flew and followed longest; though I hid from you, I was your finest shadow: wherever you sat, I sat too.

“With you I roamed the farthest, coldest worlds, like a ghost voluntarily walking over winter roofs and snow.

“With you I strove toward everything forbidden, worst, farthest: if anything in me is virtue, it is fearing no prohibition.

“With you I broke whatever my heart revered, overthrew all boundary stones and images, pursued the most dangerous wishes: truly, I once passed across every crime.

“With you I unlearned belief in words and values and great names. When the devil sheds his skin, does his name not fall away too? For it too is skin. Perhaps the devil himself is skin.

“‘Nothing is true, everything is permitted,’ I told myself. Into the coldest waters I plunged with head and heart. Ah, how often afterward I stood naked as a red crab!

“Ah, where has all my good gone, all shame and belief in the good! Where is that lying innocence I once possessed, the innocence of the good and their noble lies!

“Too often, truly, I followed truth closely upon its heels: then it struck my head. Sometimes I thought I lied, and only then did I hit the truth.

“Too much became clear to me: now nothing concerns me anymore. Nothing I love still lives—how could I still love myself?

“‘Live as I please, or not live at all’: thus I will it, and the holiest too. But alas! What pleasure have *I* left?

“Have *I* still a goal? A harbor toward which *my* sail runs?

“A good wind? Ah, only whoever knows *where* they sail knows what wind is good and favorable.

“What remains to me? A weary, insolent heart; an unsettled will; fluttering wings; a broken backbone.

“This search for *my* home: Zarathustra, you know, this search was *my* affliction; it consumes me.

“‘Where is *my* home?’ I ask and seek and have sought; I did not find it. Oh, eternal Everywhere, eternal Nowhere, eternal In Vain!”

Thus spoke the shadow, and Zarathustra’s face lengthened at its words. “You are my shadow!” he said sadly at last.

“Your danger is no small one, free spirit and wanderer! You have had a bad day: take care that a worse evening does not follow!

“To unsettled ones like you, even prison finally seems blessed. Have you seen how captured criminals sleep? Peacefully: they enjoy their new security.

“Beware lest at last a narrow faith captures you, a hard, strict delusion! For now everything narrow and fixed seduces and tempts you.

“You have lost the goal: alas, how will you jest away and endure this loss? With it you have also lost the way!

“Poor roaming enthusiast, weary butterfly! Do you want rest and a home this evening? Go up to my cave!

“There is the path to my cave. Now I will quickly run away from you again. Already something lies upon me like a shadow.

"I want to run alone, so that it grows bright around me again. For that I must stay lively upon my legs a long time yet. But in the evening, at my home—there will be dancing!" — —

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

At Noon

Zarathustra ran and ran, finding no one else, alone, finding himself again and again, enjoying and sipping his solitude, thinking of good things for hours. Around noon, with the sun directly above his head, he passed an old, crooked, knotted tree embraced all around and hidden from itself by a vine's rich love: abundant yellow grapes hung toward the wanderer. He longed to quench a little thirst and break off a cluster; but as he stretched his arm, he desired something else still more: to lie beside the tree at perfect noon and sleep.

This Zarathustra did; as soon as he lay upon the ground in the still privacy of bright grass, he forgot his little thirst and fell asleep. For, as Zarathustra's proverb says, one thing is more necessary than another. Only his eyes stayed open: they could not have enough of seeing and praising the tree and the vine's love. Falling asleep, Zarathustra spoke to his heart:

"Still! Still! Has the world not just become perfect? What is happening to me?

"As a delicate wind dances unseen upon a paneled sea, light, feather-light, so sleep dances upon me.

"It presses no eye shut, leaves my soul awake. Light it is, truly feather-light.

"It persuades me, I know not how, touches me within with a flattering hand, compels me. Yes, it compels my soul to stretch out—

"How long and weary my strange soul grows! Has the evening of a seventh day come upon it precisely at noon? Has it walked blessedly among good and ripe things too long?

"It stretches long, long—longer! My strange soul lies still. It has tasted too much good already; this golden sadness weighs upon it; it twists its mouth.

"Like a ship entering its stillest bay: now it leans against earth, weary of long voyages and uncertain seas. Is earth not more faithful?

"As such a ship nestles and clings to land, a spider spinning its thread from shore is enough. No stronger ropes are needed.

“Like such a weary ship in the stillest bay, I too now rest near earth, faithful, trusting, waiting, bound to it by the softest threads.

“Oh, happiness! Happiness! Do you want to sing, my soul? You lie in the grass. But this is the secret solemn hour when no shepherd plays his flute.

“Be modest! Hot noon sleeps upon the fields. Do not sing! Still! The world is perfect.

“Do not sing, grass-bird, my soul! Do not even whisper! Look—still! Old noon sleeps, moving its mouth: is it not just drinking a drop of happiness—

“An old brown drop of golden happiness, golden wine? Something flits over it; its happiness laughs. Thus a God laughs. Still!—

“For happiness, how little is enough!’ I once said, thinking myself clever. But it was blasphemy: *that* I have now learned. Clever fools speak better.

“The least, precisely, the softest, lightest, a lizard’s rustle, a breath, a flash, a glance—*little* makes the nature of the *best* happiness. Still!

“What happened to me: listen! Has time flown away? Am I not falling? Did I not fall—listen!—into eternity’s well?

“What is happening to me? Still! Something stabs me—alas—in the heart? In the heart! Oh, break, break, heart, after such happiness, such a stab!

“What? Has the world not just become perfect? Round and ripe? Oh, the golden rounded hoop—where is it flying? Let me run after it! Away!

“Still—” Here Zarathustra stretched and felt himself sleeping.

“Up!” he said to himself. “Sleeper! Noonday sleeper! Come, up, old legs! It is time and more than time; a good stretch of road still remains—

“Now you have slept your fill—for how long? Half an eternity! Come, up now, old heart! After such sleep, how long may you now—have your fill of waking?”

(But already he fell asleep again, and his soul spoke against him, resisting and lying down again.) “Leave me! Still! Has the world not just become perfect? Oh, the golden round ball!”—

“Stand up,” Zarathustra said, “little thief, time-thief! What? Still stretching, yawning, sighing, falling into deep wells?

“Who are you, my soul!” Here he started, for a sunbeam fell from the sky upon his face.

“Oh, sky above me,” he sighed, sitting upright, “you watch me? You listen to my strange soul?”

“When will you drink this dewdrop fallen upon all earthly things—when will you drink this strange soul—

“When, well of eternity, bright, dreadful noonday abyss, when will you drink my soul back into yourself?”

Thus spoke Zarathustra, rising from his bed beside the tree as from a strange intoxication; and the sun still stood directly above his head. From this one might rightly infer that Zarathustra had not slept long that time.

The Welcome

Only late in the afternoon, after long, fruitless searching and wandering, did Zarathustra return to his cave. But standing opposite it, not twenty paces away, he met what he least expected: again he heard the great *cry of distress*. Astonishingly, this time it came from his own cave. It was a long, many-voiced, strange cry; Zarathustra distinctly heard it composed of many voices, though from afar it might sound like one mouth’s cry.

He sprang toward his cave: what spectacle awaited him after this drama of sound! All those he had passed that day sat together: the king on the right and the king on the left, the old magician, the pope, the voluntary beggar, the shadow, the conscientious in spirit, the sad soothsayer, and the donkey. The ugliest human being had put on a crown and wrapped himself in two purple belts: like all the ugly, he loved disguise and seeming beautiful. Amid this sad company Zarathustra’s eagle stood bristling and uneasy, expected to answer too much for which its pride had no answer; the clever serpent hung around its neck.

Zarathustra looked upon all this in great wonder, then examined each guest with friendly curiosity, reading their souls and wondering again. Meanwhile those assembled rose from their seats, waiting reverently for him to speak. Zarathustra said:

“You despairing ones! Strange ones! Then it was *your* cry of distress I heard? Now I know where to seek the one I sought in vain today: *the higher human being*—

“He sits in my own cave, the higher human being! But why wonder? Did I not lure him myself with honey offerings and my happiness’s cunning calls?

“Yet you seem ill suited to one another’s company: sitting together, you make one another’s hearts ill-tempered, you criers in distress? Someone must come first—

“Someone to make you laugh again, a good, cheerful clown, a dancer and wind and wild thing, some old fool—what do you think?

“Forgive me, despairing ones, for speaking before you in such little words, truly unworthy of such guests! But you do not divine *what* makes my heart playful—

“You yourselves and your appearance do it: forgive me! Everyone grows courageous at the sight of someone despairing. Everyone thinks himself strong enough to encourage a despairing person.

“You yourselves gave me this strength—a good gift, my high guests! An honest guest-gift! Well, do not be angry now if I offer you some of mine in return.

“This is my kingdom and dominion: whatever is mine shall be yours this evening and night. My animals shall serve you; my cave shall be your resting place!

“In my home no one shall despair; in my territory I protect everyone from their wild beasts. This is the first thing I offer: safety!

“The second is my little finger. Once you have *that*, take the whole hand as well, and my heart with it! Welcome here, welcome, my guest-friends!”

Thus spoke Zarathustra, laughing with love and malice. After this welcome his guests bowed again, silent in reverence; but the king on the right answered for them.

“By how you offered hand and greeting, Zarathustra, we recognize you as Zarathustra. You lowered yourself before us; you almost wounded our reverence—

“But who could lower himself with such pride as you? *That* raises us ourselves; it refreshes our eyes and hearts.

“Only to see this, we would gladly climb mountains higher than this one. For we came as spectators: we wanted to see what brightens clouded eyes.

“And look, all our cries of distress have ended already. Our minds and hearts stand open, delighted. A little more, and our courage will turn playful.

“Nothing more joyful grows upon earth than a high, strong will: that is its loveliest growth. A whole landscape is refreshed by one such tree.

“I compare whoever grows as you do, Zarathustra, to the pine: tall, silent, hard, alone, of the finest, most supple wood, splendid—

“At last reaching outward with strong green branches toward *its own* dominion, asking strong questions before winds and storms and whatever inhabits the heights—

“Answering more strongly, a commander, a victor: who would not climb high mountains to see such growth?

“Even the gloomy and ill-made find refreshment in your tree, Zarathustra; even the unsettled grow sure at your appearance, healing their hearts.

“Truly, many eyes turn toward your mountain and tree today; a great longing has set out, and many learned to ask: who is Zarathustra?

“And all those into whose ears you ever dripped song and honey—the hidden ones, hermits, solitary pairs—suddenly said to their hearts:

“‘Does Zarathustra still live? Life is no longer worthwhile, everything is the same, everything in vain—or we must live with Zarathustra!’

“‘Why does he not come, who announced himself so long?’ many ask. ‘Has solitude swallowed him? Or should we come to him?’

“Now solitude itself grows tender and breaks, like a grave breaking and unable to hold its dead. Everywhere one sees the risen.

“Now the waves rise and rise around your mountain, Zarathustra. However high your height, many must climb to you; your boat shall not sit long upon dry land.

“And that we despairing ones have now entered your cave and already despair no more is only a sign and omen that better ones travel toward you—

“For he himself travels toward you, God’s last remnant among humanity: all the human beings of great longing, great disgust, great weariness—

“All who refuse to live unless they learn to *hope* again—or learn from you, Zarathustra, the *great* hope!”

Thus spoke the king on the right, taking Zarathustra's hand to kiss it; but Zarathustra resisted his reverence and recoiled in fright, silent and suddenly seeming to flee into far distances. After a little while he returned to his guests, looked with bright, searching eyes, and said:

"My guests, higher human beings, I will speak plain German and plainly with you. It was not for *you* I waited here in these mountains."

("German and plain? God have mercy!" the king on the left said aside. "Plainly this eastern sage does not know the dear Germans!")

"But he means 'German and blunt'—well! That is still not the worst taste today!")

"You may indeed all be higher human beings," Zarathustra continued, "but for me you are not high and strong enough.

"For me means for the inexorable thing silent within me, which will not always be silent. And if you belong to me, it is not as my right arm.

"For whoever stands upon sick and delicate legs, like you, wants above all, knowingly or secretly, to be *spared*.

"But I do not spare my arms and legs; *I do not spare my warriors*: how could you be fit for *my* war?

"With you I would spoil every victory. Many among you would already fall merely hearing my drums' loud sound.

"Nor are you beautiful and well-born enough for me. I need clean, smooth mirrors for my teachings: upon your surface my own image is still distorted.

"Many burdens and memories press upon your shoulders; many an evil dwarf crouches in your corners. There is hidden rabble even within you.

"And though you are high and of higher kind, much in you is crooked and misshapen. No smith in the world could hammer you straight and right for me.

"You are only bridges: let higher ones cross upon you! You signify steps: do not be angry with whoever climbs beyond you into *his own* height!

"From your seed one day a genuine son and perfect heir may grow for me: but that is far away. You yourselves are not those to whom my inheritance and name belong.

“It is not for you I wait in these mountains; not with you may I descend for the last time. You came only as omens that higher ones already travel toward me—

“*Not* the human beings of great longing, great disgust, great weariness, and what you called God’s remnant.

“No! No! Three times No! For *others* I wait in these mountains, and without them I will not lift my foot to leave—

“For higher, stronger, more victorious, more cheerful ones, built squarely in body and soul: *laughing lions* must come!

“Oh, my guest-friends, strange ones, have you heard nothing of my children? That they travel toward me?

“Speak to me of my gardens, my blissful islands, my new, beautiful kind—why do you not speak of them?

“This guest-gift I ask from your love: speak to me of my children. For this I am rich; for this I grew poor: what have I not given—

“What would I not give to have this one thing: *these* children, *this* living plantation, *these* living trees of my will and highest hope!”

Thus spoke Zarathustra, suddenly stopping: his longing overcame him, and he closed eyes and mouth at his heart’s emotion. All his guests too fell silent, still and dismayed; only the old soothsayer made signs with hands and gestures.

The Supper

At this point the soothsayer interrupted Zarathustra’s welcome to his guests: he pushed forward like someone with no time to lose, seized Zarathustra’s hand, and cried, “But Zarathustra!

“One thing is more necessary than another, as you yourself say: well, one thing is now more necessary to *me* than anything else.

“A word at the proper time: did you not invite me to a *meal*? And here are many who have traveled far. Surely you will not feed us with speeches?

“Besides, you have all dwelt too much on freezing, drowning, suffocating, and other bodily distresses: no one considered *my* distress—starving!”

(Thus spoke the soothsayer; hearing his words, Zarathustra’s animals ran away in terror. They saw that everything they had brought home that day would not suffice to stuff this one soothsayer.)

"Including dying of thirst," the soothsayer continued. "Though I hear water splashing here like speeches of wisdom, plentiful and tireless, I want *wine*!

"Not everyone is a born water drinker like Zarathustra. Nor is water fit for the weary and withered: *we* deserve wine—*that* alone brings sudden recovery and improvised health!"

When the soothsayer demanded wine, the silent king on the left also found his voice. "*We* provided wine," he said, "I and my brother, the king on the right: we have enough, a whole donkey-load. Nothing is missing but bread."

"Bread?" Zarathustra answered, laughing. "Precisely bread is what hermits lack. But humanity lives not by bread alone, also by the flesh of good lambs, of which I have two—

"*They* should be slaughtered quickly and prepared with spices and sage: that is how I like them. Nor do we lack roots and fruit, good enough even for gourmands and connoisseurs; or nuts and other riddles to crack.

"So shortly we shall have a good meal. But whoever wants to eat must lend a hand, kings included. For with Zarathustra even a king may be a cook."

This suggestion pleased everyone; only the voluntary beggar resisted meat and wine and spices.

"Just listen to this glutton Zarathustra!" he said jokingly. "Is this why one goes into caves and high mountains—to have such meals?

"Now, certainly, I understand his former teaching, 'Praised be a modest poverty!' And why he wants to abolish beggars."

"Be of good cheer," Zarathustra answered, "as I am. Keep your custom, excellent man: grind your grain, drink your water, praise your kitchen—if only it makes you joyful!

"I am a law only for my own, not a law for everyone. But whoever belongs to me must have strong bones and light feet—

"Glad for wars and festivals, no gloomy one or dreamer, ready for the hardest task as for a festival, healthy and whole.

"The best belongs to my own and me; if it is not given, we take it: the finest food, purest sky, strongest thoughts, most beautiful women!"—

Thus spoke Zarathustra; but the king on the right replied, “Strange! Were such sensible things ever heard from a sage’s mouth?

“Truly, the strangest thing in a sage is being sensible as well as everything else, and no donkey.”

Thus spoke the king on the right in wonder; but the donkey answered his speech with an ill-willed “Hee-haw.” This was the beginning of that long meal called “the Supper” in history books. At it they spoke of nothing except *the higher human being*.

On the Higher Human Being

- ¹ “When I first came to humanity, I committed the hermit’s folly, the great folly: I stood in the marketplace.

“Speaking to everyone, I spoke to no one. By evening tightrope walkers and corpses were my companions, and I myself almost a corpse.

“But with the new morning came a new truth: then I learned to say, ‘What do marketplace and rabble and rabble noise and long rabble ears matter to me!’

“Higher human beings, learn this from me: in the marketplace no one believes in higher human beings. If you speak there, well! But the rabble blinks, ‘We are all equal.’

“‘Higher human beings,’ the rabble blinks, ‘there are no higher human beings; we are all equal, human is human, before God—we are all equal!’

“Before God! But now this God has died. Before the rabble, however, we refuse to be equal. Higher human beings, leave the marketplace!

- ² “Before God! But now this God has died! Higher human beings, this God was your greatest danger.

“Only since he lies in the grave have you risen again. Only now comes the great noon; only now does the higher human being become master!

“Did you understand this word, my brothers? You are frightened: do your hearts grow dizzy? Does the abyss gape here? Does hell’s hound bark here?

“Come! Up! Higher human beings! Only now does the mountain of humanity’s future labor in childbirth. God died: now *we* will that the overhuman should live.

3 “The most concerned ask today, ‘How is humanity preserved?’ But Zarathustra alone and first asks, ‘How is humanity *overcome*?’

“The overhuman lies close to my heart; *that* is my first and only concern—*not* humanity: not the neighbor, poorest, greatest sufferer, or best—

“Oh, my brothers, what I can love in humanity is its crossing-over and going-under. And in you too much makes me love and hope.

“That you despised, higher human beings, gives me hope. For the great despisers are the great reverers.

“That you despaired deserves much honor. For you did not learn submission; you did not learn petty prudences.

“For today the small people have become masters: they all preach submission and modesty and prudence and diligence and consideration, and the long et cetera of small virtues.

“What is womanish, what descends from servility, especially the rabble-mish-mash: *that* now wants to master all human fate—oh, disgust! Disgust! Disgust!

“*That* asks and asks tirelessly, ‘How is humanity preserved best, longest, most pleasantly?’ Thus they are today’s masters.

“Overcome these masters of today for me, my brothers, these small people: *they* are the overhuman’s greatest danger!

“Higher human beings, overcome the small virtues, petty prudences, sand-grain considerations, swarming ant-business, pitiful contentment, the ‘happiness of the greatest number’!

“Rather despair than submit. Truly, I love you for not knowing how to live today, higher human beings! For thus *you* live best!

4 “Have you courage, my brothers? Are you brave at heart? *Not* courage before witnesses, but hermit courage and eagle courage, watched by no God anymore?

“Cold souls, mules, the blind, the drunken are not brave-hearted to me. Heart belongs to whoever knows fear but *masters* fear, whoever sees the abyss but with *pride*.

“Whoever sees the abyss with eagle eyes, whoever *grasps* the abyss with eagle claws—that person has courage.— —

- 5 “‘Humanity is evil,’ all the wisest told me in comfort. Ah, if only it were still true today! For evil is humanity’s finest strength.
 “‘Humanity must become better and more evil’—so *I* teach. The worst is needed for the overhuman’s best.
 “It may have suited that preacher of small people to suffer and bear humanity’s sin. But I rejoice in great sin as my great *comfort*.—
 “Such things are not said for long ears. Nor does every word belong in every mouth. These are subtle, distant things: sheep’s hooves must not reach for them!
- 6 “Higher human beings, do you think I am here to make good what you did badly?
 “Or that henceforth I would bed you sufferers more comfortably? Or show easier paths to you unsettled, lost, stranded climbers?
 “No! No! Three times No! Ever more, ever better of your kind shall perish—for your lot must grow ever worse and harder. Only thus—
 “Only thus does humanity grow to the height where lightning strikes and shatters it: high enough for lightning!
 “Toward few things, lasting things, distant things go my mind and longing: what does your small, many, brief misery matter to me!
 “You do not suffer enough yet! For you suffer from yourselves; you have not yet suffered *from humanity*. You would lie if you said otherwise! None of you suffers from what *I* suffered.— —
- 7 “It is not enough for me that lightning no longer harms. I do not want to divert it: it must learn to work for *me*.—
 “My wisdom has long gathered like a cloud, growing stiller and darker. So does every wisdom that one day must give birth to *lightning*.—
 “To today’s human beings I do not want to be *light* or be called light. *Them* I want to blind. Lightning of my wisdom! Put out their eyes!
- 8 “Will nothing beyond your capacity: there is a dangerous falsehood in those who will beyond their capacity.

“Especially when they will great things! For these subtle counterfeiterers and actors awaken mistrust of greatness—

“Until at last they are false before themselves, squint-eyed, whitewashed worm-eaten wood, cloaked in strong words, display virtues, brilliant false works.

“Take good care here, higher human beings! For today nothing seems more precious and rare to me than honesty.

“Does this today not belong to the rabble? But the rabble does not know great or small, straight or honest: it is innocently crooked, always lying.

- 9 “Have good mistrust today, higher human beings, brave-hearted, openhearted ones! Keep your reasons secret! For this today belongs to the rabble.

“What the rabble did not learn to believe without reasons—who could overthrow that with reasons?

“And in the marketplace gestures persuade. But reasons make the rabble mistrustful.

“And if truth once conquered there, ask yourselves with good mistrust, ‘What strong error fought for it?’

“Beware of scholars too! They hate you, for they are barren! Their eyes are cold and dried up; before them every bird lies unfeathered.

“They boast of not lying: but inability to lie is far from love of truth. Beware!

“Freedom from fever is far from knowledge! I do not believe chilled spirits. Whoever cannot lie does not know what truth is.

- 10 “If you would rise high, use your own legs! Do not let yourselves be *carried* upward; do not sit upon others’ backs and heads!

“But you mounted a horse? You now ride swiftly toward your goal? Well, my friend! Your lame foot rides with you too!

“When you reach your goal and leap from your horse, precisely upon your *height*, higher human being, you will stumble!

- 11 “You creators, higher human beings! One is pregnant only with one’s own child.

“Let no one talk you into anything! Who is *your* neighbor? Even if you act ‘for your neighbor,’ you do not create for him!

“Unlearn this ‘for,’ creators: your very virtue wants you to do nothing with ‘for’ and ‘in order to’ and ‘because.’ Seal your ears against these false little words.

“‘For the neighbor’ is only small people’s virtue: there it means ‘like with like’ and ‘one hand washes the other’—they have neither right nor strength for *your* self-interest!

“In your self-interest, creators, lies the pregnant woman’s caution and providence! Your whole love protects and spares and nourishes the fruit no eye has yet seen.

“Where your whole love is, with your child, there too is your whole virtue! Your work, your will, is *your* ‘neighbor’: do not let false values be talked into you!

- 12 “You creators, higher human beings! Whoever must give birth is sick; whoever has given birth is unclean.

“Ask women: one does not give birth because it is pleasant. Pain makes hens and poets cackle.

“Creators, much in you is unclean. That is because you had to be mothers.

“A new child: oh, how much new dirt also entered the world! Step aside! Whoever has given birth should wash their soul clean!

- 13 “Do not be virtuous beyond your strength! Will nothing from yourselves against probability!

“Follow the footprints where your fathers’ virtue walked! How could you climb high unless your fathers’ will climbs with you?

“But whoever wants to be firstborn should see that he does not also become lastborn! Where your fathers’ vices are, do not try to signify saints!

“Someone whose fathers loved women and strong wines and wild boars: what would it mean for him to demand chastity of himself?

“It would be folly! Truly, I think it much for such a man to be the husband of one or two or three women.

“And if he founded monasteries, writing above the door ‘The way to saint-hood,’ I would still say, Why? It is a new folly!

“He founded a prison and refuge for himself: may it agree with him! But I do not believe in it.

“In solitude grows whatever one brings there, including the inner beast. Thus solitude is inadvisable for many.

“Has anything dirtier existed upon earth than desert saints? Around *them* not only the devil ran loose, but the swine too.

- 14 “Shy, ashamed, awkward, like a tiger whose leap failed: thus, higher human beings, I often saw you creep aside. A *throw* went wrong for you.

“But dice players, what does it matter! You did not learn to play and mock as one must! Do we not always sit at a great table of mockery and play?

“And if a great thing failed for you, are you yourselves failures because of it? If you yourselves failed, did humanity fail? But if humanity failed—come! Up!

- 15 “The higher the kind, the more rarely a thing succeeds. You higher human beings here, are you not all failures?

“Be of good courage: what does it matter! How much is still possible! Learn to laugh at yourselves as one must laugh!

“No wonder you failed and half succeeded, half-broken ones! Does humanity’s *future* not press and push within you?

“Humanity’s farthest, deepest, star-highest, its monstrous strength: does all that not foam against itself in your pot?

“No wonder many a pot breaks! Learn to laugh at yourselves as one must laugh! Higher human beings, oh, how much is still possible!

“And truly, how much has already succeeded! How rich this earth is in little good, perfect things, in successful things!

“Set little good, perfect things around you, higher human beings! Their golden ripeness heals the heart. Perfection teaches hope.

- 16 “What has been the greatest sin upon earth until now? Was it not the word of the one who said, ‘Woe to those who laugh here!’?

“Did he find no reasons to laugh upon earth itself? Then he searched badly. Even a child finds reasons here.

“He did not love enough: otherwise he would have loved us laughing ones too! But he hated and mocked us, promising weeping and gnashing of teeth.

“Must one immediately curse where one does not love? That seems bad taste to me. But he did so, this absolutist. He came from the rabble.

“And he himself simply did not love enough: otherwise he would have been less angry at not being loved. All great love does not *want* love—it wants more.

“Avoid all such absolutists! They are a poor, sick kind, a rabble kind: they look evilly upon this life; they have the evil eye for this earth.

“Avoid all such absolutists! They have heavy feet and sultry hearts: they cannot dance. How could earth be light for them!

- 17 “All good things approach their goal crookedly. Like cats they arch their backs, purring inwardly at their near happiness—all good things laugh.

“A person’s step betrays whether they already follow *their own* course: so watch me walk! But whoever nears a goal dances.

“And truly, I have not become a statue; I do not yet stand rigid, dull, stony, a pillar: I love swift running.

“Even if earth has mire and thick melancholy, whoever has light feet runs even over mud, dancing as upon swept ice.

“Lift your hearts, my brothers, high! Higher! And do not forget your legs! Lift your legs too, good dancers; better still, stand upon your heads!

- 18 “This laughing one’s crown, this rose-wreath crown: I myself set it upon me; I myself declared my laughter holy. I found no one else strong enough today.

“Zarathustra the dancer, Zarathustra the light one, beckoning with wings, ready to fly, beckoning to all birds, ready and prepared, a blessed lighthearted one—

“Zarathustra the soothsayer, Zarathustra the truth-laughter, neither impatient nor absolute, a lover of leaps and sideways leaps: I myself set this crown upon me!

19 “Lift your hearts, my brothers, high! Higher! And do not forget your legs! Lift your legs too, good dancers; better still, stand upon your heads!

“Even in happiness there are heavy beasts, clumsy-footed from the beginning. Strangely they struggle, like an elephant trying to stand upon its head.

“But better foolish with happiness than foolish with unhappiness; better dancing clumsily than walking lame. Learn my wisdom: even the worst thing has two good reverse sides—

“Even the worst thing has good dancing legs: learn to set yourselves upon your proper legs, higher human beings!

“Unlearn blowing melancholy bubbles and all rabble sadness! Oh, how sad even the rabble’s clowns seem to me today! But this today belongs to the rabble.

20 “Be like the wind when it rushes from mountain caves: it wants to dance to its own piping; seas tremble and leap beneath its footsteps.

“The one giving donkeys wings, milking lionesses—praised be this good, unbridled spirit, coming like a storm wind to all today and all rabble—

“Hostile to thistle heads and nitpickers and every withered leaf and weed: praised be this wild, good, free storm spirit, dancing upon swamps and melancholy as upon meadows!

“Hating the rabble’s consumptive hounds and every ill-made, gloomy brood: praised be this spirit of all free spirits, the laughing storm blowing dust into the eyes of all black-seers and grumblers!

“Higher human beings, your worst is this: none of you learned to dance as one must dance—beyond yourselves! What does it matter that you failed!

“How much is still possible! *Learn* to laugh beyond yourselves! Lift your hearts, good dancers, high! Higher! And do not forget good laughter!

“This laughing one’s crown, this rose-wreath crown: to you, my brothers, I throw it! I declared laughter holy; higher human beings, *learn* to laugh!”

The Song of Melancholy

1 As Zarathustra gave these speeches, he stood near his cave’s entrance; with the final words he slipped away from his guests and fled briefly into the open.

“Oh, pure scents around me!” he cried. “Blessed stillness around me! But where are my animals? Come, come, my eagle and serpent!”

“Tell me, my animals: perhaps all these higher human beings do not *smell* good? Oh, pure scents around me! Only now do I know and feel how I love you, my animals.”

And Zarathustra said again, “I love you, my animals!” Hearing this, eagle and serpent pressed against him and looked up. Thus the three stood quietly together, sniffing and sipping the good air. For the air outside was better than among the higher human beings.

² But scarcely had Zarathustra left his cave when the old magician rose, looked cunningly around, and said, “He has gone out!”

“And already, higher human beings—let me tickle you with this flattering name of praise, as he does—already my evil spirit of deception and enchantment assails me, my melancholy devil—

“The one opposed to this Zarathustra to the core: forgive him! Now he *wants* to enchant you; it is precisely *his* hour. In vain I struggle with this evil spirit.

“To all of you, whatever honors you give yourselves in words, whether calling yourselves ‘free spirits,’ ‘truthful ones,’ ‘penitents of the spirit,’ ‘unfettered ones,’ or ‘those of great longing’—

“To all of you suffering like me *from the great disgust*, for whom the old God died and no new God yet lies in cradle and swaddling clothes, my evil spirit and sorcerer-devil is well disposed.

“I know you, higher human beings; I know him—I also know this monster I love against my will, this Zarathustra: he himself often seems like a beautiful saint’s mask—

“Like a strange new masquerade in which my evil spirit, the melancholy devil, delights. Often, I think, I love Zarathustra for my evil spirit’s sake.—

“But already *he* assails and compels me, this spirit of melancholy, this twilight devil: truly, higher human beings, he desires—

“Open your eyes! He desires to come *naked*, whether male or female I do not yet know: but he comes, he compels me, alas! Open your senses!

“Day fades; evening comes to all things, even the best. Hear and see now, higher human beings, what devil, man or woman, this spirit of evening melancholy is!”

Thus spoke the old magician, looked cunningly around, and reached for his harp.

3 “In air grown cool,
When already dew’s comfort
Pours down to earth,
Unseen, unheard—
For delicate shoes are worn
By Dew the comforter, like all gentle comforters—
Do you remember, hot heart, remember
How once you thirsted,
For heavenly tears and dripping dew,
Scorched and weary, thirsted,
While on yellow grass paths
Malicious evening sun-glances
Ran around you through black trees,
Blinding sun-fire glances, gloating.

“‘Suitor of *truth*? You?’ they mocked.
‘No! Only a poet!
An animal, cunning, predatory, creeping,
That must lie,

“‘That knowingly, willingly must lie:
Lusting for prey,
Brightly masked,
A mask to itself,
Prey to itself—
That—truth’s suitor?
No! Only fool! Only poet!

Speaking only bright things,
Crying brightly from fools' masks,
Climbing about upon lying word-bridges,
Upon bright rainbows,
Between false heavens
And false earths,
Roaming, hovering—
Only fool! Only poet!

“*That*—truth's suitor?
Not still, rigid, smooth, cold,
Become an image,
A God's pillar,
Not set before temples,
A God's doorkeeper:
No! Hostile to such statues of truth,
More at home in every wilderness than before temples,
Full of feline playfulness,
Leaping through every window,
Away! Into every chance,
Sniffing toward every primeval forest,
Craving, longing, sniffing,
That in primeval forests
Among brightly spotted predators

“You might run sinfully healthy, bright and beautiful,
With lustful lips,
Blessedly mocking, blessedly hellish, blessedly bloodthirsty,
Robbing, creeping, lying as you ran—

“Or like the eagle that long,
Long stares fixedly into abysses,
Into *its own* abysses— —

Oh, how they coil downward here,
Downward, inward,
Into ever deeper depths!—
Then,
Suddenly, straight down,
In darting flight,
Swooping upon lambs,
Headlong down, ravenous,
Lusting for lambs,
Resenting every lamb-soul,
Fiercely resenting everything that looks
Sheeplike, lamb-eyed, curly-wooled,
Gray, with lamb-sheep goodwill!

“Thus,
Eaglelike, pantherlike,
Are the poet’s longings,
Are *your* longings beneath a thousand masks,
You fool! You poet!

“You who saw humanity
As both God and sheep—
To *tear apart* the God in humanity

“As well as the sheep in humanity,
And *laugh* while tearing—

“*That, that* is your blessedness!
A panther’s and eagle’s blessedness!
A poet’s and fool’s blessedness!’ — —

“In air grown clear,
When already the moon’s sickle
Creeps green among purple reds,
Enviously, secretly—
Hostile to day,
With every step stealthily
Sickling at rose hammocks
Until they sink,
Pale downward into night—

“So once I sank myself
From my madness for truth,
From my daylight longings,
Weary of day, sick of light,
Downward, eveningward, shadowward:
By one truth
Burned and thirsty—
Do you remember, hot heart, remember
How then you thirsted?—
That I be banished
From *all* truth!
Only fool! Only poet!”

On Science

Thus the magician sang; and all those gathered slipped like birds, unawares, into the net of his cunning, melancholy sensuality. Only the conscientious in spirit was not caught: he quickly took the magician’s harp and cried, “Air! Let good air in! Let Zarathustra in! You make this cave sultry and poisonous, evil old magician!

“You seduce us, false, subtle one, toward unknown desires and wildernesses. Woe when people like you make speech and spectacle of *truth*!

“Woe to all free spirits unguarded against *such* magicians! Their freedom is gone: you teach and lure them back into prisons—

“Old melancholy devil, a decoy pipe sounds from your lament; you resemble those who secretly invite sensual pleasures by praising chastity!”

Thus spoke the conscientious one; but the old magician looked around, enjoyed his victory, and swallowed the displeasure the conscientious one caused him. “Be silent!” he said modestly. “Good songs want good echoes; after good songs one should remain silent long.

“So all these higher human beings do. But perhaps you understood little of my song? There is little of an enchanting spirit in you.”

“You praise me,” the conscientious one replied, “by separating me from you: good! But the rest of you, what do I see? You all still sit with lustful eyes—

“Free souls, where has your freedom gone? You almost seem like people who have watched evil, naked dancing girls too long: your souls themselves dance!

“Higher human beings, there must be more within you of what the magician calls his evil spirit of enchantment and deception: we must be different.

“Truly, before Zarathustra returned, we spoke and thought together enough for me to know: we *are* different.

“Even up here we *seek* different things, you and I. I seek more *security*: that is why I came to Zarathustra. For he is still the firmest tower and will—

“Today, when everything totters and all earth trembles. But seeing your eyes, you almost seem to seek *more uncertainty*—

“More shuddering, danger, earthquakes. It seems you desire—forgive my presumption, higher human beings—

“The worst, most dangerous life, which frightens *me* most: the life of wild beasts, forests, caves, steep mountains, bewildering chasms.

“And you like best not those who guide you *out* of danger, but those who lead you off every path, the seducers. Yet if such desire in you is *real*, it still seems *impossible* to me.

“For fear is humanity’s inherited, fundamental feeling; everything is explained by fear, inherited sin and inherited virtue. From fear grew *my* virtue too, called science.

“Fear of wild beasts has been bred into humanity longest, including fear of the animal hidden within itself: Zarathustra calls it ‘the inner beast.’

“Such long, ancient fear, at last refined, made spiritual and intellectual, is now, I think, called *science*.”—

Thus spoke the conscientious one. But Zarathustra, returning to his cave and having heard and divined the final speech, threw a handful of roses at him and laughed at his “truths.” “What!” he cried. “What did I hear? Truly, either you are a fool or I am: and I turn your ‘truth’ head over heels at once.

“For *fear* is our exception. Courage, adventure, delight in uncertainty and the unattempted—*courage* seems to me humanity’s entire prehistory.

“From the wildest, most courageous animals it envied and stole all their virtues: only thus did it become human.

“*This* courage, at last refined, made spiritual and intellectual, this human courage with eagle wings and serpent cleverness—*that*, I think, is now called —”

“*Zarathustra!*” everyone seated cried as with one mouth, breaking into great laughter; a heavy cloud seemed to rise from them. The magician laughed too, and said shrewdly, “Well! My evil spirit is gone!

“And did I not warn you myself, saying he was a deceiver, a lying, cheating spirit?

“Especially when showing himself naked. But how can *I* help his tricks? Did *I* create him and the world?

“Well! Let us be good and cheerful again! Though Zarathustra looks angry—look, he resents me—

“Before night he will learn to love and praise me again: he cannot live long without such follies.

“*He* loves his enemies: of everyone I have seen, he understands this art best. But for it he takes revenge upon his friends!”

Thus spoke the old magician, and the higher human beings applauded. Zarathustra went around, shaking his friends’ hands with love and malice, like someone with something to make good and beg forgiveness for from everyone.

But reaching his cave's door, he already longed again for the good air outside and his animals, and wanted to slip away.

Among Daughters of the Desert

¹ “Do not go away!” said the wanderer who called himself Zarathustra’s shadow.
“Stay with us, or the old dull melancholy may assail us again.

“Already that old magician performed his worst for us: look, the good, pious pope has tears in his eyes and has embarked once more upon the sea of melancholy.

“These kings may still put on brave faces before us: of all of us, *they* learned that best today! But without witnesses, I wager, the evil game would begin again for them too—

“The evil game of passing clouds, damp melancholy, veiled skies, stolen suns, howling autumn winds!

“The evil game of our howling and cries of distress: stay with us, Zarathustra! Much hidden misery here wants to speak, much evening, much cloud, much musty air!

“You fed us strong manly food and powerful sayings: do not let soft, womanish spirits assail us again for dessert!

“You alone make the air around you strong and clear! Did I ever find such good air upon earth as in your cave?

“Yet I saw many lands; my nose learned to examine and assess many kinds of air: but with you my nostrils taste their greatest delight!

“Unless—unless—forgive an old memory! Forgive an old dessert song I once composed among daughters of the desert—

“For among them there was equally good, bright eastern air; there I was farthest from cloudy, damp, melancholy old Europe!

“Then I loved such eastern girls and other blue kingdoms of heaven, with neither clouds nor thoughts hanging above.

“You would not believe how prettily they sat when not dancing, deep but without thoughts, like little secrets, like ribboned riddles, like dessert nuts—

“Bright and foreign, truly, but without clouds: riddles one can solve. For love of such girls I devised a dessert psalm.”

Thus spoke the wanderer and shadow; before anyone answered, he had seized the old magician’s harp, crossed his legs, and looked calmly and wisely around, slowly and questioningly drawing air through his nostrils like someone tasting new, foreign air in new lands. Then with a kind of roar he began to sing.

² “*The desert grows: woe to the one who shelters deserts!*”

“Ha! Solemn!

Solemn indeed!

A worthy beginning!

Africanly solemn!

Worthy of a lion,

Or of a moral howler monkey—

But nothing for you,

Dearest women friends,

At whose feet,

For the first time,

I, a European, may

Sit beneath palms. Selah.

“Wonderful indeed!

Here I sit now,

Near the desert, already

So far again from the desert,

And in no way yet laid waste:

Swallowed, that is,

By this smallest oasis—

It had just yawned open

Its lovely mouth,

“The sweetest-smelling little mouth:
There I fell inside,
Downward, through—among you,
Dearest women friends! Selah.

“Hail, hail to that whale,
If it made its guest
So comfortable! You understand
My learned allusion?—
Hail to its belly,
If it too
Was so lovely an oasis belly
As this: though I doubt it,
For I come from Europe,
More addicted to doubt than all
Elderly married women.
May God improve it!
Amen!

“Here I sit now,
In this smallest oasis,
Like a date,
Brown, sweet through and through, golden-sore, lusting
For a round girl’s mouth,
But more still for girlish,
Ice-cold, snow-white, sharp
Biting teeth: for these
The hearts of all hot dates yearn. Selah.

“Like those southern fruits,
Like, all too like,

“I lie here, by little

Winged beetles
Danced around and played around,
Likewise by still smaller,
More foolish, more malicious
Wishes and fancies—
Surrounded by you,
Silent, foreknowing
Girl-cats,
Dudu and Suleika,
Sphinxed around, to stuff
Many feelings into one word:
(May God forgive
This sin of language!)

Here I sit, sniffing the finest air,
Paradisal air indeed,
Bright, light air, gold-striped,
As good as any air
Ever fallen from the moon—
By accident,
Or did it happen from high spirits?
As ancient poets tell.
But I, doubter, put it
In doubt, for I come
From Europe,
More addicted to doubt than all
Elderly married women.
May God improve it!
Amen!

“Drinking this loveliest air,

“With nostrils swollen like cups,

Without future, without memories,
Thus I sit here, you
Dearest women friends,
Watching the palm
Bend and nestle like a dancer,
Swaying at the hip—
One joins in after watching long!—
Like a dancer who, it seems to me,
Has stood too long, dangerously long,
Always, always upon one leg?
And so forgot, it seems to me,
The other leg?
At least in vain
I sought the missing
Twin jewel—
The other leg—
In the sacred nearness
Of her dearest, daintiest
Fanning, fluttering, glittering skirt.
Yes, beautiful friends,
If you believe me entirely:
She has lost it!
It is gone!
Gone forever!
The other leg!
Oh, what a pity for that lovely other leg!
Where might it linger, abandoned and grieving,
That lonely leg?
Perhaps in fear of a
Fierce yellow, blond-curved

“Lion-monster? Or already
Gnawed away, nibbled away—
Pitiful, alas! Alas! Nibbled away! Selah.

“Oh, do not weep,
Soft hearts!
Do not weep, you
Date-hearts! Milk-breasts!
You little licorice-heart
Pouches!
Weep no more,
Pale Dudu!
Be a man, Suleika! Courage! Courage!
Or should perhaps
Something strengthening, heart-strengthening,
Be fitting here?
An anointed saying?
A solemn encouragement?—

“Ha! Rise, dignity!
Virtue’s dignity! European dignity!
Blow, blow again,
Bellows of virtue!
Ha!
Roar once more,
Roar morally!
As a moral lion,
Roar before the daughters of the desert!
For howling virtue,
Dearest girls,
Is above all

“European ardor, European ravenous hunger!
And already I stand here
As a European:
I can do no other, God help me!
Amen!

“The desert grows: woe to the one who shelters deserts!”

The Awakening

¹ After the wanderer and shadow’s song, the cave suddenly filled with noise and laughter. Since all the guests spoke at once, and the donkey, encouraged by this, no longer stayed silent, Zarathustra felt a little distaste and mockery toward his visitors, though he rejoiced in their cheerfulness: it seemed a sign of recovery. So he slipped outside and spoke to his animals.

“Where has their distress gone now?” he said, already breathing freely after his little weariness. “With me they seem to have unlearned cries of distress—

“Though unfortunately not yet shouting.” Zarathustra covered his ears, for the donkey’s hee-haw was mingling strangely with these higher human beings’ jubilant noise.

“They are merry,” he began again, “and who knows? Perhaps at their host’s expense. If they learned laughter from me, it was not *my* laughter they learned.

“But what does it matter! They are old people: they recover in their fashion, laugh in their fashion. My ears have endured worse and did not grow ill-tempered.

“This day is a victory: already he yields and flees, *the spirit of gravity*, my old archenemy! How well this day means to end, that began so badly and heavily!

“And end it *will*. Evening already comes, riding across the sea, the good rider! How the blessed homecomer rocks in his purple saddles!

“The sky looks clear, the world lies deep: strange ones who came to me, living with me is worthwhile!”

Thus spoke Zarathustra. Again the higher human beings’ shouting and laughter came from the cave; he began anew.

"They bite; my bait works; their enemy, the spirit of gravity, yields for them too. Already they learn to laugh at themselves: do I hear rightly?"

"My manly food works, my juicy, strengthening sayings; truly, I fed them no bloating vegetables! Rather, warriors' food, conquerors' food: I awakened new desires.

"New hopes live in their arms and legs; their hearts stretch out. They find new words; soon their spirit will breathe high spirits.

"Such food may not suit children, or longing women old and young. Their entrails require other persuasion; I am not their physician and teacher.

"*Disgust* leaves these higher human beings: well! That is my victory. In my kingdom they become secure; all stupid shame runs away; they pour themselves out.

"They pour out their hearts; good hours return; they celebrate and chew the cud—they become *grateful*.

"*That* I take as the best sign: they become grateful. Before long they will invent festivals and erect monuments to their old joys.

"They are *convalescents*!" Thus Zarathustra spoke joyfully to his heart, looking outward; his animals pressed against him, honoring his happiness and silence.

- ² Suddenly Zarathustra's ear was startled: the cave, until now full of noise and laughter, became deathly still. But his nose smelled fragrant smoke and incense, as from burning pinecones.

"What is happening? What are they doing?" he asked himself, creeping toward the entrance to watch his guests unnoticed. But wonder upon wonder! What did his own eyes have to see!

"They have all become *pious* again; they *pray*; they are mad!" he said in boundless astonishment. Truly, all these higher human beings—the two kings, the pope out of service, the evil magician, the voluntary beggar, the wanderer and shadow, the old soothsayer, the conscientious in spirit, and the ugliest human being—knelt like children and faithful old women, worshiping the donkey. Just then the ugliest human being began gurgling and snorting as though

something unspeakable wanted to emerge; when he actually reached words, there came a pious, strange litany praising the worshiped, incense-offered donkey. The litany sounded thus:

“Amen! Praise and honor and wisdom and thanks and glory and strength be to our God, from eternity to eternity!”

And the donkey cried, “Hee-haw.”

“He carries our burden; he took a servant’s shape; he is patient of heart and never says No; whoever loves his God chastises him.”

And the donkey cried, “Hee-haw.”

“He does not speak, except always to say Yes to the world he created: thus he praises his world. It is his cunning that does not speak: so he is seldom found wrong.”

And the donkey cried, “Hee-haw.” “Unremarkable he walks through the world. Gray is the bodily color in which he wraps his virtue. If he has spirit, he hides it; but everyone believes in his long ears.”

And the donkey cried, “Hee-haw.”

“What hidden wisdom this is: he bears long ears and says only Yes, never No! Did he not create the world in his image—as stupid as possible?”

And the donkey cried, “Hee-haw.”

“You follow straight and crooked paths; little you care what seems straight or crooked to us human beings. Beyond good and evil is your kingdom. Your innocence is not knowing what innocence is.”

And the donkey cried, “Hee-haw.”

“Look how you repel no one, neither beggars nor kings. You let the little children come to you, and when naughty boys entice you, you simply say Hee-haw.”

And the donkey cried, “Hee-haw.”

“You love she-donkeys and fresh figs; you are no despiser of food. A thistle tickles your heart when you are hungry. Therein lies a God’s wisdom.”

And the donkey cried, “Hee-haw.”

The Donkey Festival

- ¹ At this point in the litany Zarathustra could master himself no longer: he cried “Hee-haw” louder than the donkey and sprang among his maddened guests. “What are you doing, children of humanity?” he cried, pulling the worshipers from the ground. “Woe if anyone but Zarathustra saw you! “Everyone would judge that with your new faith you were the worst blasphemers or the most foolish of old women! “And you yourself, old pope, how does it agree with you to worship a donkey here as God?” — “Zarathustra,” the pope answered, “forgive me, but in God’s affairs I am more enlightened even than you. Rightly so. “Better to worship God thus, in this shape, than in no shape at all! Ponder this saying, high friend: you quickly divine that wisdom lies within it. “The one who said ‘God is a spirit’ made the greatest stride and leap toward unbelief upon earth: such a word is not easily made good again! “My old heart leaps and bounds because something still exists upon earth to worship. Forgive an old, pious pope’s heart for that, Zarathustra!” — “And you,” Zarathustra said to the wanderer and shadow, “you call and think yourself a free spirit? Yet practice such idolatry and priestly service here? “Truly, you behave worse here than among your evil brown girls, evil new believer!” “Badly enough,” the wanderer and shadow answered. “You are right: but how can I help it? The old God lives again, Zarathustra, whatever you may say. “The ugliest human being is to blame for everything: he resurrected him. And if he says he once killed him, *death* among gods is always only a prejudice.” “And you,” Zarathustra said, “evil old magician, what have you done! In this free age, who will believe in you henceforth if *you* believe in such divine donkey business? “What you did was stupidity: how could a clever man commit such stupidity!” “Zarathustra,” the clever magician answered, “you are right; it was stupidity—and it cost me enough difficulty.”

“And you too,” Zarathustra said to the conscientious in spirit, “consider, lay your finger upon your nose! Does nothing here offend your conscience? Is your spirit not too clean for this praying and the fumes of these praying brothers?”

“There is something,” the conscientious one answered, laying his finger upon his nose, “something in this spectacle that even pleases my conscience.

“Perhaps I may not believe in God: but certainly in this shape God seems most believable to me.

“God is supposed to be eternal, according to the testimony of the most pious: whoever has so much time takes time. As slowly and stupidly as possible—*with that* such a one can go very far.

“And whoever has too much spirit might fall in love with stupidity and folly themselves. Reflect upon yourself, Zarathustra!

“You yourself—truly! Even you could become a donkey from abundance and wisdom.

“Does a perfect sage not gladly follow the crookedest paths? The evidence teaches it, Zarathustra—*your* evidence!”

“And you yourself, finally,” Zarathustra said, turning to the ugliest human being, still upon the ground with arm raised toward the donkey—for he was giving it wine. “Speak, unspeakable one: what have you done!

“You seem transformed; your eye glows; sublimity’s cloak lies around your ugliness: *what* did you do?

“Is what they say true, that you resurrected him? Why? Was he not killed and done away with for good reason?

“You yourself seem awakened: what did you do? What did *you* overturn? Why did *you* convert? Speak, unspeakable one!”

“Zarathustra,” the ugliest human being answered, “you are a rogue!

“Whether *he* still lives, lives again, or is thoroughly dead—which of us knows best? I ask you.

“But one thing I know, which I once learned from you: whoever would kill most thoroughly *laughs*.

“‘One kills not with anger, but with laughter,’ you once said. Zarathustra, hidden one, destroyer without anger, dangerous saint—you are a rogue!”

² Then Zarathustra, astonished at all these roguish answers, sprang back to his cave's door and, turning toward all his guests, cried strongly:

"Oh, all you mischievous fools, jesters! Why disguise and hide yourselves from me!

"How each heart wriggled with pleasure and malice because at last you became like little children again—pious—

"Because at last you did as children do: prayed, folded hands, and said 'dear God'!

"But now leave *this* nursery, my own cave, where all childishness is at home today. Cool your hot childish spirits and noisy hearts outside!

"Certainly, unless you become like little children, you will not enter *that* kingdom of heaven." Zarathustra pointed upward.

"Yet we do not want to enter the kingdom of heaven: we have become men—*so we want the kingdom of earth.*"

³ Again Zarathustra began to speak. "My new friends," he said, "strange ones, higher human beings, how well I like you now—

"Since you grew joyful again! Truly, you have all blossomed: flowers like you seem to need *new festivals*—

"A little brave nonsense, some divine service and donkey festival, some old, cheerful Zarathustra-fool, a roaring wind blowing your souls bright.

"Do not forget this night and donkey festival, higher human beings! *That* you invented with me; I take it as a good sign—only convalescents invent such things!

"And if you celebrate it again, this donkey festival, do it for love of yourselves, and for love of me! And in *my* memory!"

Thus spoke Zarathustra.

The Night Wanderer's Song

¹ Meanwhile one after another had stepped outside into the cool, thoughtful night. Zarathustra himself led the ugliest human being by the hand to show him his night-world, the great round moon, and silver waterfalls beside his cave. At last they stood still together, old people all, but with comforted, courageous

hearts, wondering how well they felt upon earth; the night's intimacy drew ever nearer their hearts. Again Zarathustra thought, "How well I like these higher human beings now!" But he said nothing, honoring their happiness and silence.—

Then came the most astonishing event of that astonishing long day: the ugliest human being began once more and for the last time to gurgle and snort; when he reached words, a question sprang round and clean from his mouth, a good, deep, clear question that moved every listener's heart.

"All my friends," the ugliest human being said, "what do you think? For this day's sake, for the first time *I* am content to have lived my whole life.

"Yet even testifying so much is not enough. Life upon earth is worthwhile: one day, one festival with Zarathustra taught me to love the earth.

"*'Was that life?'* I want to say to death. 'Well then! Once more!'

"My friends, what do you think? Will you not speak to death as I do: *was that* life? For Zarathustra's sake, well then! Once more!" —

Thus spoke the ugliest human being; it was not long before midnight. What do you think happened then? Hearing his question, the higher human beings suddenly became aware of their transformation and recovery, and who had given it to them. They sprang toward Zarathustra, thanking, revering, caressing, kissing his hands, each according to their nature: some laughed, some wept. The old soothsayer danced with pleasure; even if, as some narrators think, he was full of sweet wine, he was certainly fuller still of sweet life and had renounced all weariness. Some even say the donkey danced then: for the ugliest human being had given it wine not for nothing. This may be so or otherwise; even if the donkey did not truly dance that evening, greater and stranger wonders happened than a donkey's dance. In short, as Zarathustra's proverb says, "What does it matter!"

- ² But as this happened with the ugliest human being, Zarathustra stood like a drunkard: his gaze dimmed, his tongue stammered, his feet swayed. Who could divine the thoughts passing over his soul? Plainly his spirit withdrew and fled

ahead into far distances, as though “upon a high ridge, as it is written, between two seas—

“Between past and future, walking like a heavy cloud.” Gradually, while the higher human beings held him in their arms, he returned a little to himself, holding back the crowd of reverent, anxious ones with his hands, yet saying nothing. Suddenly he turned his head quickly, seeming to hear something: he put his finger to his mouth and said, “*Come!*”

At once everything grew still and intimate; slowly a bell’s sound rose from the depths. Zarathustra listened, as did the higher human beings; then a second time he put his finger to his mouth and said, “*Come! Come! Midnight approaches!*” His voice had changed. Yet he still did not move: it grew stiller and more intimate, and everything listened, even the donkey, Zarathustra’s honored animals, eagle and serpent, his cave, the great cool moon, and night itself. A third time Zarathustra raised his hand to his mouth and spoke:

“*Come! Come! Come! Let us walk now! It is the hour: let us walk into the night!*”

- 3 “Higher human beings, midnight approaches: I will whisper something into your ears, as that old bell whispers into mine—

“As secretly, terribly, heartily as that midnight bell speaks to me, having experienced more than one human being—

“Having already counted your fathers’ heartbeats of pain—ah! Ah! How it sighs! How it laughs in its dream, the old deep, deep midnight!

“Still! Still! Much can be heard that must not find a voice by day; but now, in cool air, when even your hearts’ noise has fallen silent—

“Now it speaks, now it can be heard, now it steals into night-wakeful souls: ah! Ah! How it sighs! How it laughs in its dream!

“Do you not hear how secretly, terribly, heartily it speaks to *you*, the old deep, deep midnight? *Human being, attend!*

- 4 “Woe to me! Where has time gone? Did I not sink into deep wells? The world sleeps—

“Ah! Ah! The dog howls, the moon shines. I would sooner die, die, than tell you what my midnight heart now thinks.

“Already I have died. It is gone. Spider, what are you spinning around me? Do you want blood? Ah! Ah! Dew falls, the hour comes—

“The hour when I shiver and freeze, the hour that asks and asks and asks, ‘Who has heart enough for this—

“‘Who shall be earth’s master? Who will say: *thus* shall you run, great and small streams!’

“The hour approaches: human being, higher human being, attend! This speech is for subtle ears, your ears—*what does deep midnight say?*

- 5 “It carries me away; my soul dances. Day’s work! Day’s work! Who shall be earth’s master?

“The moon is cool, the wind silent. Ah! Ah! Have you flown high enough? You danced: but a leg is no wing.

“Good dancers, now all joy is past: wine became lees, every cup brittle, graves stammer.

“You did not fly high enough: now the graves stammer, ‘Redeem the dead! Why is night so long? Does the moon not intoxicate us?’

“Higher human beings, redeem the graves; wake the corpses! Ah, what does the worm still dig? The hour approaches, approaches—

“The bell booms, the heart still rasps, the woodworm, heartworm still digs. Ah! Ah! *The world is deep!*

- 6 “Sweet lyre! Sweet lyre! I love your sound, your drunken toad-song! How long ago, how far away it comes from, far from love’s ponds!

“Old bell, sweet lyre! Every pain tore your heart, father-pain, fathers’ pain, forefathers’ pain; your speech grew ripe—

“Ripe as golden autumn and afternoon, as my hermit heart. Now you speak: the world itself grew ripe, the grape browns—

“Now it wants to die, die of happiness. Higher human beings, do you not smell it? A scent secretly wells upward—

“A fragrance and scent of eternity, a rose-blessed, brown-gold wine scent of old happiness—

"Of drunken midnight dying-happiness, singing: the world is deep *and deeper than day has thought!*

- 7 "Leave me! Leave me! I am too pure for you. Do not touch me! Has my world not just become perfect?

"My skin is too pure for your hands. Leave me, stupid, clumsy, dull day! Is midnight not brighter?

"The purest shall be earth's masters, the least known, strongest, midnight souls brighter and deeper than any day.

"Day, you grope for me? You feel for my happiness? To you I am rich, solitary, a treasure mine, a chamber of gold?

"World, you want *me*? Am I worldly to you? Spiritual? Divine? But day and world, you are too clumsy—

"Have cleverer hands, reach for deeper happiness and deeper unhappiness, reach for some God, do not reach for me—

"My unhappiness, my happiness is deep, strange day; yet I am no God, no God's hell: *deep is its woe.*

- 8 "God's woe is deeper, strange world! Reach for God's woe, not me! What am I? A drunken, sweet lyre—

"A midnight lyre, a bell-toad no one understands, yet which *must* speak before the deaf, higher human beings! For you do not understand me!

"Gone! Gone! Oh, youth! Noon! Afternoon! Now came evening and night and midnight—the dog howls, the wind—

"Is the wind not a dog? It whines, yaps, howls. Ah! Ah! How it sighs! How it laughs, rattles, pants, midnight!

"How soberly this drunken poet speaks now! Has she drunk beyond her drunkenness? Grown over-wakeful? Is she chewing the cud?

"She chews her woe in dreams, old deep midnight, and still more her joy. For though woe is deep, *joy is deeper still than heartache.*

- 9 "Vine! Why praise me? I cut you! I am cruel; you bleed—what does your praise want from my drunken cruelty?

“Everything perfected, everything ripe wants to die!’ you say. ‘Blessed, blessed be the vintner’s knife! But everything unripe wants life: woe!’

“Woe says, ‘Pass away! Away, you woe!’ But everything suffering wants life, to become ripe and joyful and longing—

“Longing for farther, higher, brighter things. ‘I want heirs,’ says everything suffering. ‘I want children, not *myself*’—

“But joy wants neither heirs nor children: joy wants itself, wants eternity, recurrence, everything eternally the same.

“Woe says, ‘Break, bleed, heart! Walk, leg! Fly, wing! Upward! Higher! Pain!’ Come! Up! My old heart: *woe says, ‘Pass away!’*

- 10 “Higher human beings, what do you think? Am I a soothsayer? A dreamer? Drunkard? Dream interpreter? A midnight bell?

“A dewdrop? A vapor and fragrance of eternity? Do you not hear? Do you not smell? My world just became perfect; midnight is also noon—

“Pain is also joy, curse also blessing, night also sun—go away, or learn that a sage is also a fool.

“Did you ever say Yes to one joy? My friends, then you said Yes to *all* woe as well. All things are chained, threaded, in love—

“If ever you wanted one time twice, ever said, ‘You please me, happiness! How fleeting! A moment!’ then you wanted *everything* back!

“Everything anew, everything eternal, everything chained, threaded, in love: oh, thus you *loved* the world—

“Eternal ones, love it eternally and always; to woe too say: pass away, but return! *For all joy wants—eternity!*

- 11 “All joy wants all things’ eternity, wants honey, wants lees, wants drunken midnight, wants graves, wants graves’ tearful comfort, wants gilded sunset—

“*What* does joy not want! It is thirstier, more heartfelt, hungrier, more terrible, more secret than any woe; it wants *itself*, bites into *itself*, the ring’s will struggles within it—

“It wants love, wants hatred, is overflowing, gives, throws away, begs someone to take it, thanks the receiver, would gladly be hated—

“So rich is joy that it thirsts for woe, hell, hatred, disgrace, the cripple, *world*—
for this world, you know it!

“Higher human beings, joy longs for you, unbridled, blessed joy—for your
woe, you failures! All eternal joy longs for what has failed.

“For all joy wants itself, and therefore heartache too! Oh, happiness, pain! Oh,
break, heart! Higher human beings, learn it: joy wants eternity—

“Joy wants *all* things’ eternity, *wants deep, deep eternity!*”

12 “Have you learned my song now? Divined what it wants? Come! Up! Higher
human beings, sing my round-song now!

“Sing yourselves the song named ‘Once More,’ whose meaning is ‘For all eterni-
ty!’ Sing, higher human beings, Zarathustra’s round-song!

“Human being! Attend!

What does deep midnight say?

‘I slept, I slept—

‘From deepest dream I woke:—

‘The world is deep,

‘Deeper than day has thought.

‘Deep is its woe—

Joy—deeper than heartache:

‘Woe says: Pass away!

‘But all joy wants eternity—

‘Wants deep, deep eternity!’”

The Sign

The morning after that night, Zarathustra sprang from his bed, girded his
loins, and emerged from his cave glowing and strong, like a morning sun rising
from dark mountains.

“Great star,” he said, as he had once said, “deep eye of happiness, what would
all your happiness be without *those* for whom you shine!

“And if they stayed in their chambers while you already wake and come and
give and distribute, how your proud modesty would rage!

“Well! They still sleep, these higher human beings, while *I* am awake: *these* are not my true companions! It is not for them I wait here in my mountains.

“I want my work, my day: but they do not understand my morning’s signs; my step is no awakening call to them.

“They still sleep in my cave; their dream still chews upon my midnights. The ear listening for *me*, the *obeying* ear, is absent from their limbs.”

Zarathustra had spoken this to his heart as the sun rose; then he looked questioningly upward, hearing his eagle’s sharp cry above. “Well!” he called up.

“That pleases and befits me. My animals wake because I wake.

“My eagle wakes and honors the sun as I do. With eagle claws it grasps the new light. You are my true animals; I love you.

“But my true human beings are still missing!”—

Thus spoke Zarathustra; suddenly he heard countless birds swarming and fluttering around him. So great was the whirring of wings and crowding around his head that he closed his eyes. Truly, they fell upon him like a cloud, like a cloud of arrows showering upon a new enemy. But here it was a cloud of love, showering upon a new friend.

“What is happening to me?” Zarathustra thought in his astonished heart, slowly sitting upon the great stone beside his cave’s exit. As he reached around and above and below himself, warding off the tender birds, something stranger happened: unwittingly his hand entered a thick, warm shag of hair; at the same moment a roar sounded before him, a gentle, long lion’s roar.

“*The sign comes*,” Zarathustra said, and his heart changed. Truly, when his sight cleared, a yellow, mighty beast lay at his feet, pressing its head against his knees, unwilling to leave him for love, behaving like a dog that finds its old master again. The doves were no less eager in their love than the lion; whenever a dove flitted across its nose, the lion shook its head, wondered, and laughed.

At all this Zarathustra spoke only one phrase: “*My children are near, my children*”—then he fell entirely silent. But his heart was released; tears dripped from his eyes and fell upon his hands. He noticed nothing more and sat unmoving, no longer resisting the animals. Doves flew back and forth, settled

upon his shoulder, caressed his white hair, tireless in tenderness and rejoicing. The strong lion kept licking the tears falling upon Zarathustra's hands, roaring and growling shyly. Thus these animals behaved.—

All this lasted a long time, or a short time: properly speaking, for such things upon earth there is *no* time. Meanwhile the higher human beings had awakened in Zarathustra's cave and formed a procession to meet him and offer morning greetings, finding upon waking that he was no longer among them. But when they reached the cave's door and the sound of their footsteps ran ahead, the lion started violently, suddenly turned from Zarathustra, and sprang roaring wildly toward the cave. Hearing its roar, all the higher human beings cried out as with one mouth, fled back, and vanished in an instant.

But Zarathustra himself, stunned and estranged, rose from his seat, looked around, stood wondering, questioned his heart, reflected, and was alone. "What did I hear?" he said slowly at last. "What just happened to me?"

Already memory returned, and in one glance he understood everything between yesterday and today. "Here is the stone," he said, stroking his beard, "upon *which* I sat yesterday morning; here the soothsayer approached me; here I first heard the cry I just heard, the great cry of distress.

"Higher human beings, it was *your* distress that old soothsayer foretold yesterday morning—

"Toward your distress he wanted to tempt and lure me: 'Zarathustra,' he said, 'I come to tempt you to your final sin.'

"To my final sin?" Zarathustra cried, laughing angrily at his own words. "*What* was reserved for me as my final sin?"

Once more Zarathustra sank within himself, sat again upon the great stone, and reflected. Suddenly he sprang up—

"*Pity! Pity for the higher human being!*" he cried, his face becoming bronze.

"Well! *That* had its time!

"My suffering and my pity—what do they matter! Do I strive for *happiness*? I strive for my *work*!

"Well! The lion came; my children are near; Zarathustra has ripened; my hour has come—

“This is *my* morning; *my* day begins: *rise now, rise, great noon!*” — —

Thus spoke Zarathustra and left his cave glowing and strong, like a morning sun rising from dark mountains.

End of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.