



Thus Spoke Zarathustra

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

Plain English Translation

MOUSEIA



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Translated by Michael Berardi

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THIS EDITION

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TRANSLATOR

Michael Berardi

THE WORK

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PART 1

Prologue



Part One

Zarathustra's Prologue.

¹ Zarathustra was thirty years old when he left his homeland and the lake beside it and climbed into the high country. For ten years he took joy in his mind and his aloneness and never tired of either. Then, at last, his heart turned. One morning he rose with the red dawn, walked out in front of the sun, and addressed it in these words:

“You great star! What would your happiness be if you didn’t have those you shine on!

“For ten years you came up here to my cave. You would have grown sick of your light and of this road, if it hadn’t been for me, my eagle and my snake.

“But every morning we waited for you, took your abundance from you, and blessed you for it.

“Look! I have grown weary of my wisdom, like the bee that has gathered too much honey. I need hands that reach out to take.

“I want to give away and hand out, until the wise among humans are glad once more of their foolishness, and the poor are glad once more of their riches.

“I must go down into the depths, as you do in the evening, when you pass behind the sea and carry your light to the underworld, you overrich star!

“Like you, I must *go under*, as humans call it, the humans I want to go down to.

“So bless me, then, you calm eye, that can look without envy even at a happiness that is far too great!

“Bless the cup that wants to overflow, so that the water flows golden out of it and carries the reflection of your joy everywhere!

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

That is how Zarathustra’s going under began.

- ² Zarathustra went down the mountain alone, and no one met him. But when he came into the forest, suddenly an old man stood before him, who had left his holy hut to look for roots in the woods. And the old man spoke to Zarathustra like this:

“This wanderer is no stranger to me: many years ago he passed by here. Zarathustra was his name, but he has changed.

“Back then you carried your ashes up the mountain. Do you want to carry your fire into the valleys today? Aren’t you afraid of the punishment for starting fires?

“Yes, I know Zarathustra. His eye is clear, and no disgust hides at the corner of his mouth. Doesn’t he walk along like a dancer?

“Zarathustra has changed, Zarathustra has become a child, Zarathustra is one who has woken up. What do you want now among the sleepers?

“In your solitude you lived as if in the sea, and the sea carried you. Oh no, you want to step onto land? Oh no, you want to drag your own body around again?”

Zarathustra answered: “I love humans.”

“Why,” said the saint, “did I go into the forest and the wilderness? Wasn’t it because I loved humans far too much?

“Now I love God. I don’t love humans. Humans are too imperfect a thing for me. Love for humans would kill me.”

Zarathustra answered: “Why did I talk about love! I’m bringing humans a gift.”

“Give them nothing,” said the saint. “Take something from them and carry it with them; that will do them the most good, if it also does you good!

“And if you want to give to them, give no more than alms, and make them beg for those too!”

“No,” answered Zarathustra, “I don’t give alms. I’m not poor enough for that.”

The saint laughed at Zarathustra and spoke like this: “Then make sure they accept your treasures! They distrust hermits, and they don’t believe that we come to give.

“Our footsteps sound too lonely to them in the streets. And when they lie in their beds at night and hear a man walking, long before the sun is up, they probably ask themselves: where is that thief going?

“Don’t go to people, stay in the forest! Go to the animals instead! Why won’t you be like me, a bear among bears, a bird among birds?”

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

The saint answered: “I make songs and sing them, and when I make songs I laugh, weep, and hum. That is how I praise God.

“With singing, weeping, laughing, and humming I praise the God who is my God. But what do you bring us as a gift?”

When Zarathustra had heard these words, he said goodbye to the saint and spoke: “What could I have to give you! But let me go quickly, so that I don’t take anything from you!” And so they parted from each other, the old man and the man, laughing the way two boys laugh.

When Zarathustra was alone again, he said to his heart: “Could it be! This old saint in his forest has not yet heard that *God is dead!*”

- 3 When Zarathustra came to the nearest town, which lies at the edge of the forests, he found many people gathered there in the marketplace. It had been announced that a tightrope walker was going to be seen. And Zarathustra spoke to the people like this:

“*I teach you the overhuman.* Human beings are something that must be overcome. What have you done to overcome them?

“Every being so far has created something beyond itself. And do you want to be the ebb of this great flood, and would you rather go back to the animals than overcome the human being?

“What is the ape to a human being? A thing to laugh at, or a painful shame. And that is just what a human being shall be to the overhuman: a thing to laugh at, or a painful shame.

“You have made the path from worm to human, and much of 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 split and a hybrid of plant and ghost. But 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 urge you, my brothers, *stay true to the earth*, and don’t believe those who talk to you about hopes beyond the earth! They are poisoners, whether they know it or not.

“They despise life. They are dying off and poisoned themselves, and the earth is tired of them. So let them be gone!

“Once, blasphemy against God was the greatest blasphemy, but God died, and with him died these blasphemers. To blaspheme against the earth is now the most terrible thing, and to rate the innards of the Unfathomable higher than the meaning of the earth!

“Once the soul looked down on the body with contempt, and at that time this contempt was the highest thing. The soul wanted the body skinny, ghastly, starved. That is how it thought to slip away from the body and the earth.

“Oh, this soul was itself still skinny, ghastly and starved, and cruelty was this soul’s pleasure!

“But even you, my brothers, tell me: what does your body say about your soul? Isn’t your soul poverty and filth and a pitiful comfort?

“Truly, a human being is a dirty river. You must already be a sea to take in a dirty river without becoming unclean.

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

“What is the greatest thing you can experience? It is the hour of great contempt. The hour in which even your happiness becomes disgusting to you, and likewise your reason and your virtue.

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

“The hour when you say: ‘What does my reason matter! Does it crave knowledge the way the lion craves its food? It is poverty and filth and a pitiful comfort!’

“The hour when you say: ‘What does my virtue matter! It has not yet driven me mad. How tired I am of my good and my evil! All of that is poverty and filth and a pitiful comfort!’

“The hour when you say: ‘What does my justice matter! I do not see that I am glowing coals and embers. But the just man is glowing coals and embers!’

“The hour when you say: ‘What does my pity matter! Is pity not the cross to which whoever loves human beings is nailed? But my pity is no crucifixion.’

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

“It isn’t your sin that cries to heaven. It’s your contentment with so little. Your stinginess, even in your sin, cries to heaven!

“Where is the lightning that will lick you with its tongue? Where is the madness you ought to be vaccinated with?

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

When Zarathustra had spoken like this, someone in the crowd shouted: “We have heard enough about the tightrope walker. Now let us see him too!” And the whole crowd laughed at Zarathustra. The tightrope walker, however, thought the words were meant for him, and set about his work.

- ⁴ But Zarathustra looked at the people and was amazed. Then he spoke like this: “A human being is a rope, tied between animal and overhuman, a rope over an abyss.

“A dangerous crossing, a dangerous being on the way, a dangerous looking back, a dangerous shuddering and standing still.

“What is great in human beings is that they are a bridge and not a goal. What can be loved in human beings is that they are a *crossing over* and a *going under*.

“I love those who don’t know how to live except as ones going under, for they are the ones crossing over.

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

“I love those who don’t first look behind the stars for a reason to go under and be sacrificed, but who sacrifice themselves to the earth, so that the earth may one day belong to the overhuman.

“I love those who live in order to know, and who want to know so that the overhuman may one day live. And so they want their own going under.

“I love those who work and invent in order to build the house for the overhuman and to prepare earth, animals and plants for the overhuman. For that is how they want their own going under.

“I love those who love their virtue, for virtue is the will to go under and an arrow of longing.

“I love those who don’t keep back a single drop of spirit for themselves, but want to be wholly the spirit of their virtue. That is how they cross the bridge as spirit.

“I love those who make their virtue their bent and their fate. That is how, for the sake of their virtue, they are willing both to go on living and to live no more.

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

“I love those whose soul squanders itself, who want no thanks and give nothing back. For they are always giving, and they don’t want to save themselves.

“I love those who are ashamed when the dice fall in their favor, and who then ask: am I a cheat? For they want to perish.

“I love those who throw golden words out ahead of their deeds, and who always do even more than they promise. For they want their own going under.

"I love those who justify the people of the future and redeem the people of the past. For they want to perish because of the people of the present.

"I love those who punish their god because they love their god. For they must perish from the anger of their god.

"I love those whose soul is deep even in a wound, and who can perish from a small experience. That is how they gladly cross the bridge.

"I love those whose soul is so full that they forget themselves, and all things are in them. That is how all things become their going under.

"I love those who are free in spirit and free in heart. For their head is only the innards of their heart, and their heart drives them to their going under.

"I love all those who are like heavy drops falling one by one out of the dark cloud that hangs over human beings. They announce that the lightning is coming, and they perish as heralds.

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

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

"Must their ears be smashed first, so that they learn to hear with their eyes? Must one rattle like drums and like preachers of repentance? Or do they only believe a stammerer?

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

"So they don't like to hear the word 'contempt' said about themselves. Well then, I will speak to their pride.

"So I will tell them about the most contemptible thing. And that is *the last human being*."

And Zarathustra spoke to the people like this:

"It's time for human beings to set their goal. It's time for human beings to plant the seed of their highest hope.

“Its soil is still rich enough for that. But this soil will one day be poor and tame, and no tall tree will be able to grow out of it anymore.

“Woe! The time is coming when human beings no longer shoot the arrow of their longing out beyond humanity, and the string of their bow has forgotten how to twang!

“I tell you: one must still carry chaos within oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star. I tell you: you still carry chaos within you.

“Woe! The time is coming when human beings will no longer give birth to a star. Woe! The time is coming of the most despicable human being, who can no longer despise himself.

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

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

“The earth has then grown small, and on it hops the last human being, who makes everything small. His kind is as impossible to wipe out as the flea; the last human being lives the longest.

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

“They have left the regions where living was hard, for people need warmth. People still love their neighbor and rub up against them, for people need warmth.

“Getting sick and being mistrustful count as sinful to them. People walk along carefully. What a fool, anyone who still stumbles over stones or over human beings!

“A little poison now and then: that makes pleasant dreams. And a lot of poison in the end, for a pleasant death.

“People still work, for work is a pastime. But they make sure the pastime isn’t too strenuous.

“No one is poor or rich anymore: both are too burdensome. Who would still want to rule? Who would still want to obey? Both are too burdensome.

“No shepherd and one herd! Everyone wants the same, everyone is the same. Whoever feels differently goes into the madhouse of their own free will.

“‘Once the whole world was mad,’ say the most refined, and blink.

“They are clever and know everything that has happened, so they never run out of things to mock. They still quarrel, but they make up soon, or else it upsets the stomach.

“People have their little pleasure for the day and their little pleasure for the night, but they respect health.

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

And here ended the first speech of Zarathustra, which is also called “the Prologue”: for at this point the shouting and the delight of the crowd interrupted him. “Give us this last human being, oh Zarathustra,” they cried; “make us into these last human beings! Then we will make you a gift of the overhuman!” And the whole crowd cheered and clicked their tongues. But Zarathustra became sad, and said to his heart:

“They don’t understand me. I’m not the mouth for these ears.

“I probably lived too long in the mountains, I listened too much to brooks and trees. Now I talk to them like a goatherd.

“My soul is unmoved and bright, like the mountains in the morning. But they think I’m cold, and a mocker making terrible jokes.

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

- ⁶ Then something happened that struck every mouth dumb and every eye fixed. Meanwhile the tightrope walker had begun his work: he had stepped out of a small door and walked along the rope, which was stretched between two towers so that it hung above the market and the people. Just as he was in the middle of his path, the little door opened once more, and a gaudy fellow, like a clown, jumped out and hurried after the first one. “Forward, cripple-foot!” cried his terrible voice; “forward, sloth, smuggler, pale face! Lest I tickle you with my heel! What are you doing here between towers? You belong in a tower; you should be locked up, you block the free path for someone better than you!” And with every word he came nearer and nearer; and when he was only one step behind him, the terrible thing happened that struck every mouth dumb and every eye fixed: he let out a shriek like a devil and leaped over the one who

stood in his way. But that one, seeing his rival win like this, lost his head and his footing on the rope; he threw away his pole and plunged faster than it, like a whirl of arms and legs, into the depths. The market and the people looked like the sea when a storm rushes into it: everything fled apart and piled over one another, and most of all where the body had to come down.

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

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

The man looked up suspiciously. "If you speak the truth," he said, "then I lose nothing if I lose my life. I am not much more than an animal that has been taught to dance, with blows and thin meals."

"Not at all," said Zarathustra; "you have made a profession out of danger, and there is nothing to despise in that. Now you perish by your profession: for that reason I will bury you with my own hands."

When Zarathustra had said this, the dying man no longer answered; but he moved his hand, as if he were looking for Zarathustra's hand in thanks. —

⁷ Meanwhile evening came, and the market hid itself in darkness. Then the people dispersed, for even curiosity and fright grow tired. Zarathustra, however, sat on the ground beside the dead man, lost in thought, and so he forgot the time. But at last it became night, and a cold wind blew over the lonely man. Then Zarathustra rose and said to his heart:

"Truly, Zarathustra made a fine catch of fish today! He caught no human being, but he did catch a corpse.

"Human existence is uncanny and still without meaning. A clown can become its fate.

“I want to teach humans the meaning of their being, which is the overhuman, the lightning out of the dark cloud that is the human being.

“But I am still far from them, and my sense doesn’t speak to their senses. To humans I am still something in between, between a fool and a corpse.

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

- 8 When Zarathustra had said this to his heart, he hoisted the corpse onto his back and set out on his way. He had not gone a hundred steps when a man crept up to him and whispered in his ear — and look! The one who spoke was the clown from the tower. “Leave this city, oh Zarathustra,” he said; “too many people hate you here. The good and the just hate you, and they call you their enemy and despiser; the believers in the right faith hate you, and they call you the danger to the crowd. It was lucky for you that people laughed at you: truly, you talked just like a clown. It was lucky for you that you joined the dead dog; by humbling yourself like that, you have saved yourself for today. But leave this city — or tomorrow I will jump over you, a living man over a dead one.” And when he had said this, the man vanished; but Zarathustra went on through the dark alleys.

At the city gate he met the gravediggers. They shone their torch in his face, recognized Zarathustra, and mocked him greatly. “Zarathustra is carrying off the dead dog! Good for Zarathustra, becoming a gravedigger! Our hands are too clean for this roast. Does Zarathustra want to steal the devil’s morsel? Well then! And good luck with the 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 together.

Zarathustra said nothing in reply and went on his way. After he had walked for two hours, past forests and marshes, he had heard too much of the hungry howling of the wolves, and hunger came upon him too. So he stopped in front of a lonely house in which a light was burning.

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

“My hunger has strange moods. Often it comes to me only after the meal, and today it didn’t come all day. Where was it?”

And with that Zarathustra knocked on the door of the house. An old man appeared. He carried the light and asked: “Who is coming to me and to my bad sleep?”

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

“Give me something to eat and drink; I forgot it during the day. Whoever feeds the hungry refreshes his own soul: so says wisdom.”

The old man went away, but came straight back and offered Zarathustra bread and wine. “It is a bad region for the hungry,” he said; “that is why I live here. Beast and human come to me, the hermit. But tell your companion to eat and drink too; he is more tired than you.” Zarathustra answered: “My companion is dead; I will hardly persuade him to do so.” “That is no concern of mine,” said the old man sullenly; “whoever knocks at my house must also take what I offer him. Eat and drink, and fare well!” —

Then Zarathustra went on for two more hours, trusting the road and the light of the stars, for he was a habitual night-walker and liked to look every sleeper in the face. But when morning began to dawn, Zarathustra found himself in a deep forest, and no path showed itself to him anymore. There he laid the dead man in a hollow tree at his head — for he wanted to protect him from the wolves — and lay down himself on the ground and the moss. And at once he fell asleep, his body weary, but his soul untroubled.

- ⁹ Zarathustra slept for a long time, and not only the dawn passed over his face, but also the morning. At last, though, his eye opened. In wonder Zarathustra looked into the forest and the stillness, in wonder he looked into himself. Then he got up quickly, like a sailor who suddenly sees land, and shouted with joy, for he saw a new truth. And then he spoke to his heart like this:

“A light dawned on me: I need companions, living ones — not dead companions and corpses that I carry with me wherever I want to go.

“But I need living companions, who follow me because they want to follow themselves, and go where I want to go.

“A light dawned on me: Zarathustra should speak not to the people but to companions! Zarathustra should not become the shepherd and dog of a herd!

“To lure many away from the herd, that is what I came for. The people and the herd shall be angry with me: Zarathustra wants to call the shepherds robbers.

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

“Look at the good and the just! Whom do they hate the most? The one who smashes their value-tablets, the smasher, the lawbreaker: — but that one is the creator.

“Look at the believers of every belief! Whom do they hate the most? The one who smashes their value-tablets, the smasher, the lawbreaker: — but that one is the creator.

“The creator seeks companions, not corpses, and not herds or believers either. 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 the harvest before him. But he lacks the hundred sickles, so he tears out the ears of grain and is annoyed.

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

“Fellow creators Zarathustra seeks, fellow harvesters and fellow celebrants Zarathustra seeks. What does he have to do with herds and shepherds and corpses!

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

“But I part from you, the time is up. Between dawn and dawn a new truth came to me.

“I am not to be a shepherd, not a gravedigger. I will not even talk with the people again. For the last time I spoke to a dead man.

“I want to join the creators, the harvesters, the celebrants. I want to show them the rainbow and all the stairs of the overhuman.

“To the hermits who live alone I will sing my song, and to the hermits who live in pairs. And to anyone who still has ears for the unheard-of, I will make their heart heavy with my happiness.

“I want to reach my goal, I go my way. I will jump over the hesitant and the slow. So let my way be their going under!”

10 Zarathustra had spoken this to his heart when the sun stood at noon. He looked up questioningly, for above him he heard the sharp cry of a bird. And look! An eagle was circling through the air in wide rings, and hanging from it was a snake — not like prey, but like a friend: for it had coiled itself around his neck.

“They are my animals!” said Zarathustra, and rejoiced from his heart.

“The proudest animal under the sun and the cleverest animal under the sun: they have set out to scout.

“They want to find out whether Zarathustra is still alive. Truly, am I still alive?

“I found it more dangerous among humans than among animals. Zarathustra walks dangerous ways. May my animals lead me!”

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

“If only I were wiser! If only I were wise through and through, like my snake!

“But I ask for the impossible there: so I ask my pride to always go along with my cleverness!

“And if my cleverness one day leaves me, oh, it loves to fly away, may my pride then still fly with my foolishness!”

That is how Zarathustra’s going under began.

PART 1

Discourses



Zarathustra's Discourses

On the Three Transformations.

I'll name three transformations of the spirit for you: how the spirit becomes a camel, and the camel a lion, and finally the lion a child.

There is much that is heavy for the spirit, the strong, burden-bearing spirit in which reverence lives. Its strength longs for the heavy, for the heaviest.

"What is heavy?" asks the burden-bearing spirit, and it kneels down like a camel and wants to be loaded well.

"What is the heaviest, you heroes?" asks the burden-bearing spirit, "so that I can take it on myself and be glad of my strength.

"Isn't it this: to humble yourself in order to hurt your arrogance? To let your foolishness shine in order to mock your wisdom?

"Or is it this: to part from our cause just when it celebrates its victory? To climb high mountains in order to tempt the tempter?

"Or is it this: to feed on the acorns and grass of knowledge, and to suffer hunger of the soul for the sake of truth?

"Or is it this: to be sick, send the comforters home, and make friends with the deaf, who never hear what you want?

"Or is it this: to step into dirty water when it is the water of truth, and not to push away cold frogs and hot toads?

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

The burden-bearing spirit takes all of this heaviest upon itself. Like the camel that hurries loaded 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 wants to take freedom for itself and be master in its own desert.

Here it looks for its last master. It wants to become an enemy to him and to its last god, and it wants to wrestle the great dragon for victory.

What is the great dragon that the spirit can no longer call master and god? “You shall” is the name of the great dragon. But the spirit of the lion says “I will.”

“You shall” lies in its way, sparkling gold, an animal covered in scales, and on every scale “You shall!” shines in gold.

Thousand-year-old values gleam on these scales, and so speaks the mightiest of all dragons: “The whole value of things — it gleams from me.”

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

My brothers, why does the spirit need the lion? Isn’t the beast of burden enough, the one that gives things up and is reverent?

Creating new values — even the lion cannot yet do that. But making freedom for oneself, for new creating — that the lion’s power can do.

To create freedom for oneself, and a holy No even to duty: for that, my brothers, the lion is needed.

To take the right to new values — that is the most terrible taking for a burden-bearing and reverent spirit. Truly, it is a robbery for it, and the business of a beast of prey.

Once it loved “You shall” as its holiest thing; now it must find delusion and arbitrariness even in the holiest, so that it can rob itself of 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 robbing lion also become a child?

The child is innocence and forgetting, a new beginning, a game, a wheel that rolls of its own accord, a first movement, a sacred yes-saying.

Yes, for the game of creating, my brothers, a holy saying of Yes is needed. The spirit now wills *its own* will. The one who lost the world wins their own world.

I named three transformations of the spirit for you: how the spirit became a camel, and the camel a lion, and finally the lion a child.

That is what Zarathustra said. And at that time he was staying in the city called the Colorful Cow.

On the Teaching Chairs of Virtue.

People praised a wise man to Zarathustra: he knew how to speak well about sleep and virtue, they said. He was greatly honored and well paid for it, and all the young men sat in front of his teaching chair. Zarathustra went to him, and with all the young men he sat in front of his teaching chair. And the wise man said:

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

The thief is still bashful before sleep: he always steals quietly through the night. But the watchman of the night is shameless; shamelessly he carries his horn.

Sleeping is no small art. It takes effort to stay awake all day for it.

Ten times a day you must overcome yourself. That makes a good tiredness, and it is poppy for the soul.

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

Ten truths you must find during the day. Otherwise you'll still be looking for truth at night, and your soul will have stayed hungry.

Ten times you must laugh during the day and be cheerful, or else your stomach will disturb you at night, that father of gloom.

Few people know this, but you must have all the virtues in order to sleep well.

Will I bear false witness? Will I commit adultery?

Will I let myself covet my neighbor's maid? All of that would go badly with good sleep.

And even when you have all the virtues, you must still understand one more thing: sending the virtues themselves to sleep at the right time.

So that they don't quarrel with each other, the well-behaved little women! And over you, you unlucky one!

Peace with God and with the neighbor: that is what good sleep wants. And peace with the neighbor's devil too! Otherwise he'll haunt you at night.

Honor to the authorities, and obedience, even to crooked authorities! That is what good sleep wants. Can I help it that power likes to walk on crooked legs?

The one I'll always call the best shepherd is the one who leads his sheep to the greenest pasture. That goes well with good sleep.

I don't want much honor or great treasures: they inflame the spleen. But it's hard to sleep without a good name and a small treasure.

A small company is more welcome to me than a bad one; yet it must come and go at the right time. That is compatible with good sleep.

I like the poor in spirit very much too: they promote sleep. Blessed are they, especially if you always agree with them.

So the day runs for the virtuous. When night comes, I take good care not to call sleep! He doesn't want to be called, sleep, the lord of the virtues!

Rather, I think over what I did and thought during the day. Chewing it over, patient as a cow, I ask myself: what were your ten overcomings, after all?

And what were the ten reconciliations, and the ten truths, and the ten laughs that my heart treated itself to?

While I'm thinking over such things, rocked by forty thoughts, sleep suddenly overtakes me, the uncalled one, the lord of the virtues.

Sleep taps on my eye, and it grows heavy. Sleep touches my mouth, and it stays open.

Truly, on soft soles he comes to me, the dearest of thieves, and steals my thoughts: I stand there stupid, like this chair.

But I don't stand for long after that. I'm already lying down.

When Zarathustra heard the wise man speak like this, he laughed to himself in his heart, for a light had dawned on him. And so he spoke to his heart:

This wise man with his forty thoughts is a fool to me. But I believe he knows very well how to sleep.

Happy is anyone who lives near this wise man! Such sleep is catching. It is catching even through a thick wall.

There is a magic even in his teaching chair. And it was not for nothing that the young men sat in front of the preacher of virtue.

His wisdom is this: to stay awake in order to sleep well. And truly, if life had no meaning and I had to choose nonsense, then this would also be the most worthwhile nonsense for me.

Now I clearly understand what people once looked for above all when they looked for teachers of virtue. They looked for good sleep, and poppy-flower virtues to go with it!

For all these praised wise men of the teaching chairs, wisdom was sleep without dreams. They knew no better meaning of life.

Even today there are surely a few like this preacher of virtue, and not always such honest ones. But their time is up. And they won't be standing much longer: they're already lying down.

Blessed are these sleepy ones, for they will soon nod off.

That is what Zarathustra said.

On the Believers in Other Worlds.

Once Zarathustra too threw his delusion out beyond man, like all believers in other worlds. The world seemed to me then the work of a suffering, tormented god.

The world seemed to me then a dream, a god's poem: colored smoke before the eyes of one who is divinely dissatisfied.

Good and evil and pleasure and pain and I and you: it looked to me like colored smoke before creative eyes. The creator wanted to look away from himself, and so he made the world.

It is a drunken pleasure for the sufferer to look away from his suffering and lose himself. A drunken pleasure and self-loss: that is how the world seemed to me once.

This world, forever imperfect, the image of an eternal contradiction, and an imperfect image at that, a drunken pleasure for its imperfect creator: that is how the world seemed to me once.

So I too once threw my delusion out beyond man, like all believers in other worlds. Beyond man in truth?

Ah, my brothers, this god that I made was man's work and man's madness, like all gods!

He was a human being, only a poor piece of human being and of me: out of my own ash and glow this specter came to me, and truly! It did not come to me from beyond.

What happened, my brothers? I overcame myself, the one who suffered; I carried my own ash up the mountain; I invented a brighter flame for myself. And look! The specter *withdrew* from me!

It would be suffering for me now, and torment for one who has recovered, to believe in such ghosts. It would be suffering for me now, and humiliation. This is how I speak to the believers in other worlds.

It was suffering and powerlessness that made all the other worlds, and that short madness of happiness that only the one who suffers most experiences.

Weariness, which wants to reach the last thing in a single leap, a leap to death, a poor ignorant weariness that does not even want to want anymore: that is what created all the gods and afterworlds.

Believe me, my brothers! It was the body that despaired of the body — it groped with the fingers of a deluded spirit against the last walls.

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

And then it wanted to get through the last walls with its head, and not only with its head, over to "that world."

But "that world" is well hidden from man, that dehumanized, inhuman world, which is a heavenly nothing. And the belly of being doesn't speak to man at all, except as man.

Truly, all being is hard to prove and hard to bring to speech. Tell me, my brothers: is not the most wondrous of all things still the best proven?

Yes, this I, and the contradiction and confusion of the I, still speak 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 composes poems and rhapsodizes and flutters about with broken wings.

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

My I taught me a new pride, and I teach it to human beings: no longer to stick the head in the sand of heavenly things, but to carry it freely, an earthly head, which gives the earth its meaning!

I teach people a new will: to want this path that man has walked blindly, and to call it good, and no longer to sneak off from it to the side, like the sick and the dying!

The sick and the dying were the ones who despised body and earth and invented the heavenly and the redeeming drops of blood. But even these sweet and dark poisons they took from body and earth!

They wanted to run away from their misery, and the stars were too far for them. So they sighed: "Oh, if only there were heavenly paths for sneaking into another being and happiness!" Then they invented their sneaky ways and their little bloody potions!

Now they imagined themselves carried away from their body and this earth, these ungrateful ones. But to whom did they owe the convulsion and bliss of their rapture? To their body and this earth.

Zarathustra is gentle with the sick. Truly, he isn't angry at their kinds of comfort and ingratitude. May they become people who recover, and overcome, and create a higher body for themselves!

Nor is Zarathustra angry at the one who is recovering when he looks fondly at his delusion and creeps around the grave of his god at midnight. But even his tears are still sickness and a sick body to me.

There has always been a great deal of sickly people among those who write poetry and are hungry for God; furiously they hate the knower and that youngest of the virtues, which is called honesty.

They always look back to dark times: then, to be sure, delusion and belief were a different matter; the madness of reason was likeness to God, and doubt was sin.

I know these godlike ones only too well. They want people to believe in them, and doubt to be sin. I also know only too well what they themselves believe in best.

Truly, they believe not in afterworlds and redeeming drops of blood, but in the body most of all; and their own body is their thing-in-itself.

But to them it is a sickly thing, and they would gladly leap out of their skin. Therefore they listen for the preachers of death, and they themselves preach afterworlds.

Better listen, my brothers, to the voice of the healthy body. This voice is more honest and purer.

The healthy body speaks more honestly and more purely, the perfect one, built at right angles. And it speaks of the meaning of the earth.

That is what Zarathustra said.

On Those Who Despise the Body.

I want to say my word to the despisers of the body. I don't want them to learn differently and teach differently. I want them only to say goodbye to their own body, and so become silent.

"I am body and soul" — so speaks the child. And why should one not speak like children?

But the one who has awakened, the one who knows, says: I am body entirely and nothing besides; and soul is only a word for something about the body.

The body is a great reason, a plurality with one meaning, a war and a peace, a herd and a herdsman.

Your little reason is also a tool of your body, my brother, the one you call "spirit," a small tool and toy of your great reason.

“I,” you say, and you’re proud of this word. But the greater thing is what you don’t want to believe in: your body and its great reason. It doesn’t say I, but it does I.

What the senses feel and what the spirit knows never has its end in itself. But senses and spirit want to persuade you that they are the end of all things: so vain are they.

Senses and spirit are tools and toys. Behind them lies the Self. The Self also seeks with the eyes of the senses, and it also listens with the ears of the spirit.

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

Behind your thoughts and feelings, my brother, stands a mighty ruler, an unknown sage — he is called the Self. He dwells in your body; he is your body. There is more reason in your body than in your best wisdom. And who knows what your body needs your best wisdom for?

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 to my goal. I am the leading-strings of the I and the prompter of its concepts.”

The Self says to the I: “Here, feel pain!” And then the I suffers, and thinks about how to stop suffering — and for that very purpose it is meant to think.

The Self says to the I: “Here, feel pleasure!” Then the I rejoices, and thinks about how to rejoice often again — and for that very purpose it is meant to think.

I want to say a word to the despisers of the body. Their despising is what makes their esteeming. What is it that created esteeming and despising and value and will?

The creating Self created esteeming and despising for itself; it created pleasure and pain for itself. The creating body created the spirit for itself as a hand of its will.

Even in your folly and contempt, you despisers of the body, you still serve your Self. I tell you: your Self itself wants to die and turns away from life.

It is no longer able to do what it wants most: to create beyond itself. That is what it wants most; that is its whole fervor.

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 are no longer able to create beyond yourselves.

And that is why you are angry now at life and the earth. An envy you don't know about is in the sideways glare of your contempt.

I don't go your way, you despisers of the body! You are no bridges to the over-human for me!

That is what Zarathustra said.

On Joys and Passions.

My brother, if you have a virtue, and it is your virtue, then you do not share it with anyone.

Of course, you want to call it by name and caress it; you want to tug at its ear and play games with it.

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

You would do better to say: "It can't be spoken and has no name, the thing that gives my soul torment and sweetness and is also the hunger of my bowels."

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

Speak and stammer like this: "This is *my* good. I love it. It pleases me completely. Only this way do I want the good.

"I don't want it as the law of a god. I don't want it as a human rule or human necessity. Let it be no signpost for me to worlds above the earth and to paradises.

"An earthly virtue is what I love: little cleverness is in it, and least of all the reason everyone shares.

"But this bird built its nest with me: that is why I love it and cherish it. Now it sits with me on its golden eggs."

So you shall 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 on the heart of these passions. Then they became your virtues and joy-passions.

And whether you came from the family of the hot-tempered, or the lustful, or the faith-crazed, or the vengeful:

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

Once you had wild dogs in your cellar: but in the end they turned into birds and lovely singing women.

From your poisons you brewed your balsam. You milked your cow Gloom; now you drink the sweet milk of her udder.

And from now on nothing evil grows out of you, unless it is the evil that grows out of the fight among your virtues.

My brother, if you're lucky, you have one virtue and no more. That way you cross the bridge more easily.

It is distinguishing to have many virtues, but a heavy lot; and many a man went into the desert and killed himself because he was tired of being the battle and battlefield of virtues.

My brother, are war and battle evil? But this evil is necessary. Necessary are the envy and the distrust and the slander among your virtues.

Look how each of your virtues craves the highest place. It wants your whole spirit, to be *its* herald. It wants your whole strength in anger, hate and love.

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

Whoever is ringed by the flame of jealousy turns the poisoned sting against themselves in the end, like the scorpion.

Ah, my brother, have you never yet 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 you will perish by them. —

That is what Zarathustra said.

On the Pale Criminal.

You do not want to kill, you judges and sacrificers, until the animal has nodded? Look, the pale criminal has nodded: from his eye speaks the great contempt.

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

Judging himself was his highest moment. Don’t let the exalted one go back down again into his lowness!

There is no redemption for a man who suffers from himself like this, except a quick death.

Your killing, you judges, should be pity and not revenge. And as you kill, make sure you justify life yourselves!

It is not enough that you reconcile yourselves with the one you kill. Let your sadness be love for the overhuman: that is how you justify your still-living!

You should say “enemy,” but not “villain.” You should say “sick person,” but not “scoundrel.” You should say “fool,” but not “sinner.”

And you, red judge: if you said out loud everything you’ve already done in thought, everyone would cry out: “Away with this filth and poisonous worm!”

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

An image made this pale man pale. He was the same size as his deed when he did it; but he could not bear its image once it was done.

From then on he always saw himself as the doer of a single deed. I call this madness: the exception turned into his essence.

The stroke binds the hen; the blow he struck bound his poor reason. I call this the madness *after* the deed.

Listen, you judges! There is another madness, and it comes before the deed. Ah, you didn’t crawl deep enough into this soul!

So speaks the red judge: “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 didn’t understand this madness and talked him into it. “What does blood matter!” it said. “Don’t you at least want to make a robbery of it? To take a revenge?”

And he listened to his poor reason: its speech lay on him like lead, so he robbed while he murdered. He did not want to be ashamed of his madness.

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

If he could only shake his head, his load would roll off. But who shakes this head?

What is this man? A heap of diseases that reach out into the world through the spirit. There they want to take their prey.

What is this man? A tangle of wild snakes that seldom have peace with one another. So they go off on their own and look for prey in the world.

Look at this poor body! What it suffered and craved, this poor soul interpreted for itself. It interpreted it as murderous pleasure and greed for the happiness of the knife.

Whoever falls ill now is overcome by the evil that is evil now: he wants to hurt with whatever hurts him. But there were other times, and another evil and good.

Once doubt was evil, and the will to self. In those days the sick person became a heretic and a witch. As heretic and witch they suffered and wanted to make others suffer.

But this does not go into your ears: it would harm your good people, you tell me. But what do I care about your good people!

Much about your good people disgusts me, and certainly not their evil. I wish they had a madness that would destroy them, like this pale criminal!

Truly, I wish their madness were called truth, or faithfulness, or justice; but they have their virtue so that they may live long, in a pitiful comfort.

I am a railing by the river. Grab me, whoever can grab me! But I am not your crutch.

That is what Zarathustra said.

On Reading and Writing.

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

It isn't easy to understand another person's blood. I hate the idlers who read.

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

That everyone is allowed to learn to read ruins, in the long run, not only writing but also thinking.

Once the spirit was God, then it became man, and now it is even becoming rabble.

Whoever writes in blood and maxims doesn't want to be read, but learned by heart.

In the mountains the shortest way is from peak to peak. But for that you must have long legs. Maxims should be peaks. And the people they're spoken to should be big and tall.

The air thin and pure, danger near, and the spirit full of a cheerful malice: these go well together.

I want to have goblins around me, for I am brave. Courage that scares away ghosts makes goblins for itself. Courage wants to laugh.

I no longer feel as you do. This cloud that I see beneath me, this blackness and heaviness that I laugh at: that is exactly your thundercloud.

You look up when you long to be lifted. And I look down because I am lifted.

Which of you can laugh and be lifted at the same time?

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

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

You tell me: "Life is hard to bear." But then why would you have pride in the morning and surrender in the evening?

Life is hard to bear. But don't act so delicate with me! We're all of us fine load-carrying donkeys, male and female.

What do we have in common with the rosebud, which trembles because a drop of dew lies on its body?

It's true: we love life, not because we're used to living, but because we're used to loving.

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

And to me too, who am fond of life, butterflies and soap bubbles, and whatever is of their kind among people, seem to know the most about happiness.

To see these light, foolish, delicate, nimble little souls flutter: 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 serious, thorough, deep, solemn. It was the spirit of heaviness. Through him all things fall.

People kill not by anger but by laughter. Come, let us kill the spirit of heaviness!

I have learned to walk: since then I let myself run. I have learned to fly: since then I do not want to be pushed first in order to move from the spot.

Now I am light, now I fly, now I see myself below me, now a god dances through me.

That is what Zarathustra said.

On the Tree on the Mountain.

Zarathustra's eye had seen that a young man was avoiding him. And one evening, as he walked alone through the mountains that surround the town called "the Colorful Cow," look, there on his walk he found this young man sitting leaning against a tree and looking into the valley with tired eyes. Zarathustra took hold of the tree beside which the young man sat, and spoke like this:

If I wanted to shake this tree here with my hands, I would not be able to do it.

But the wind, which we don't see, torments it and bends it wherever it wants.

We are bent and tormented worst by unseen hands.

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

"Why are you frightened at that? But it is the same with man as with the tree.

"The more he wants to go up into the height and the light, the more strongly his roots strive earthward, downward, into the dark, the deep, into evil."

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

Zarathustra smiled and said: "Some souls you will never discover, unless you invent them first."

"Yes, into evil!" the young man cried again.

"You spoke the truth, Zarathustra. I no longer trust myself since I have wanted to rise, and no one trusts me anymore. How does that happen?"

"I change too fast: my today refutes my yesterday. When I climb, I often skip the steps, and no step forgives me for that.

"When I am up high, I always find myself alone. No one speaks with me; the frost of loneliness makes me shiver. What do I want up here?"

"My contempt and my longing grow together; the higher I climb, the more I despise the one who climbs. What does he want up here?"

"How ashamed I am of my climbing and stumbling! How I mock my heavy panting! How I hate the one who flies! How tired I am up here!"

Here the young man fell silent. And Zarathustra looked at the tree beside which they stood, and spoke like this:

This tree stands lonely here on the mountain. It grew high above man and beast.

And if it wanted to speak, it would have no one who could understand it: that is how high it grew.

Now he waits and waits — but what is he waiting for? He lives too close to the seat of the clouds: is he waiting for the first bolt of lightning?

When Zarathustra had said this, the young man cried out with violent gestures:

"Yes, Zarathustra, you speak the truth. I longed for my own downfall when I wanted to rise, and you are the lightning I was waiting for! Look, what am I still, since you appeared to us? It is *envy* of you that has destroyed me!" So spoke the young man, and wept bitterly. But Zarathustra put his arm around him and led him along with him.

And when they had walked together for a while, Zarathustra began to speak like this:

It tears my heart. Better than your words, your eyes tell me all your danger.

You're not free yet. You are still *searching* for freedom. Your searching has made you sleepless and over-awake.

You want to go up into free heights; your soul thirsts for stars. But your bad drives thirst for freedom too.

Your wild dogs want freedom; they bark with delight in their cellar when your spirit tries to loosen every prison.

To me you're still a prisoner who dreams up freedom for himself. Ah, the soul of such prisoners becomes clever, but also cunning and bad.

The one who has been freed in spirit must still purify themselves. A lot of prison and mold is still left in them. Their eye must still become pure.

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

You still feel noble, and the others who are hostile to you and send you evil looks still feel you are noble. Know that a noble person stands in everyone's way.

Even for the good, a noble person stands in the way; and even when they call him a good man, they want thereby to push him aside.

The noble one wants to create something new, and a new virtue. The good one wants the old, and wants the old to be preserved.

But the danger for the noble one is not that he becomes a good one, but an insolent one, a mocker, a destroyer.

Ah, I have known noble ones who lost their highest hope. And then they slandered all high hopes.

Then they lived insolently in short pleasures, and they hardly set goals beyond the day.

"Spirit is also lust," they said. Then the wings of their spirit broke. Now it crawls around and soils what it gnaws.

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

But by my love and hope I implore you: don't throw away the hero in your soul! Keep your highest hope holy!

That is what Zarathustra said.

On the Preachers of Death.

There are preachers of death, and the earth is full of those who must be preached away from life.

The earth is full of the superfluous. Life is ruined by the far too many. Let them be lured out of this life with “eternal life”!

“Yellow”: that is what the preachers of death are called, or “black.” But I want to show you them in other colors too.

There are the terrible ones, who carry a beast of prey around inside them and have no choice except between cravings and tearing themselves apart. And even their cravings are still a tearing apart of themselves.

They haven’t even become human yet, these terrible ones. Let them preach turning away from life and depart themselves!

There are the consumptives of the soul. They’re barely born when they begin to die, and they long for teachings of weariness and renunciation.

They would gladly be dead, and we should approve of their wish! Let’s take care not to wake these dead or hurt these living coffins!

A sick person meets them, or an old man, or a corpse, and at once they say, “Life is refuted!”

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

Wrapped in thick gloom and hungry for the little accidents that bring death, they wait, with their teeth clenched.

Or else they reach for candy and mock their own childishness as they do it: they hang their life on a straw and mock that they still hang on a straw.

Their wisdom goes: “Anyone who stays alive is a fool. But we are such fools! And that is the most foolish thing about life!”

“Life is only suffering,” others say, and they don’t lie. So make sure you stop! Make sure the life that is only suffering comes to an end!

And let the teaching of your virtue read: “You shall kill yourself! You shall steal yourself away!”

“Lust is a sin,” say some of those who preach death. “Let’s step aside and not conceive children!”

“Giving birth is hard work,” say the others. “Why go on giving birth? All you bring into the world is unhappy people!” And they too are preachers of death. “Pity is what is needed,” say the third. “Take what I have! Take what I am! All the less does life bind me!”

If they were pitying to the bottom of their hearts, they would make their neighbors sick of life. Being wicked, that would be their true kindness.

But they want to get free of life. What do they care that they bind others even tighter with their chains and gifts!

And you too, for whom life is wild work and restlessness: aren’t you very tired of life? Aren’t you very ripe for the preaching of death?

All of you who love wild work, and what is quick, new, and strange: you put up badly with yourselves. Your hard work is flight, and a will to forget yourselves.

If you believed more in life, you would throw yourselves less at the moment. But you don’t have enough inside you to wait, and not even enough for laziness!

The voice of those who preach death sounds everywhere. And the earth is full of people to whom death must be preached.

Or “eternal life”: that is all the same to me, as long as they depart quickly!

That is what Zarathustra said.

On War and Warriors.

We don’t want to be spared by our best enemies, or by those we love from the bottom of our hearts either. So let me tell you the truth!

My brothers in war! I love you from the bottom of my heart. I am one of your kind, and always was. And I am also your best enemy. So let me tell you the truth!

I know the hatred and envy of your hearts. You are not great enough not to know hatred and envy. So be great enough not to be ashamed of them!

And if you can’t be saints of knowledge, then at least be its fighters. They are the companions and forerunners of that kind of holiness.

I see many soldiers. I wish I saw many fighters! “Uni-form” is what people call what they wear. May what they hide beneath it not be uni-form!

You should be the kind whose eye is always looking for an enemy, for *your* enemy. And some of you feel a hatred at first sight.

You should look for your enemy and wage your war, and wage it for your thoughts! And if your thought loses, your honesty should still cry out in triumph over it!

You should love peace as a means to new wars. And the short peace more than the long one.

I don't advise you to work but to fight. I don't advise you to make peace but to win. Let your work be a fight, let your peace be a victory!

You can only keep quiet and sit still when you have arrow and bow. Otherwise you chatter and quarrel. Let your peace be a victory!

You say it's the good cause that makes even war holy? I tell you: it's the good war that makes every cause holy.

War and courage have done more great things than love of neighbor. It was not your pity but your bravery that until now has saved the unfortunate.

What is good? you ask. To be brave is good. Let the little girls talk: "Being good is what is at once pretty and touching."

They call you heartless; but your heart is genuine, and I love the shame of your warmth. You are ashamed of your flood, and others are ashamed of their ebb.

You are ugly? Well then, my brothers! Take the sublime around you, the cloak of the ugly!

And when your soul grows great, it grows arrogant, and there is malice in your loftiness. I know you.

In malice the arrogant and the weak meet. But they misunderstand each other. I know you.

You may have only enemies whom you must hate, but not enemies you may look down on. You must be proud of your enemy: then the successes of your enemy are also your successes.

Rebellion is a slave's kind of nobility. Let your nobility be obedience! Let your very commanding be an obeying!

To a good fighter, "you shall" sounds more pleasant than "I will." And everything that is dear to you, you should first have commanded to you.

Let your love of life be love of your highest hope; and let your highest hope be the highest thought of life!

But your highest thought you should let me command you, and it goes: the human being is something that is to be overcome.

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

I don't spare you. I love you from the bottom of my heart, my brothers in war!

That is what Zarathustra said.

On the New Idol.

Somewhere there are still peoples and herds, but not with us, my brothers. With us there are states.

State? What is that? Well then! Now open your ears, for now I will tell you my word on the death of peoples.

State is what they call the coldest of all cold monsters. Coldly it lies too; and this lie crawls from its mouth: "I, the state, am the people."

It's a lie! Creators were the ones who made the peoples and hung a faith and a love over them. That is how they served life.

Destroyers are the ones who set traps for the many and call them "the state." They hang a sword and a hundred desires over them.

Where a people still exists, it doesn't understand the state and hates it as the evil eye and as a sin against customs and laws.

This sign I give you: every people speaks its own tongue of good and evil, and the neighbor does not understand it. It invented its language in its customs and laws.

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

Everything about it is false. It bites with stolen teeth, the biter. Even its insides are false.

Confusion of the tongues of good and evil: this sign I give you as the sign of the state. Truly, this sign points to 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 far-too-many! How it gulps them down and chews them and chews them over again!

“There is nothing greater on earth than I. I am the ordering finger of God.” That is how the monster roars. And it’s not only the long-eared and the short-sighted who sink to their knees!

Ah, even into you, you great souls, it whispers its gloomy lies! Ah, it guesses the rich hearts that like to squander themselves!

Yes, it guesses you too, you conquerors of the old God! You grew tired in the fight, and now your tiredness serves the new idol as well!

Heroes and honorable people are what it would like to line up around itself, the new idol! It likes to sun itself in the sunshine of good consciences, the cold monster!

It will give *you* everything if *you* worship it, the new idol. That is how it buys for itself the shine of your virtue and the look in your proud eyes.

It wants to use you as bait for the far-too-many! Yes, a hellish trick was invented there, a horse of death, jingling in the finery of divine honors!

Yes, a dying-for-many was invented there, which praises itself as life: truly, a service of the heart to all the preachers of death!

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

Just look at these superfluous people! They steal for themselves the works of the inventors and the treasures of the wise. “Education” is what they call their theft, and everything turns into sickness and misery for them!

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

Just look at these superfluous people! They gain riches and become poorer with them. They want power, and first the crowbar of power, a lot of money, these incapable people!

Watch them climb, these nimble monkeys! They climb over each other and so drag each other down into the mud and the depths.

They all want to get to the throne: their madness is this, as if happiness sat on the throne! Often the mud sits on the throne — and often the throne sits on the mud.

To me they are all madmen and climbing monkeys and overheated people. Their idol, the cold monster, smells bad to me. They all smell bad to me together, these idol worshippers.

My brothers, do you want to suffocate in the fumes of their mouths and desires? Better to smash the windows and jump out into the open!

Get out of the way of the bad smell! Go away from the idol worship of the superfluous!

Get out of the way of the bad smell! Go away from the steam of these human sacrifices!

Even now the earth stands open to great souls. Many seats are still empty for those who are alone and those who are two together, around whom blows the scent of silent seas.

A free life still stands open to great souls. Truly, whoever owns little is possessed that much less. Praised be small poverty!

There, where the state ends, is where the human being who isn't superfluous first begins. There the song of the necessary begins, the unique and irreplaceable tune.

There, where the state *ends*: look over there, my brothers! Don't you see it, the rainbow and the bridges of the overhuman?

That is what Zarathustra said.

On the Flies of the Marketplace.

Run away, my friend, into your solitude! I see you dazed by the noise of the great men and stung all over by the stings of the small.

Forest and rock know how to keep silent with you in a worthy way. Be like the tree you love again, the broad-branched one: quiet and listening, it hangs over the sea.

Where solitude ends, the marketplace begins; and where the marketplace begins, there also begins the noise of the great actors and the buzzing of the poisonous flies.

In the world even the best things are worth nothing without someone who first stages them. The people call these stagers great men.

The people understand little of what is great, that is, what creates. But they have a sense for all the stagers and actors of great things.

The world turns around the inventors of new values — turning unseen. But around the actors turn the crowd and the fame: that is how the world goes.

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

Tomorrow he has a new belief, and the day after tomorrow a newer one. He has quick senses, like the people, and changeable weather.

Knocking over means proving, to him. Driving mad means convincing. And blood counts as the best of all reasons.

A truth that slips only into fine 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 clowns, and the people boast of their great men! They are the masters of the hour to them.

But the hour presses them, and so they press you; and they want a yes or a no from you too. Woe, do you want to set your chair between yes and no?

Because of these unconditional, pressing people, don't be jealous, you lover of truth! Truth has never yet hung on the arm of an unconditional person.

Because of these sudden people, go back into your safety. Only in the marketplace are you assaulted with Yes? or No?

Experience comes slowly to all deep wells. They have to wait a long time until they know what fell into their depths.

Everything great happens away from the marketplace and fame. Away from the marketplace and fame the inventors of new values have always lived.

Run away, my friend, into your solitude: I see you stung by poisonous flies. Run to where rough, strong air blows!

Flee into your solitude! You lived too close to the small and wretched. Flee from their invisible revenge! Against you they are nothing but revenge.

Don't raise your arm against them any more! They are countless, and it isn't your lot to be a fly swatter.

These small and pitiful ones are countless, and raindrops and weeds have already been the downfall of many a proud building.

You are not a stone, but you have already become hollow from many drops. I tell you, you will still break and burst from so many drops.

I see you worn out by poisonous flies, I see you scratched bloody in a hundred places, and your pride won't even get angry.

They would like blood from you in all innocence. Their bloodless souls crave blood, and so they sting in all innocence.

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

You are too proud, I think, to kill these nibblers. But take care that it doesn't become your doom to bear all their poisonous wrong!

They buzz around you with their praise too. Their praising is pushiness. They want to be near your skin and your blood.

They flatter you as if you were a god or a devil. They whimper before you as before a god or a devil. What does it matter! They are flatterers and whimperers and nothing more.

They also often present themselves to you as lovable. But that was always the cleverness of cowards. Yes, cowards are clever!

They think a lot about you with their narrow souls, and to them you are always troubling! Everything that is thought over a lot becomes troubling.

They punish you for all your virtues. The only thing they truly forgive you is your mistakes.

Because you are gentle and just-minded, you say: "They are innocent of their small 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 goes against their taste. They rejoice when you are, for once, modest enough to be vain.

What we recognize in a person, we also set alight in him. So beware of the small!

Before you they feel small, and their lowness smolders and glows against you in invisible revenge.

Did you not notice how often they fell silent when you came to them, and how their strength drained out of them like smoke from a dying fire?

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

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

Run away, my friend, into your solitude, to where a rough, strong air blows. It isn't your lot to be a fly swatter.

That is what Zarathustra said.

On Chastity.

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

Isn't it better to fall into the hands of a murderer than into the dreams of a woman in heat?

And just look at these men: their eyes say it. They know nothing better on earth than to lie with a woman.

There is mud at the bottom of their souls; and woe if their mud even has spirit! If only you were at least perfect as animals! But innocence belongs to the animal.

Am I advising you to kill your senses? I advise you toward innocence of the senses.

Am I advising you toward chastity? Chastity is a virtue in some, but in many it is almost a vice.

These people hold back, to be sure. But the bitch Sensuality looks out with envy from everything they do.

Even into the heights of their virtue and right into their cold spirit this beast follows them, with its unrest.

And how prettily the bitch Sensuality knows how to beg for a piece of spirit when she is denied a piece of meat!

You love tragedies and everything that breaks the heart? But I am suspicious of your bitch.

Your eyes are too cruel, and you look lustfully at sufferers. Has not your lust merely disguised itself and called itself pity?

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

Whoever finds chastity hard should be advised against it, so that it doesn't become the road to hell, that is, to the mud and the heat of the soul.

Am I talking about dirty things? That isn't the worst thing to me.

It isn't when the truth is dirty but when it is shallow that the knower is unwilling to step into its water.

Truly, there are people who are chaste to the core. They are gentler in heart, and they laugh more gladly and more abundantly than you.

They laugh at chastity too, and ask: "What is chastity?"

"Isn't chastity foolishness? But this foolishness came to us, and we didn't go to it.

"We offered this guest lodging and heart. Now the guest lives with us. Let the guest stay as long as they want!"

That is what Zarathustra said.

On the Friend.

"There is always one too many around me," so thinks the hermit. "Once one times one: in the long run that makes two!"

I and Me are always too eager in conversation. How would it be bearable 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 gives away where we would like to have faith in ourselves. Our longing for a friend is our betrayer.

And often you only want to leap over envy with love. And often you attack and make yourself an enemy, to hide that you can be attacked.

“At least be my enemy!” That is what true reverence says, which doesn’t dare to ask for friendship.

If you want to have a friend, you must also be willing to wage war for your friend. And to wage war, you must be *able* to be an enemy.

You should still honor the enemy in your friend. Can you step right up to your friend without going over to your friend’s side?

In your friend you should have your best enemy. You should be closest to them with your heart when you resist them.

You don’t want to wear any clothes in front of your friend? It’s supposed to be an honor to your friend that you show yourself as you are? But your friend wishes you to the devil for it!

Whoever makes no secret of himself causes outrage: you have so much reason to fear nakedness! Yes, if you were gods, you would have reason to be ashamed of your clothes!

You can’t dress up beautifully enough for your friend, for you are to be an arrow for your friend and a longing for the overhuman.

Have you already seen your friend sleeping, so that you could learn what he looks like? What else is your friend’s face? It is your own face, in a rough and imperfect mirror.

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

A friend should be a master at guessing and at keeping silent. You must not want to see everything. Your dream should tell you what your friend does when awake.

Let your pity be a kind of guessing, so that you first find out whether your friend wants pity. Perhaps what your friend loves in you is the unbroken eye and the look of eternity.

Let your pity for your friend hide under a hard shell; you should break a tooth on it. That way it will have its refinement and its sweetness.

Are you pure air and solitude and bread and medicine to your friend? Many a person cannot loosen his own chains, and yet he is a redeemer to his friend.

Are you a slave? Then you can't be a friend. Are you a tyrant? Then you can't have friends.

For too long a slave and a tyrant have 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 is still ambush, lightning, and night alongside 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, the poverty of you men, and the stinginess of your souls! As much as you give to your friend, I will give even to my enemy, and I won't have become any poorer for it.

There is comradeship. May there be friendship!

That is what Zarathustra said.

On a Thousand Goals and One.

Zarathustra saw many lands and many peoples, and so 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 things. But if a people wants to preserve itself, it must not value things the way its neighbor does.

Much that one people called good, another people called scorn and disgrace. That is what I found. Much that I found called evil in one place was dressed in purple honors in another.

One neighbor never understood another. Each soul was always amazed at the neighbor's delusion and wickedness.

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

What a people finds hard is praised. What is indispensable and hard is called good. And what still frees a people from its greatest need, the rare thing, the hardest thing, that it praises as holy.

Whatever makes a people rule and win and shine, to the horror and envy of its neighbor: that it counts as the highest thing, the first thing, the measure, the meaning of all things.

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

"Always you shall be the first and rise above the others: your jealous soul shall love no one except the friend" — this made a Greek's soul tremble; and thereby he walked his path of greatness.

"To speak the truth, and to handle bow and arrow well." That seemed both dear and hard to the people my name comes from, the name that is both dear and hard to me.

"To honor father and mother, and to do their will down to the root of the soul." Another people hung this tablet of overcoming over itself, and became powerful and everlasting with it.

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

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

Values were first placed in things by human beings, to preserve themselves: they first gave things meaning, a human meaning! That is why they call themselves "human," that is: the valuer.

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

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

A change of values is a change of creators. Whoever has to be a creator always destroys.

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

Peoples once hung a tablet of the good over themselves. Love that wants to rule and love that wants to obey together created such tablets.

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

Truly, the cunning I, the loveless one, that wants its own advantage in the advantage of many: that is not the origin of the herd, but its downfall.

They were always lovers, and creators, who created good and evil. The fire of love glows in the names of all the virtues, and so does the fire of wrath.

Zarathustra saw many lands and many peoples: no greater power did Zarathustra find on earth than the works of lovers. “Good” and “evil” is their name.

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

A thousand goals there have been so far, for there have been a thousand peoples. Only the fetter of the thousand necks is still missing, the one goal. Humanity has no goal yet.

But tell me, my brothers: if humanity still lacks a goal, doesn’t it also still lack itself?

That is what Zarathustra said.

On Love of Neighbor.

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

You flee to your neighbor from yourselves and would like to 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 the I not yet. So human beings press toward the neighbor.

Do I advise you to love your neighbor? I would sooner advise you to flee from your neighbor and to love the farthest!

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

This specter that runs ahead of you, my brother, is more beautiful than you. Why do you not give it your flesh and your bones? But you are afraid, and run to your neighbor.

You cannot bear yourselves and do not love yourselves enough: now you want to tempt the neighbor into love and gild yourselves with his error.

I wish you could not bear 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 once you have tempted him to think well of you, you think well of yourselves.

Not only does the person lie who speaks against what they know, but even more the person who speaks against what they don't know. And that is how you speak of yourselves in company, and lie to your neighbor with yourselves.

So says the fool: "Dealing with people ruins character, especially if you have none."

One person goes to the neighbor because they are looking for themselves, and another because they would like to lose themselves. Your bad love of yourselves turns your solitude into a prison.

It is the more distant ones who pay for your love of neighbor; and even when five of you are together, a sixth must always die.

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

I don't teach you the neighbor, but the friend. Let the friend be the festival of the earth for you, and a foretaste of the overhuman.

I teach you the friend and the friend's overfull heart. But you have to know how to be a sponge, if you want to be loved by overfull hearts.

I teach you the friend, in whom the world stands finished, a bowl of the good: the creating friend, who always has a finished world to give away.

And just as the world unrolled for him, so it rolls back up for him in rings: as the becoming of the 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 you should love the overhuman as your cause.

My brothers, I don't advise you to love your neighbor. I advise you to love the farthest.

That is what Zarathustra said.

On the Way of the Creator.

Do you want to go into isolation, my brother? Do you want to look for the way to yourself? Wait a little longer and listen to me.

"Whoever seeks easily loses himself. All isolation is guilt," so says the herd. And you belonged to the herd for a long time.

The voice of the herd will still sound in you too. And when you say, "I no longer share one conscience with you," it will be a lament and a pain.

Look, this pain itself was born from that one conscience. And the last glimmer of that conscience still glows on your sorrow.

But you want to walk the path of your sorrow, which is the way to yourself? Then show me your right and your strength for it!

Are you a new strength and a new right? A first movement? A wheel that rolls of its own accord? Can you also compel the stars to turn around you?

Ah, there is so much lust for height! There are so many convulsions of the ambitious! Show me that you aren't one of the lustful and ambitious!

Ah, there are so many great thoughts that do no more than a bellows: they puff up and leave things emptier.

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

Are you someone who was *allowed* to escape a yoke? There are people who threw away their last worth when they threw away their servitude.

Free from what? What does Zarathustra care about that! But your eye should tell me brightly: free *for what*?

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

Terrible is solitude with the judge and avenger of one's own law. So a star is hurled out into empty space and into the icy breath of solitude.

Today you still suffer from the many, you one. Today you still have your courage whole, and your hopes.

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

One day you will no longer see your heights, and your lowlands will be too close; even your sublime will frighten you like a specter. One day you will cry: "Everything is false!"

There are feelings that want to kill the lonely person. If they don't succeed, well, then they themselves must die! But are you able to be a murderer?

Do you already know the word "contempt," my brother? And the torment of your justice, of being just to those who despise you?

You force many to change their opinion of you, and they hold that hard against you. You came close to them and still passed by: that they never forgive you.

You step beyond them; but the higher you climb, the smaller the eye of envy sees you. Most of all, however, the one who flies is hated.

"How could you be just to me!" you must say. "I choose your injustice as the portion measured out to me."

They throw injustice and filth at the lonely one; but, my brother, if you want to be a star, you must shine on them no less for that!

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

Beware also of holy simple-mindedness! Everything that isn't simple is unholy to it. It likes to play with fire too: the stake.

And beware also of the attacks of your love! The lonely person reaches out a hand too quickly to anyone they meet.

To many a person you must not give your hand, only your paw; and I want your paw to have claws too.

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

Lonely one, you are going the way to yourself! And your way leads past yourself and past your seven devils!

You will be a heretic to yourself, and a witch, and a fortune-teller, and a fool, and a doubter, and an unholy one, and a villain.

You must want to burn yourself in your own flame. How could you become new if you haven't first become ashes!

Lonely one, you walk the path of the creator: you want to create a god for yourself out of your seven devils!

Lonely one, you are going the way of the lover. You love yourself, and that is why you despise yourself, the way only lovers despise.

The lover wants to create because they despise! What does anyone know of love who didn't have to despise exactly what they loved!

Go into your isolation with your love and with your creating, my brother. And only late will justice limp after you.

Go into your solitude with my tears, my brother. I love the one who wants to create beyond himself and so goes under. —

That is what Zarathustra said.

On Old and Young Women.

“Why do you creep so shyly through the dusk, Zarathustra? And what do you carefully hide under your cloak?

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

Truly, my brother! said Zarathustra, it is a treasure that was given to me. It is a small truth that I carry.

But it is unruly like a young child. And if I don't hold its mouth shut, it screams much too loud.

When I walked alone on my way today, at the hour when the sun sets, an old little woman met me and spoke to my soul like this:

“Zarathustra has said much to us women too, but he has never spoken to us about woman.”

And I answered her: “About woman one should speak only to men.”

“Speak to me about woman too,” she said. “I am old enough to forget it right away.”

And I did what the old woman wished and spoke to her like this:

Everything about woman is a riddle, and everything about woman has one solution: its name is pregnancy.

A man is a means for a woman. The end is always the child. But what is a woman for a man?

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

A man should be raised for war and a woman for the recreation of the warrior. Everything else is foolishness.

The warrior does not like overly sweet fruits. That is why he likes woman; even the sweetest woman is still bitter.

A woman understands children better than a man does, but a man is more childlike than a woman.

In the genuine man a child is hidden, and it wants to play. Come on, you women, discover the child in the man for me!

Let woman be a toy, pure and fine, like a gem, shining with the virtues of a world that isn't here yet.

Let the ray of a star shine in your love! Let your hope be: "May I give birth to the overhuman!"

Let there be courage in your love! With your love you should go straight at the one who frightens you!

Let your honor be in your love! Woman otherwise understands little about honor. But let this be your honor: always to love more than you are loved, and never to be second.

The man should fear woman when she loves: then she brings every sacrifice, and every other thing is worth nothing to her.

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

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

A man's happiness is: I want. A woman's happiness is: he wants.

"Look, the world has just now become perfect!" That is what every woman thinks when she obeys out of complete love.

And woman must obey and find a depth to match her surface. Surface is woman's disposition: a restless, stormy skin on shallow water.

But a man's heart is deep, his stream roars in underground caves. A woman senses his strength but doesn't understand it.

Then the old little woman answered me: "Zarathustra said many pleasant things, and especially to those who are young enough for them.

"It is strange: Zarathustra knows little about women, and yet he is right about them! Is it because with woman nothing is impossible?

"And now take a small truth as thanks! I am old enough for it!

"Wrap it up and hold its mouth shut: otherwise it screams much too loud, this small truth."

"Woman, give me your small truth!" I said. And the old woman said:

"You are going to women? Don't forget the whip!"

That is what Zarathustra said.

On the Adder's Bite.

One day Zarathustra had fallen asleep under a fig tree, because it was hot, and had laid his arms over his face. Then an adder came and bit him in the neck, so that Zarathustra cried out in pain. When he had taken his arm from his face, he looked at the serpent: it recognized Zarathustra's eyes, coiled clumsily, and wanted to get away. "Not at all," said Zarathustra; "you have not yet accepted my thanks! You woke me in time; my way is still long." "Your way is short," said the adder sadly; "my poison kills." Zarathustra smiled. "When has a dragon ever died 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 fell around his neck once more and licked his wound.

When Zarathustra once told this to his disciples, they asked: "And what, oh Zarathustra, is the moral of your story?" Zarathustra answered them thus:

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

But if you have an enemy, don't repay evil with good, for that would shame the enemy. Instead prove that the enemy has done you some good.

And better to be angry than to shame! And when you are cursed, I don't like it that you then want to bless. Better to curse back a little!

And if a great wrong is done to you, then quickly add five small ones to it for me! Terrible to look at is the one who is crushed by wrong alone.

Did you know this already? A shared wrong is half a right. And the one who can bear the wrong should take it on themselves!

A small revenge is more human than no revenge at all. And if punishment is not also a right and an honor for the one who transgresses, then I do not like your punishing either.

It is nobler to put yourself in the wrong than to insist on being right, especially when you are right. You just have to be rich enough for it.

I don't like your cold justice. And out of the eye of your judges I always see the executioner and his cold iron looking at me.

Tell me, where is justice found, which is love with seeing eyes?

So invent for me the love that bears not only all punishment but also all guilt!

So invent for me the justice that acquits everyone except the one who judges!

Do you also want to hear this? For the one who wants to be just through and through, even lying becomes a kindness toward human beings.

But how could I want to be just from the ground up! How can I give each person what is theirs! Let this be enough for me: I give each person what is mine.

Finally, my brothers, beware of doing wrong to any hermits! How could a hermit forget! How could a hermit pay back!

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

Beware of insulting the hermit! But if you did, well, then kill the hermit too!

That is what Zarathustra said.

On Child and Marriage.

I have a question for you alone, my brother. I throw this question like a plumb line into your soul, so that I can know how deep it is.

You are young and wish for a child and marriage. But I ask you: are you a person who is *allowed* to wish for a child?

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

Or does the animal speak out of your wish, and need? 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 be built yourself, for me, square in body and soul.

You should not only propagate yourselves onward, but upward! Let the garden of marriage help you to that!

You should create a higher body, a first movement, a wheel that rolls of its own accord: you should create a creator.

Marriage: that is what I call the will of two to create the one that is more than those who created it. Reverence for one another, as for those who will such a will, I call marriage.

That is the meaning and the truth of your marriage. But what the all-too-many call marriage, these superfluous ones, ah, what do I call that?

Ah, this poverty of soul for two! Ah, this filth of soul for two! Ah, this pitiful comfort for two!

They call all this marriage. And they say their marriages were made in heaven.

Well, I don't like it, this heaven of the superfluous! No, I don't like them, these animals tangled in the heavenly net!

Keep far from me the god too who comes limping up to bless what he did not join together!

Don't laugh at such marriages! What child wouldn't have reason to weep over its parents?

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

Yes, I wished the earth would quake with convulsions whenever a saint and a goose pair with each other.

This one went out like a hero in search of truths, and in the end he caught for himself a small dressed-up lie. He calls it his marriage.

That one was aloof in company and choosy in his choosing. But all at once he ruined his company for good. He calls it his marriage.

That one looked for a maid with the virtues of an angel. But all at once he became the maid of a woman, and now it would be necessary for him to become an angel on top of that.

I find all buyers careful now, and all of them have sly eyes. But even the slyest buys his wife in a sack.

Many short follies: that is what you call love. And your marriage puts an end to many short follies by means of one long stupidity.

Your love of woman and woman's love of man: ah, if only it were compassion for suffering and veiled gods! But mostly two animals guess at each other.

But even your best love is only a rapturous metaphor and a painful glow. It is a torch that should light you to higher ways.

Beyond yourselves you should one day love! So *learn* to love first! And that is why you had to drink the bitter cup of your love.

There is bitterness in the cup even of the best love. That is how it makes longing for the overhuman, that is how it makes thirst in you, the creator!

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

I call such a will and such a marriage holy.

That is what Zarathustra said.

On Free Death.

Many die too late, and some die too early. The teaching "die at the right time" still sounds strange.

Die at the right time: that is what Zarathustra teaches.

Of course, whoever never lives at the right time, how could he ever die at the right time? If only he had never been born! So I advise the superfluous.

But even the superfluous make a great fuss about their dying, and even the hol-lowest nut still wants to be cracked.

Everyone takes dying seriously; but death is still no festival. Human beings have not yet learned how to consecrate the most beautiful festivals.

I show you the death that fulfills, which becomes a spur and a vow for the living.

The one who fulfills dies their own death, victorious, surrounded by those who hope and vow.

So 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. The second best is to die in battle and to squander a great soul.

But hateful to the fighter as to the victor is your grinning death, which sneaks up like a thief and yet comes as a master.

I praise my death to you, the free death, which comes to me because *I* want it.

And when will I want it? Whoever has a goal and an heir wants death at the right time for the sake of goal and heir.

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

Truly, I don't want to be like the rope-makers: they draw out their thread and always walk backward themselves.

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

And whoever wants fame must take leave of honor in good time and practice the hard art of going at the right time.

You have to stop letting yourself be eaten when you taste best. Those know this who want to be loved for a long time.

There are sour apples, of course, whose lot is to wait until the last day of autumn. And all at once they become ripe, yellow, and wrinkled.

In some the heart grows old first, in others the mind. And some are old in youth. But whoever is young late stays young long.

Life turns out badly for some. A poison worm eats its way into their heart. So let them see to it that their dying turns out all the better.

Some never become sweet. They rot in the summer already. It is cowardice that holds them to their branch.

Far too many live, and far too long they hang on their branches. Let a storm come that shakes all this rotten, worm-eaten fruit from the tree!

If only preachers of *fast* death would come! Those would be the right storms and shakers of the trees of life for me! But I only hear slow death preached, and patience with everything “earthly.”

Ah, you preach patience with the earthly? It is this earthly that has too much patience with you, you blasphemers!

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

He knew only tears and the melancholy of the Hebrew, along with the hatred of the good and the just, the Hebrew Jesus. Then the longing for death overcame him.

If only he had stayed in the desert, far from the good and the just! Perhaps he would have learned to live and to love the earth, and to laugh with it!

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. A youth loves unripe, and unripe hates human beings and earth too. In a youth the heart and the wings of the mind are still tied down and heavy.

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

Free for death and free in death, a holy sayer of No when it is no longer time for Yes: that is how he understands death and life.

That your dying may be no slander against humanity and earth, my friends: that I ask of the honey of your soul.

In your dying your spirit and your virtue should still glow, like a sunset glow around the earth. Or else your dying has turned out badly for you.

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

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

More than anything I like to see you, my friends, throw the golden ball! And so I will linger a little longer on earth. Forgive me for it!

That is what Zarathustra said.

On the Giving Virtue.

¹ When Zarathustra had said goodbye to the city that his heart was fond of, whose name is “the Colorful Cow,” many who called themselves his disciples followed him and accompanied him. So they came to a crossroads. There Zarathustra told them that he now wanted to go alone, for he was a friend of going alone. But his disciples gave him a staff as a parting gift, on whose golden handle a snake coiled around the sun. Zarathustra was pleased with the staff and leaned on it. Then he spoke to his disciples like this:

Tell me: how did gold come to the highest value? Because it is uncommon and useless and shining and mild in its gleam. It always gives itself away.

Gold came to the highest value only as an image of the highest virtue. The look of the giver shines like gold. The gleam of gold makes peace between moon and sun.

The highest virtue is uncommon and useless, it shines and is mild in its gleam: the highest virtue is a giving virtue.

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

This is your thirst: to become offerings and gifts yourselves. And that is why you thirst to heap up all riches in your soul.

Your soul strives insatiably for treasures and jewels, because your virtue is insatiable in its wish to give.

You force all things to you and into you, so that they may flow back out of your well as the gifts of your love.

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

There is another selfishness, a far too poor one, a hungry one, which always wants to steal: that selfishness of the sick, the sick selfishness.

With the thief’s eye it looks at everything that shines. With the greed of hunger it measures the one who has plenty to eat. And it always sneaks around the table of the givers.

Sickness speaks out of such craving, and invisible degeneration. The thieving greed of this selfishness speaks of a sickly body.

Tell me, my brothers: what do we count as bad, and as the worst? Isn't it *degeneration*? And we always suspect degeneration where the giving soul is missing.

Our way goes upward, from species across to over-species. But the degenerating mind is a horror to us, the mind that says: "Everything for me."

Our mind flies upward: so it is a metaphor for our body, a metaphor of a rising. The names of the virtues are metaphors of such risings.

That is how the body goes through history, a becoming one and a fighting one. And the spirit, what is it to the body? The herald of its battles and victories, its companion and echo.

All names of good and evil are metaphors. They don't say it outright, they only beckon. A fool who wants knowledge from them!

Pay attention, my brothers, to every hour when your spirit wants to speak in metaphors: there is the origin of your virtue.

Your body is then raised up and resurrected; with its delight it enchants the spirit, so that it becomes creator and valuer and lover and benefactor of all things.

When your heart wells up broad and full, like a stream, a blessing and a danger to those who live along its banks: there is the origin of your virtue.

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

When you despise what is pleasant and the soft bed, and cannot make your bed far enough away from the soft ones: there is the origin of your virtue.

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

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

It is power, this new virtue. It is a ruling thought, and around it a clever soul: a golden sun, and around it the snake of knowledge.

² Here Zarathustra was silent for a while and looked lovingly at his disciples. Then he went on speaking, and his voice had changed.

Stay 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. So I ask and implore you.

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

Lead, as I do, the flown-away virtue back to the earth, yes, back to body and life: so that it gives the earth its meaning, a human meaning!

A hundred times so far both spirit and virtue have flown astray and blundered. Ah, in our body all this delusion and error still lives: it has become body and will there.

A hundred times so far both spirit and virtue have tried and gone astray. Yes, the human being was an experiment. Ah, much ignorance and error has become body in us!

Not only the reason of thousands of years, but also their madness breaks out in us. It is dangerous to be an heir.

We are still fighting step by step with the giant Chance, and over all of humanity so far nonsense has ruled, the no-sense.

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

Knowing, the body purifies itself. Trying with knowledge, it raises itself. For the one who knows, all drives become holy. For the one who is raised, the soul becomes glad.

Physician, heal yourself: then you help your patient too. Let this be the patient's best help, to see with their own eyes the one who heals themselves.

There are a thousand paths that have never been walked, a thousand healths and hidden islands of life. Unexhausted and undiscovered are still human beings and the human earth.

Wake and listen, you lonely ones! From the future winds come with secret beating of wings. And good news goes out to fine ears.

You lonely ones of today, you who have separated yourselves, you shall one day be a people: out of you, who have chosen yourselves, a chosen people shall grow, and out of it, the overhuman.

Truly, the earth shall yet become a place of healing! And already a new scent lies around it, one that brings health, and a new hope!

- 3 When Zarathustra had said these words, he fell silent, like one who has not yet said his last word; for a long time he weighed the staff doubtfully in his hand. At last he spoke thus, and his voice had changed.

I am going alone now, my disciples! You too are going away now, and alone! That is how I want it.

Truly, I advise you: go away from me and defend yourselves against Zarathustra! And better still: be ashamed of him! Perhaps he deceived you.

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

One repays a teacher poorly if one remains only a pupil. And why do you not want to pluck at my wreath?

You revere me. But what if your reverence one day falls over? Take care that a statue doesn't strike you dead!

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: then you found me. That is how all believers do it; that is why faith means 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, my brothers, I will then look for my lost ones with different eyes. I will then love you with a different love.

And one day you shall become my friends, and children of one hope: then I want to be with you a third time, so that I may celebrate the great noon with you.

And this is the great noon, when the human being stands at the midpoint of his path between animal and overhuman, and celebrates his way to evening as his highest hope: for it is the way to a new morning.

Then the one who goes under will bless themselves for being one who goes over. And the sun of their knowledge will stand at noon for them.

“All gods are dead: now we want the overhuman to live.” Let this be our last will one day at the great noon!

That is what Zarathustra said.

Part 2



Second Part

“—Only after all of you have rejected me will I come back to you.

“Then, my brothers, I really will look for those I lost with different eyes. I will love you with a different love.”

Zarathustra, On the Virtue of Giving (I. p. 112.)

The Child Carrying a Mirror

Afterward Zarathustra went back into the mountains, alone in his cave, and kept away from people. He waited like a farmer who has sown his seed. But he grew impatient and longed for the people he loved: he still had so much to give them. This is the hardest thing—to close your open hand out of love, and remain modest while giving.

Months and years passed for the lonely man. His wisdom kept growing, and having so much of it hurt him.

One morning he woke before dawn. He lay thinking for a long time, then said to himself:

“What frightened me in my dream enough to wake me? Didn’t a child come up to me with a mirror?

“‘Zarathustra,’ the child told me, ‘look at yourself in the mirror!’

“But I screamed when I looked. My heart shook: instead of myself I saw a devil’s face laughing at me.

"I understand the dream's warning very well. My *teaching* is in danger. Weeds want to pass for wheat!

"My enemies have grown strong and changed the picture of my teaching. Now the people I love most must feel ashamed of the gifts I gave them.

"I have lost my friends. The time has come to look for the people I lost!"—

Zarathustra jumped up as he said this. He was not like a frightened person struggling for breath, but like a visionary singer suddenly filled with inspiration. His eagle and snake looked at him in surprise. A happiness still to come shone on his face like dawn.

"What has happened to me, my animals?" he said. "Haven't I changed? Hasn't happiness struck me like a windstorm?

"My happiness is foolish and will say foolish things. It is still young, so be patient with it!

"My happiness has wounded me. Let everyone who suffers be my doctor!

"I can go down to my friends again, and my enemies too! Zarathustra can speak and give again, and do what the people he loves care about most!

"My impatient love spills out in streams, down toward east and west. From silent mountains and storms of pain, my soul pours loudly into the valleys.

"I have spent too long longing and looking far away. I have lived alone too long and forgotten how to keep quiet.

"I have become nothing but a mouth, a stream rushing down from high rocks. I want to send my *words* tumbling into the valleys.

"Let my river of love fall into places without paths! Surely a river must eventually find its way to the sea!

"There is a lake inside me, alone and satisfied with itself. But my river of love sweeps it along, down to the sea!

"I take new paths and find a new way to speak. Like all creators, I am tired of old ways of speaking. My spirit no longer wants to walk on worn-out soles.

"All talking moves too slowly for me. Storm, I will jump into your chariot! I will drive even you harder with my malice!

"I want to travel over wide seas like a scream and a shout of joy, until I find the happy islands where my friends live—

“And my enemies among them! Now I love anyone I can speak to! My enemies too are part of my happiness.

“When I want to mount my wildest horse, my spear is always the best help. It is always ready to serve my foot—

“The spear I throw at my enemies! How grateful I am that at last my enemies let me throw it!

“The pressure in my cloud was too great. Between laughing lightning flashes, I want to throw hailstorms down below.

“My chest will rise powerfully and blow its storm hard across the mountains. That will relieve it.

“My happiness and freedom really come like a storm! But let my enemies think *the devil* is raging above their heads.

“Yes, my friends, my wild wisdom will frighten you too. Perhaps you will run away with my enemies.

“If only I knew how to call you back with shepherds’ flutes! If only my lioness Wisdom could learn to roar gently! We have already learned so much together!

“My wild wisdom became pregnant on lonely mountains. She gave birth to her young, her youngest, on rough stones.

“Now she runs foolishly through the harsh desert, looking and looking for soft grass—my old wild wisdom!

“The soft grass of your hearts, my friends! She wants to lay what she loves most upon your love!”

That is what Zarathustra said.

On the Happy Islands

Figs fall from the trees, good and sweet. As they fall, their red skins tear. For ripe figs, I am a wind from the north.

My friends, these teachings fall to you like figs. Drink their juice and sweet flesh now! Around us it is autumn, with a clear sky and afternoon light.

Look at how much we have around us! When you have more than enough, it is lovely to look out across distant seas.

People used to say God when they looked at distant seas. Now I have taught you to say overhuman.

God is a guess. But I want your guesses to go no further than your will to create.

Could you *create* a God? Then stop talking to me about gods! But you could create the overhuman.

Perhaps not yourselves, my brothers! But you could change yourselves into the overhuman's fathers and ancestors. Let that be your finest creation!—

God is a guess. But I want your guesses kept within what can be thought.

Could you *think* a God? Let your will to truth mean this: everything must change into something human beings can think, see, and feel. Think your own senses all the way through!

You must first create what you called the world. It must become your own reason, image, will, and love. And that will truly make you happy, you who seek knowledge!

How could you bear life without this hope? You must not have been born into something impossible to understand or contrary to reason.

But let me tell you everything in my heart, friends: *if* there were gods, how could I stand not being a god? *So* there are no gods.

I drew that conclusion. Now it draws me along.—

God is a guess. But who could drink all the suffering in that guess without dying? Should the creator lose his belief, and the eagle its flight in an eagle's far distances?

God is a thought that makes everything straight crooked and everything standing still spin. What? Would time disappear, and everything that passes away be only a lie?

Thinking this makes human bones whirl and grow dizzy, and even makes the stomach vomit. I call guessing like this a dizzying sickness.

I call all this teaching about the One, the Complete, the Unmoving, the Satisfied, and the Everlasting evil and hostile to humanity!

Everything everlasting is only a figure of speech! And poets tell too many lies.—

But the best images should speak about time and change. They should praise and justify everything that passes away!

Creating is the great release from suffering. It makes life lighter. But for a creator to exist, suffering and a great deal of change are necessary.

Yes, creators, there must be much bitter dying in your lives! That makes you defenders and justifiers of everything that passes away.

For the creator himself to become the child being born again, he must also want to be the mother and her pain.

I have traveled through a hundred souls, a hundred cradles, and a hundred birth pains. I have said goodbye many times. I know the last hours that break the heart.

But this is what my creative will wants, my fate. Or, more honestly, this exact kind of fate is what my will wants.

Everything that can feel suffers because of me and is locked in prisons. But my willing always comes to free me and bring me joy.

Willing sets us free. That is the true teaching about will and freedom that Zarathustra gives you.

To stop willing, valuing, creating! May that great tiredness always stay far away from me!

Even when I learn, I feel only my will's pleasure in producing and becoming. If my knowledge is innocent, it is because the will to produce life is in it.

That will drew me away from God and gods. If gods were there, what would be left to create?

But my eager will to create keeps driving me back to humanity, as a hammer is driven toward stone.

"Human beings, an image sleeps in the stone for me, the image of all my images! Why must it sleep in the hardest, ugliest stone!

"Now my hammer attacks its prison cruelly. Bits of stone fly off. What do I care?

"I want to complete it. A shadow came to me once, the quietest and lightest thing of all!

"The beauty of the overhuman came to me as a shadow. My brothers, what do gods matter to me now?"—

That is what Zarathustra said.

On People Who Pity

My friends, someone mocked your friend by saying, “Look at Zarathustra! Doesn’t he walk among us as if we were animals?”

But this says it better: “A person who seeks knowledge walks among human beings as among animals.”

To that person, a human being is the animal with red cheeks.

How did that happen? Isn’t it because people have so often had to feel ashamed?

My friends, this is what the person who knows says: shame, shame, shame—that is human history!

So a noble person orders himself not to shame anyone. He tells himself to feel shame in front of anyone suffering.

I really do not like the merciful who enjoy their own pity. They have too little shame.

If I must feel pity, I do not want that name. And when I feel it, I prefer to do so far away.

I also like to cover my head and leave before anyone recognizes me. My friends, I tell you to do the same!

May fate always bring me people free from pain, like you, and people with whom I *can* share hope, a meal, and honey!

I have done various things for people suffering. But I always felt I did something better when I learned to enjoy life more.

Since humanity began, people have enjoyed life too little. My brothers, that alone is our inherited sin!

When we learn to enjoy life more, we most effectively unlearn hurting others and thinking up ways to hurt them.

That is why I wash the hand that helped someone suffering, and wipe my soul clean too.

I was ashamed to see the sufferer in pain because of his shame. When I helped, I badly wounded his pride.

Large debts make people vengeful rather than grateful. Even a little favor becomes a gnawing worm if it is not forgotten.

“Be reluctant to accept! Honor people by accepting from them!” That is my advice to people with nothing to give.

But I am a giver. I gladly give to friends as their friend. Strangers and poor people can pick fruit from my tree themselves. That is less embarrassing.

But beggars should be abolished completely! It is annoying to give to them and annoying not to give.

The same goes for sinners and guilty consciences! Believe me, my friends: being bitten by conscience teaches people to bite.

The worst things, though, are small-minded thoughts. Better to do something evil than think in a small way!

You say, “Enjoying little acts of malice saves us from many big evil acts.” But this is not a place to want savings.

An evil act is like a sore. It itches, scratches, and breaks open. It speaks honestly. “Look, I am sickness,” says the evil act. That is its honesty.

But a small-minded thought is like a fungus. It creeps, crouches, and tries to be nowhere, until little fungi have made the whole body rotten and weak.

To someone possessed by a devil I whisper, “Better raise your devil to greatness! There is a path to greatness for you too!” —

My brothers, we know a little too much about everyone! We can see through some people, but that does not mean we can get through them.

Living with people is difficult because keeping quiet is difficult.

We are most unfair not to people we dislike, but to people who do not matter to us at all.

If a friend is suffering, be a place where his pain can rest. But be like a hard bed, a camp bed. That is how you help him most.

If a friend hurts you, say, “I forgive what you did to me. But how could I forgive your doing it to *yourself*?”

All great love speaks that way. It goes beyond even forgiveness and pity.

Hold on to your heart. If you let it go, how quickly you lose your head!

Where have people done more foolish things than among those who pity?

What has caused more pain than their foolishness?

Trouble awaits every lover who has nothing higher than their pity!

Once the devil said to me, “God has his own hell too: his love for humanity.” Recently I heard him say, “God is dead. His pity for human beings killed him.”—

So take this warning against pity: a heavy cloud will yet come upon humanity *from there!* I know the signs of coming weather!

But remember this too: every great love goes beyond its pity. It still wants to create what it loves!

“I offer myself to my love, *and my neighbor just as I offer myself.*” That is what every creator says.

But all creators are hard.—

That is what Zarathustra said.

About Priests

Once Zarathustra signaled to his students and told them:

“There are priests here. They may be my enemies, but walk past them quietly. Let your swords rest!

“Some of them are heroes too. Many have suffered too much, and so want to make other people suffer.

“They are vicious enemies. Nothing takes revenge more eagerly than their humility. Attack them and you can easily get dirty yourself.

“But their blood is related to mine. I want my blood respected even in them.”—

After they passed, pain struck Zarathustra. He struggled with it only a short time before starting to speak:

“I feel sorry for these priests. I dislike their ways too, but since I began living among people that has become the least important part.

“I suffer with them and have suffered with them. I see them as prisoners, marked men. The one they call their Savior chained them—

“Chained them with false values and words of delusion! If only someone would save them from their Savior!

“They thought they had reached an island while the sea was tossing them around. But it was a sleeping monster!

“False values and deluded words are the worst monsters for mortal beings. Disaster sleeps in them and waits a long time.

“Eventually it comes awake and eats and swallows the people who built their huts upon it.

“Look at the huts these priests built! They call their sweet-smelling caves churches.

“This falsified light! This stale air! A soul is forbidden to fly up to its own height here!

“Instead their faith orders, ‘Climb the stairs on your knees, sinners!’

“I would rather look at a shameless person than at the twisted eyes of their shame and worship!

“Who made these caves and stairways of repentance? Wasn’t it people wanting to hide, ashamed before a clear sky?

“Only when a clear sky looks through broken roofs again, down at grass and red poppies beside broken walls, will I care for this God’s places again.

“They gave the name God to what opposed and hurt them. There was much heroism in their worship!

“But the only way they knew to love their God was to nail the human being to a cross!

“They intended to live like corpses and lined their corpse with black. Even their speeches smell to me of the unpleasant spices in rooms for the dead.

“To live near them is to live near black pools, where a toad sings with sweet depth of meaning.

“To make me believe in their Savior, they would have to sing better songs. His followers would have to look more saved!

“I would like to see them naked. Only beauty should preach repentance. Who would be persuaded by this covered-up sadness?

“Their saviors themselves did not come from freedom or freedom’s seventh heaven! They never walked upon the carpets of knowledge!

“The minds of these saviors were made of gaps. Into each gap they put their delusion, their gap-filler, which they called God.

“Their spirit drowned in pity. Whenever they swelled and overflowed with it, a great piece of foolishness floated on top.

“They eagerly shouted and drove their flock across their little bridge, as if there were just one bridge to the future! These shepherds were still sheep themselves!

“These shepherds had small minds and broad souls. But my brothers, even the broadest souls so far have been such small countries!

“They left bloody signs along their road. Their foolishness taught that blood could prove truth.

“But blood is the worst witness for truth. It poisons even the purest teaching into delusion and hatred in people’s hearts.

“If someone goes through fire for a teaching, what does that prove? It means more when someone’s teaching comes out of their own burning!

“A hot, heavy heart and a cold head: when those meet, the roaring whirlwind called ‘Savior’ begins.

“There have been people greater and more highly born than these sweeping whirlwinds that people call saviors!

“To find the path to freedom, my brothers, you must be saved even from greater people than all those saviors!

“No overhuman has existed yet. I saw both the greatest and smallest human being naked—

“They still resemble each other too much. Even the greatest was all too human!”

That is what Zarathustra said.

On People with Virtue

You have to address slack, sleeping senses with thunder and fireworks in the sky.

But beauty speaks quietly. Its voice enters only the most alert souls.

Today my shield shook and laughed softly. That is beauty’s holy shaking and laughter.

Today my beauty laughed at you people with virtue. I heard it say, “They still want payment!”

You still want payment for being virtuous! You want a reward for goodness, heaven in exchange for earth, and eternity in exchange for today?

Now you are angry because I teach that no one hands out wages or rewards? I do not even teach that virtue rewards itself.

This saddens me: people have falsely put rewards and punishments into the very basis of things, and now into the depths of your souls too!

But my words will tear up the ground of your souls like a wild boar's snout. Call me a plow blade.

Everything hidden in your depths must come into the light. When you lie dug up and broken in the sun, your lies will be separated from your truth too.

For this is your truth: you are *too clean* for the dirty words revenge, punishment, reward, repayment.

You love your virtue as a mother loves her child. But who has heard of a mother wanting payment for loving?

Your virtue is the self you love most. You have a ring's thirst inside you. Every ring twists and turns to reach itself again.

Each act of your virtue resembles a star going dark. Its light keeps traveling. When will it ever stop being on its way?

So your virtue's light still travels after the act is finished. Even if the act is forgotten and dead, its ray of light lives on and travels.

Your virtue should be yourself, not something foreign, not a skin or a covering. That is the truth from deep inside your souls!—

But some people call the spasms beneath a whip virtue. You have listened too much to their shouting!

Others call their vices becoming lazy virtue. When their hatred and jealousy stretch their arms and legs, their 'justice' wakes up and rubs its sleepy eyes.

Others are dragged down by their devils. But the lower they sink, the more brightly their eyes and desire for their God burn.

Their shouting reached your ears too: "What I am *not*—that is God and virtue to me!"

Others move along heavily and creak, like carts taking stones downhill. They talk a lot about dignity and virtue. Their name for their brake is virtue!

Others are like ordinary clocks that have been wound up. They tick, and want ticking to be called virtue.

I enjoy those people. Wherever I find such clocks, I will wind them up with my mockery. Let them whirl for me!

Others are proud of their handful of justice. For its sake they wrong everything, until the world is drowned in their injustice.

How unpleasantly the word ‘virtue’ comes out of their mouths! When they say, “I am just,” it always sounds like, “I have my revenge!”

They want to scratch their enemies’ eyes out with their virtue. They raise themselves only to lower others.

Others again sit in their swamp, speaking out of the reeds: “Virtue means sitting quietly in the swamp.

“We bite nobody and stay away from anyone who wants to bite. On every subject we hold the opinion we are given.”

Still others love gestures and think that virtue is a kind of gesture.

Their knees always worship, and their hands praise virtue. Their hearts know nothing about it.

Others think saying “Virtue is necessary” is a virtue. At bottom they believe only that the police are necessary.

Some people cannot see what is high in human beings. They call seeing people’s low side too closely virtue. That makes their bad way of looking at people their virtue.

Some want to be inspired and lifted up, and call it virtue. Others want to be knocked down, and call that virtue too.

In this way almost everyone believes they have a part in virtue. At least everyone wants to be an expert in ‘good’ and ‘evil.’

But Zarathustra did not come to tell all these liars and fools, “What do *you* know about virtue? What *could* you know about it?”—

“He came so that you, my friends, would get tired of the old words you learned from liars and fools:

“Tired of ‘reward,’ ‘repayment,’ ‘punishment,’ ‘revenge in justice’—

“Tired of saying, ‘An act is good because it is unselfish.’

“My friends, let *your* self be in what you do as a mother is in her child. Let that be *your* way of speaking about virtue!”

I took a hundred words from you and the favorite toys of your virtue. Now you are angry with me like children.

“They were playing by the sea. A wave came and swept their toys away into deep water. Now they cry.

“But that same wave will bring new toys and pour new colorful shells out before them!

“They will be comforted. My friends, you too will have things to comfort you, and new colorful shells!”—

That is what Zarathustra said.

About the Rabble

Life is a source of pleasure. But when the rabble drinks from it too, every well becomes poisoned.

I like everything clean. But I do not want to see grinning mouths and the thirst of dirty people.

They looked down into the well. Now their ugly smile shines back up at me.

They poisoned the holy water with their lust. By calling their dirty dreams pleasure, they poisoned the words as well.

The flame objects when they put their damp hearts beside the fire. Spirit itself bubbles and smokes when the rabble comes near the fire.

Fruit turns sickly sweet and too soft in their hands. Their look makes fruit trees easy for the wind to knock down and dries up their tops.

Some people who turned away from life were only turning away from the rabble. They did not want to share the well, flame, and fruit with them.

Some who went into the desert and were thirsty among wild animals only wanted to avoid sitting around the water tank with dirty camel drivers.

Some who came like destroyers, like hail across every orchard, only wanted to put a foot into the rabble’s jaws and block its throat.

Knowing that life itself needs hostility, dying, and crosses for torture was not the hardest mouthful for me to swallow—

“Does life *need* the rabble too?” I once asked, nearly choking on the question.

Does it need poisoned wells, stinking fires, dirty dreams, and maggots in life’s bread?

My disgust, not hatred, ate hungrily into my life. I often grew tired of spirit when I found even the rabble had wit!

I turned away from the rulers when I saw what they now call ruling: bargaining and haggling for power with the rabble!

I lived among people speaking foreign languages and kept my ears shut. That way the language of their bargaining for power would stay foreign to me.

Holding my nose, I walked unhappily through all yesterday and today. Both yesterday and today stink of the writing rabble!

For a long time I lived like a disabled person who had become deaf, blind, and unable to speak. I wanted to avoid the rabble of power, writing, and pleasure.

My spirit climbed stairs carefully, with difficulty. Small handouts of pleasure refreshed it. For the blind man, life crept along with a stick.

What happened? How did I escape disgust? Who made my eyes young again?

How did I fly to a height where the rabble no longer sits at the well?

Did my disgust give me wings and the ability to sense springs? I had to fly to the highest place to find the source of pleasure again!

I found it, my brothers! Here at the highest place, the spring of pleasure flows for me! There is a life the rabble does not drink from!

Spring of pleasure, you flow almost too strongly for me! Often you empty the cup again by trying to fill it!

I still have to learn to approach you more modestly. My heart still rushes toward you too strongly—

“My heart, where my short, hot, sad, overwhelmingly happy summer burns: how it longs for your coolness!

“My spring’s hesitant sadness is over! The malice of my June snowflakes has passed! I have become all summer, all summer noon!”

Summer in the highest place, with cold springs and happy quiet! Come, my friends, and make the quiet happier still!

This is *our* height and home. We live too high and steep here for the dirty and their thirst.

Look into my spring of pleasure with your clean eyes, friends! Why should that make it cloudy? It will laugh toward you with *its own* cleanness.

We build our nest in the tree called Future. Let eagles carry food in their beaks to us lonely ones!

Not food the unclean could eat with us! They would think they were eating fire and burn their mouths!

We have no homes ready here for the unclean. Our happiness would seem an ice cave to their bodies and spirits!

We want to live like strong winds above them, near eagles, snow, and sun. That is how strong winds live.

One day I want to blow among them like a wind and take their spirit's breath away with mine. That is what my future wants.

Zarathustra is a strong wind to every low place. His advice to his enemies and everything spitting and vomiting is: "Don't spit *into* the wind!"

That is what Zarathustra said.

About Tarantulas

Look, that is the tarantula's cave! Do you want to see her? Her web hangs here. Touch it to make it shake.

She comes willingly. Welcome, tarantula! The triangle that marks you sits black upon your back. I know what sits in your soul too.

Revenge sits there. A black scab grows wherever you bite. Your poison makes a soul spin with revenge!

This image is how I speak to you who make souls spin, you preachers of *equality*. To me you are tarantulas, hiding your wish for revenge!

But I will bring your hiding places into daylight. That is why I laugh in your faces with the laughter of the heights.

That is why I pull at your web. Let your anger draw you out of your cave of lies, and your revenge jump out from behind the word 'justice.'

For me, *freeing humanity from revenge* is the bridge to the highest hope, a rainbow after long storms.

But the tarantulas want something different. They tell each other, "We call it justice when the world fills with the storms of our revenge."

"We will take revenge on and insult everyone who is not equal to us," the tarantula hearts promise each other.

“From now on, ‘will to equality’ must be the name of virtue. We will raise our voices against everything powerful!”

You preachers of equality: the powerless tyrant’s madness cries out through you for ‘equality.’ Your most secret wishes to rule hide in the language of virtue!

Bitter pride and suppressed envy, perhaps your fathers’ pride and envy, burst out of you as flames and a madness for revenge.

The son says what the father kept quiet. I have often found the son to be his father’s exposed secret.

They look inspired, but revenge inspires them, not their hearts. When they become subtle and cold, envy makes them that way, not spirit.

Their jealousy takes them along thinkers’ paths too. This is how to recognize their jealousy: they always go too far, until, worn out, they have to sleep on snow.

Every complaint sounds of revenge. Every compliment contains a hurt. They think being a judge is happiness.

My advice to you, friends, is this: distrust everyone with a strong urge to punish!

They are people of bad character and background. An executioner and a tracking hound look out of their faces.

Distrust people who talk a lot about their own justice! Honey is not all their souls lack.

If they call themselves ‘the good and the just,’ remember they lack only power to become Pharisees!

My friends, I do not want to be confused with other people.

Some preach my teaching about life, but also preach equality and are tarantulas.

They speak in favor of life even though, like poisonous spiders, they sit in their caves turned away from it. They do this to hurt people.

They want to hurt the people now in power, among whom preaching death is most at home.

If things were different, the tarantulas would teach differently. In the past they themselves were the best at attacking the world and burning heretics.

I do not want to be mistaken for these preachers of equality. Justice tells *me*,
“Human beings are not equal.”

They should not become equal either! What would my love for the overhuman mean if I said anything else?

Let them crowd toward the future on a thousand bridges and walkways. Let there be more and more war and inequality between them. My great love makes me say this!

In their hostility, they should invent images and ghosts. With these images and ghosts they should fight the highest fight against each other!

Good and evil, rich and poor, high and low, and every name for a value: let these be weapons, noisy signs that life must keep overcoming itself!

Life wants to build upward with columns and steps. It wants to see far away and look toward beautiful happiness. *That* is why it needs height!

Because it needs height, it needs steps and conflict among the steps and people climbing! Life wants to climb and overcome itself while climbing.

Look, friends! Here by the tarantula’s cave rise the ruins of an old temple. Look at them with eyes full of light!

The person who once built his thoughts upward in stone here knew the secret of all life as well as the wisest person!

He teaches us clearly through this image that even beauty contains struggle, inequality, and war for power and greater power.

How divinely the vault and arch break against each other as they wrestle! How their light and shadow struggle against each other, these divine strivers—

“Let us be enemies as firmly and beautifully, my friends! Let us struggle divinely *against* each other!”—

Oh! My old enemy the tarantula has bitten me herself! Firmly and beautifully, like a god, she bit my finger!

“There must be punishment and justice,” she thinks. “He must pay for singing songs here in honor of hostility!”

Yes, she has taken revenge! And now her revenge will make my soul spin too!

My friends, tie me to this column so I *don’t* spin! I would rather be a saint on a column than a spinning frenzy of revenge!

Zarathustra is no spinning whirlwind. If he dances, he certainly does not dance a tarantula's dance!—

That is what Zarathustra said.

About Famous Wise People

All you famous wise people served the people and their superstitions, *not* truth! That is exactly why people respected you.

They tolerated your lack of belief for the same reason. It was a joke and an indirect route to the people. A master lets his slaves act that way and even enjoys their boldness.

But the free spirit, the enemy of chains, the one who will not worship and lives in forests, is hated by the people as dogs hate a wolf.

Hunting him out of hiding has always meant 'a sense of what is right' to the people. They still set their dogs with the sharpest teeth on him.

"Truth is here, because the people are here! Trouble for those who keep searching!" That is what the cry has always been.

You wanted to prove your people right about what they worshiped. You called that your 'will to truth,' famous wise people!

Your hearts always said, "I came from the people. God's voice came from there too." You were always stubborn and clever as donkeys when defending the people.

Some powerful men wanted to get along well with the people. In front of their horses they harnessed a little donkey too—a famous wise person.

Now I wish you famous wise people would finally take the lion's skin off completely!

Take off the spotted predator's skin, the shaggy coat of the investigator, seeker, and conqueror!

Before I could believe you are 'truthful,' you would have to break your own will to worship.

I call someone truthful who goes into deserts without gods, having broken his worshipping heart.

In yellow sand, burned by the sun, he may look thirstily at islands with many springs, where living creatures rest under dark trees.

But thirst does not persuade him to become like those comfortable creatures.
Where there are oases, there are idols too.

Hungry, violent, alone, without a god: that is how the lion's will wants to be.
Free from servants' happiness, released from gods and worship, unafraid and
frightening, great and alone: that is the truthful person's will.

Truthful people, free spirits, have always lived in the desert as its masters. In the
cities live the well-fed famous wise people—the animals pulling loads.

Like donkeys, they always pull the *people's* cart!

I am not angry with them for it. But to me they remain servants in harness,
even if their harness shines with gold.

Often they were good servants who deserved praise. Virtue says, "If you must
serve, find the person your service helps most!"

"Let your master's spirit and virtue grow because you serve him. Then you
grow with his spirit and virtue yourself!"

Famous wise people, servants of the people: you did grow with the people's
spirit and virtue, and they grew through you! I say that in your honor!

But even in your virtues you remain common people to me, with dull eyes, not
knowing what *spirit* is!

Spirit is life cutting into life itself. It increases its knowledge through its own
pain. Did you know that?

Spirit's happiness is to be anointed and set apart through tears as an animal for
sacrifice. Did you know that?

Even a blind person's blindness, searching, and feeling around should show the
sun's power, the sun he looked into. Did you know that?

The person who knows must learn to *build* with mountains! Moving moun-
tains is a small thing for spirit. Did you know that?

You know only spirit's sparks. You do not see the anvil it is or its hammer's
cruelty!

You do not know spirit's pride! You could bear its modesty even less if it ever
spoke!

You were never yet ready to throw your spirit into a hole full of snow. You are
not hot enough! So you do not know the delight of its cold either.

You act too familiar with spirit in everything. You often made wisdom a poor-house and hospital for bad poets.

You are not eagles, so you have not felt happiness in the terror of spirit. Anyone who is not a bird should not settle over deep drops.

To me you are lukewarm. But all deep knowledge flows cold. The deepest wells of spirit are ice-cold, refreshing hot hands and people acting.

You stand there respectably, stiff and straight-backed, famous wise people! No strong wind or will drives you.

Have you never watched a sail cross the sea, rounded, swollen, shaking in the wind's force?

My wisdom crosses the sea like that sail, shaking before the force of spirit—my wild wisdom!

But you servants of the people, famous wise people, how *could* you come with me?—

That is what Zarathustra said.

The Song at Night

Night has come. All the gushing fountains speak louder now. My soul is a gushing fountain too.

Night has come. Only now do lovers' songs wake up. My soul is a lover's song too.

Something inside me is unsatisfied and cannot be satisfied. It wants to speak out. I want love, and that desire speaks love's own language.

I am light. If only I were night! But I am alone because light surrounds me.

If only I were dark and belonged to night! I would suck at the breasts of light!

I would bless you too, little sparkling stars and glowworms up above! Your gifts of light would make me happy.

But I live in my own light. I drink back the flames that burst out of me.

I do not know how happy receiving makes someone. I have often dreamed that stealing must bring even more happiness than receiving.

This is what makes me poor: my hand never gets a rest from giving. This is what makes me jealous: seeing eyes that wait and the lit-up nights of longing.

How unhappy all givers are! How my sun darkens! How I want to be wanted!
How hungry I am with a full stomach!

People take from me. But do I still touch their souls? There is a gap between giving and taking. The smallest gap is the last to get a bridge.

My beauty makes me hungry. I want to hurt the people I shine for and rob the people I have given gifts to. That is my hunger for malice.

To pull my hand away when someone already reaches for it, to hesitate like a waterfall hesitating as it falls—that is my hunger for malice.

My plenty thinks up this revenge. This treachery comes from being alone.

Giving killed my happiness in giving. My virtue grew tired of itself because it had too much!

A person who always gives risks losing a sense of shame. Always handing things out covers both hand and heart in calluses.

My eyes no longer fill with tears at the shame of people asking. My hand has become too hard to feel the shaking hands it fills.

Where did the tear in my eye and the soft down on my heart go? How lonely all givers are! How silent everyone who shines!

Many suns circle through empty space. Their light speaks to everything dark, but they say nothing to me.

This is light's hostility to other light. Without mercy it follows its paths.

Deep inside, every sun is unfair to things that shine, cold toward other suns. That is how every sun moves.

Suns race along their paths like a storm. That is their movement. They follow a will that never yields. That is their coldness.

Only you, the dark ones, the night ones, make warmth from things that shine!

Only you drink milk and comfort from light's udders!

Ice surrounds me, and icy things burn my hand! There is a thirst inside me that longs for your thirst!

Night has come. Why must I be light? And thirst for darkness! And loneliness!

Night has come. My desire bursts out like a spring. I want to speak.

Night has come. All the gushing fountains speak louder now. My soul is a gushing fountain too.

Night has come. Only now do lovers' songs wake up. My soul is a lover's song too.—

That is what Zarathustra sang.

The Dancing Song

One evening Zarathustra walked through the woods with his students. Looking for a spring, he reached a green meadow with trees and bushes standing quietly around it. Girls were dancing together there. They stopped as soon as they recognized him. But Zarathustra came toward them with a friendly gesture and said:

“Don't stop dancing, lovely girls! No spoilsport has come to look at you badly, no enemy of girls.

“I defend God before the devil, who is the spirit of gravity. You light-footed ones, how could I oppose divine dances? Or girls' feet with beautiful ankles?

“I am a forest, a night of dark trees. But anyone not afraid of my darkness also finds slopes covered in roses beneath my cypresses.

“They may find the little god girls love best too. He lies quietly by the spring with his eyes shut.

“He fell asleep in broad daylight, that lazy fellow! Maybe he chased too many butterflies?

“Don't be angry, beautiful dancers, if I punish the little god a bit! He will probably shout and cry. But even when he cries he is funny!

“With tears in his eyes he must ask you to dance. I will sing a song myself while he dances:

“A dance song mocking the spirit of gravity, my highest, most powerful devil, the one they call ‘lord of the world.’”—

This is what Zarathustra sang while Cupid danced with the girls.

“Recently I looked into your eye, Life! I felt I was sinking into something with no bottom.

“But you pulled me out with a golden fishhook. You laughed at me for saying nobody could reach your depths.

“‘That is how all fish talk,’ you said. ‘Anything *they* cannot reach the bottom of has no bottom.

“But I am only changeable and wild, and a woman in every way—not a virtuous one.

“Even though you men call me “Deep,” “Faithful,” “Eternal,” “Mysterious.”

“You men always give us your own virtues. Such good people you are!”

“That is how she laughed, the unbelievable one. But I never believe her words or laughter when she says bad things about herself.

“When I spoke privately to my wild Wisdom, she angrily told me, ‘You want, desire, and love. That is the only reason you *praise* life!’

“I nearly answered angrily and told the angry one the truth. There is no angrier answer than ‘telling the truth’ to your wisdom.

“This is how matters stand between the three of us. Deep down I love only Life, most of all when I hate her!

“But I am fond of Wisdom, often too fond, because she reminds me so much of Life!

“She has her eyes, her laugh, even her little golden fishing rod. How is it my fault they look so similar?

“Once Life asked me, ‘Who is this Wisdom?’ I answered eagerly, ‘Oh yes! Wisdom!’

““You thirst for her and never get enough. You look through veils and reach through nets.

“Is she beautiful? I don’t know! But even the oldest carp are still caught with her as bait.

“She changes and is stubborn. I often watched her bite her lip and pull a comb the wrong way through her hair.

“Perhaps she is evil and false, a woman in every way. But she is most tempting exactly when she says bad things about herself.’

“When I told Life this, she laughed nastily and shut her eyes. ‘Who are you talking about?’ she asked. ‘Me, perhaps?’

“Even if you were right, is that how to speak to my face? Now tell me about your Wisdom too!”

“Then you opened your eye again, dear Life! Once more I seemed to sink into something with no bottom.”—

That is what Zarathustra sang. When the dance ended and the girls left, he became sad.

“The sun set a long time ago,” he finally said. “The meadow is wet. Cold air comes from the woods.

“Something unknown surrounds me and looks thoughtful. What! Are you still alive, Zarathustra?

“Why? What for? By what means? Where to? Where? How? Isn’t staying alive foolish?—

“My friends, it is evening asking these questions through me. Forgive me for being sad!

“It has become evening. Forgive me for that!”

That is what Zarathustra said.

The Song of Graves

“There is the quiet island of graves. My youth’s graves are there too. I want to carry an evergreen wreath of life there.”

With that decision in my heart, I crossed the sea.—

Visions and appearances of my youth! All those loving looks and godlike moments! How quickly you died for me! Today I remember you as people I have lost.

From you, my dearest dead, comes a sweet smell that opens the heart and brings tears. It shakes and opens the heart of the person sailing alone.

I am still the richest person, the one most worth envying, though I am the loneliest! I *had* you, and you still have me. Who else had rose apples like these fall from the tree?

I am still the heir and soil of your love, flowering in your memory with colorful, wild virtues, my dearest ones!

We were made to stay close to each other, lovely strange wonders. You did not come to my desire and me like shy birds, but as people trusting someone who trusted them!

Like me, you were made for faithfulness and tender eternities. Must I now call you by your unfaithfulness, divine looks and moments? I have not learned another name yet.

You died for me too quickly, you fugitives. But you did not run from me, nor I from you. Neither of us is guilty toward the other in our unfaithfulness.

To kill *me*, they strangled you, birds singing my hopes! Malice kept shooting arrows at you, my dearest ones, to hit my heart!

It did hit! You were always closest to my heart, what I possessed and what possessed me. *That* is why you had to die young, much too soon!

The arrow was aimed at the most easily hurt thing I owned: you, with skin like soft down, or still more like a smile dying under a look!

But I want to tell my enemies this: what is killing people compared with what you did to me!

You did worse to me than any murder. You took something I cannot recover. That is what I tell you, my enemies!

You killed the visions and dearest wonders of my youth! You took my playmates, those happy spirits! To remember them, I put down this wreath and this curse.

This curse is for you, my enemies! You made my eternity short, like a sound breaking off in a cold night. Now it came only as a flash from divine eyes, just a moment!

Once, in a good hour, my innocence said, "Let every being be divine to me."

Then you attacked me with dirty ghosts. Where did that good hour go!

"Let every day be holy," my youthful wisdom once said. That really was a happy wisdom speaking!

But you enemies stole my nights and sold them into sleepless suffering. Where did that happy wisdom go?

Once I wanted lucky signs from birds. You put an ugly owl-monster across my road. Where did my tender desire go?

Once I promised to give up all disgust. You turned the people close and closest to me into boils. Where did my finest promise go?

Once I walked happy paths like a blind person. You threw dirt onto that person's road. Now his old blind person's path disgusted him.

When I did my hardest thing and celebrated the victory of overcoming, you made the people who loved me shout that I hurt them most.

That was always your doing: spoiling my best honey and the hard work of my best bees.

You kept sending the rudest beggars to my generosity. You crowded people incapable of shame around my pity. That hurt my virtue's belief.

Even when I offered my holiest thing, your 'piety' quickly set its fatter gifts beside it. My holiest thing suffocated in the smoke of your fat.

Once I wanted to dance as I never had before, dance beyond all heavens. Then you won over my favorite singer.

He began a frightening, dull tune. He blared into my ears like a gloomy horn! Murderous singer, tool of malice, most innocent one! I was ready for my finest dance. Your music killed my delight!

Only by dancing can I express the image of the highest things. Now my highest image stayed unspoken in my arms and legs!

My highest hope stayed unspoken and unreleased! All the visions and comforts of my youth died!

How did I bear it? How did I get over these wounds and overcome them? How did my soul rise out of these graves?

Something in me cannot be hurt or buried, something that breaks rocks. It is *my will*. It walks quietly and unchanged through the years.

My old will wants to take its path on my feet. Its purpose has a hard heart and cannot be hurt.

Only at my heel am I impossible to wound. You are still alive there, unchanged, most patient one! You have kept breaking through every grave!

The part of my youth still waiting for release lives in you too. As life and youth, you sit here hoping on yellow ruins of graves.

Yes, you still break all graves for me. Good fortune to you, my will! Only where there are graves can there be rising from death.—

That is what Zarathustra sang.—

On Overcoming Yourself

You wisest people call what drives you and makes you eager a 'will to truth'?

I call your will a will to make everything that exists thinkable!

First you want to *make* everything possible to think about. You have good reason to doubt that it already is.

But it must also obey and bend. That is what your will wants. It must become smooth and subject to spirit, its mirror and reflection.

Your whole will is a will to power, wisest people, even when you talk about good and evil and about values.

You still want to create a world you can kneel before. That is your last hope and what intoxicates you.

The unwise, the people, are like a river carrying a boat onward. Values sit solemnly in the boat, dressed in disguises.

You put your will and values on the river of change. What people believe about good and evil reveals an old will to power to me.

You and your ruling will, wisest people, put those guests into the boat. You gave them a grand appearance and proud names!

Now the river carries your boat onward. It *has* to carry it. A breaking wave foaming and angrily protesting against the keel makes little difference!

The river is not your danger or what ends your good and evil. That danger is the will itself, the will to power, life's tireless will to produce.

But to help you understand what I say about good and evil, I will tell you about life and the character of living things too.

I followed living things along the biggest and smallest paths to discover their nature.

With a hundred mirrors I caught their look even when their mouth was closed, so their eye could speak. Their eye did speak to me.

Wherever I found life, I also heard about obedience. Every living thing obeys.

Second, whoever cannot obey themselves is given orders. That is the nature of living things.

Third, I heard that commanding is harder than obeying. Not just because the commander carries the weight of everyone obeying, a weight that can easily crush him—

Every command looked to me like a test and a risk. Whenever a living thing commands, it risks itself.

Even when it commands itself, it must pay for giving orders. For its own law it must become judge, avenger, and victim.

How does this happen? I asked myself. What persuades living things to obey and command, and still obey while commanding?

Listen to my words now, wisest people! Test carefully whether I have reached life's own heart, right down to its roots!

Wherever I found life, I found a will to power. Even in a servant's will I found a desire to be master.

The weaker serves the stronger because its will wants to rule something weaker still. It cannot give up that particular pleasure.

Just as the smaller gives itself to the greater to have pleasure and power over the smallest, even the greatest gives itself up and risks its life for power.

The greatest one's giving consists in this: risk, danger, and a game of dice with death at stake.

Where there are sacrifices, services, and loving looks, there is also the wish to be master. The weaker sneaks along secret paths into the stronger one's castle, into its heart, and steals power there.

Life itself told me this secret. "Look," it said, "I am *what must always overcome itself*."

"You may call it a will to reproduce, or a drive toward a goal, toward something higher, farther away, more varied. But all of it is one thing and one secret.

"I would rather go under than give that one thing up. Wherever there is decline and falling leaves, life sacrifices itself for power!

"I have to be struggle and change and purpose and conflict between purposes. Anyone who understands my will also understands the *crooked* paths it must take!

"Whatever I create, however much I love it, soon I must oppose it and my love for it. That is what my will wants.

"You too, seeker of knowledge, are only a path and footprint of my will. My will to power even walks on the feet of your will to truth!

"Anyone who aimed the phrase 'will to exist' at truth missed it. There is no such will!

“Something that does not exist cannot want anything. If something already exists, how could it still want to exist?

“There is will only where there is life. But I teach you that it is not a will to live. It is a will to power!

“Living things value many things more highly than life itself. But the will to power speaks out of valuing itself!” —

Life taught me that once. With it I can also solve the riddle of your hearts, wisest people.

“I tell you: no good and evil last forever! They have to overcome themselves from within, again and again.

“You who give values use force with your values and words about good and evil. That is your hidden love, your soul shining, shaking, and overflowing.

“But stronger force and a new overcoming grow from your values. The egg and its shell break against them.

“Anyone who must create in good and evil must first destroy and break values.

“So the greatest evil belongs with the greatest goodness. But that goodness creates.—

“Let us talk about it, wisest people, even if it is bad. Silence is worse. Every truth kept quiet becomes poisonous.

“Let anything break that can break against our truths! We still have many houses to build!”

That is what Zarathustra said.

About Lofty People

The bottom of my sea is quiet. Who would guess it holds playful monsters!

My depths cannot be shaken. But swimming riddles and laughter shine in them.

Today I saw a lofty man, a solemn man, someone doing penance in spirit. His ugliness made my soul laugh!

He stood there silently with his chest lifted, like someone holding his breath:

Covered in ugly truths he had caught on his hunt, with plenty of torn clothes. Many thorns hung on him too, but I saw no rose yet.

He has not yet learned to laugh or be beautiful. This hunter came back darkly from the forest of knowledge.

He returned from fighting wild animals. But a wild animal he has not overcome still looks out of his serious face!

He still stands like a tiger ready to jump. I dislike tense souls like these, all these people holding themselves back.

Friends, you tell me that taste is not something to argue about? But all of life argues over taste and tasting!

Taste means the weight, the scales, and the person weighing, all at once. Trouble for any living thing wanting to live without arguing over weights, scales, and the people using them!

Only when this lofty man tires of being lofty will his beauty start. Only then will I want to taste him and find him pleasant.

Only when he turns away from himself will he jump over his own shadow and into *his own* sun.

He sat in the shade too long. His spiritual penance made his cheeks pale. He nearly starved on his expectations.

Contempt remains in his eyes, and disgust hides around his mouth. He is resting now, but his rest has not yet lain down in the sun.

He should behave like a bull. His happiness should smell of earth, not of despising earth.

I would like to see him as a white bull, snorting and bellowing ahead of the plow. His bellow should praise everything earthly!

His face is still dark. The shadow of his hand moves over it. The meaning of his look is still in shadow.

His own act is still the shadow covering him. The hand darkens the person acting. He has not overcome his act yet.

I like the bull's neck in him. Now I want to see the angel's eyes too.

He must also unlearn his heroic will. I want him lifted up, not just lofty. Let the air above lift him without his willing!

He defeated monsters and solved riddles. But he should also set his monsters and riddles free, turning them into heavenly children.

His knowledge has not learned to smile or give up jealousy. His rushing passion has not become quiet in beauty yet.

His desire should fall silent and sink not from being satisfied, but from beauty!

Grace belongs to a generous spirit's generosity.

The hero should rest with his arm over his head. In that way he should overcome even his resting.

But *beauty* is harder than anything else for the hero. No forceful will can seize beauty by fighting for it.

A little more, a little less: here that means a lot, more than anything.

To stand with muscles relaxed and will released from harness is hardest for all of you lofty people!

When power becomes kind and comes down where it can be seen, I call that coming down beauty.

Powerful one, I want beauty from you more than from anyone. Let your goodness be your last victory over yourself.

I believe you capable of every evil. That is why I want good from you.

I have often laughed at weak people thinking themselves good because their paws were lame!

Aim for the virtue of a column: as it rises, it becomes more beautiful and delicate, but harder inside and able to carry more weight.

Yes, lofty one, one day you must be beautiful and hold a mirror before your own beauty.

Then divine desires will make your soul shake. Even your vanity will contain worship!

This is the secret of the soul: only after the hero leaves it does the overhero approach it in a dream.

That is what Zarathustra said.

The Country of Culture

I flew too far into the future and became terrified.

When I looked around, time was the only thing living in the same age as me.

I fled back toward home, faster and faster. That brought me to you people of the present and to the country of culture.

For the first time I came ready to look at you, with a willing desire. I really did come with longing in my heart.

But what happened? Frightened though I was, I had to laugh! I had never seen anything so covered in spots of different colors!

I laughed and laughed while my feet and heart still shook. "This is where all the paint pots live!" I said.

Faces and limbs painted with fifty blotches: that is how you sat there, people of the present, amazing me!

You had fifty mirrors around you, flattering and repeating your display of colors!

You people of the present could not wear a better mask than your own face! Who could *recognize* you!

You are covered in writing from the past, and that writing is painted over with new writing. No wonder you are hidden from anyone trying to read the signs!

Even someone who examines kidneys would hardly believe you still have kidneys! You look baked out of colors and pasted pieces of paper.

Every age and people looks out colorfully from your veils. Every custom and faith speaks in many colors through your gestures.

Take away your veils, coverings, colors, and gestures, and only enough would remain to scare birds.

I am that scared bird who once saw you naked, without paint. I flew away when the skeleton waved love at me.

I would rather work for daily wages in the underworld, among the shadows of the past! Even the people down there are fatter and fuller than you!

This is bitter in my stomach: I cannot stand you dressed or naked, people of the present!

Anything frightening in the future, anything that has scared birds lost in flight, is more familiar and comfortable than your 'reality.'

"We are completely real, with neither belief nor superstition," you say, proudly sticking your chests out—even without chests!

How *could* you believe, you many-colored people? You are pictures of everything anyone ever believed!

You walk about disproving belief itself and breaking the limbs of all thoughts.
Unbelievable: that is my name for you ‘real’ people!

Every age chatters against every other age in your minds. All their dreams and talk were more real than your waking life!

You cannot produce anything: *that* is why you lack belief. But anyone who had to create always had dreams of truth and signs in the stars, and believed in believing!—

You are half-open gates with gravediggers waiting beside them. *Your* reality is this: “Everything deserves to be destroyed.”

How you stand before me, you barren people, so thin around the ribs! Some of you have probably noticed it yourselves.

One said, “Did a God secretly take something from me while I slept? Enough to make a little woman from it!

“How strangely poor my ribs are!” Many people of the present have already said that.

You make me laugh, people of the present, especially when you wonder about yourselves!

How unfortunate I would be if I could not laugh at your surprise and had to drink everything disgusting out of your bowls!

Instead I will take you lightly, since I have *heavy things* to carry. What does it matter if beetles and winged insects settle on my pack too?

They will not make it heavier for me! You people of the present will not bring my great tiredness.—

Where else can I climb with my longing? From every mountain I look for a fatherland and motherland.

But I found no home anywhere. In every city I am unsettled, ready to leave at every gate.

The people of the present, whom my heart recently drew me toward, are strange and ridiculous to me. I have been driven out of fatherlands and motherlands.

Now I love only my *children’s country*, still undiscovered in the most distant sea. I tell my sails to keep looking for it.

Through my children I will make up for being my fathers' child, and through the whole future make up for *this* present!

That is what Zarathustra said.

About Untainted Knowledge

When the moon rose yesterday, it looked so broad and pregnant on the horizon that I thought it would give birth to a sun.

But its pregnancy was a lie. I would sooner believe in the man in the moon than the woman.

Though there is not much man in him either, that shy night traveler. He crosses the roofs with a guilty conscience.

The monk in the moon is jealous and lustful. He desires earth and all the pleasures of lovers.

I do not like that tomcat on the rooftops! Everyone sneaking around half-closed windows disgusts me!

He moves silently and piously over carpets of stars. But I dislike men's feet that step so softly, without even a spur jingling.

An honest person's footsteps speak. A cat slips over the ground. Look, the moon comes like a cat, dishonestly.—

This image is for you sensitive hypocrites, you 'pure seekers of knowledge.' I call you people full of lust!

You too love earth and earthly things. I have guessed you correctly! But you are ashamed of your love and feel guilty about it. You resemble the moon!

Your spirit has been persuaded to despise earthly things, but your insides have not. *They* are the strongest part of you!

Now your spirit is ashamed of obeying your insides. Because of its shame, it takes paths of sneaking and lying.

"The highest thing for me," your dishonest spirit tells itself, "would be to watch life without wanting anything, not like a dog with its tongue out:

"To be happy watching, with my will dead, free of selfish grasping and greed, cold and gray as ash all over, but with drunken moon-eyes!"

"This is what I would love most," the seduced one persuades himself, "to love earth as the moon does, touching its beauty with my eyes alone.

“Let *untainted* knowledge of things mean wanting nothing from them except to lie before them like a mirror with a hundred eyes.”—

Sensitive hypocrites, lustful people! Your desire lacks innocence. Now you attack desire because of that!

You do not love the earth as creators, parents, people who delight in things coming into being!

Where is innocence? Where there is a will to produce life. To me, someone wanting to create beyond themselves has the purest will.

Where is beauty? Where I *have to will* with my whole will, where I want to love and go under so that a picture does not stay just a picture.

Loving and going under have rhymed with each other forever. Willing love also means being willing to die. That is what I tell you cowards!

But now you want to call your unmanned sideways look ‘contemplation.’ Whatever cowardly eyes can touch must be called ‘beautiful’! You dirty noble names!

This will be your curse, untainted, pure knowers: you will never give birth, even if you lie broad and pregnant on the horizon!

You fill your mouths with noble words. Are we supposed to believe your hearts are overflowing, you liars?

But *my* words are little, despised, crooked words. I like picking up what falls under your dinner table.

With them I can still tell hypocrites the truth! My fish bones, shells, and prickly leaves will tickle hypocrites’ noses!

The air around you and your meals is always bad. Your lustful thoughts, lies, and secrets are in the air!

First dare to believe yourselves, and your own insides! A person who does not believe themselves keeps lying.

You put a God’s mask on before yourselves, you ‘pure’ people. Your horrible ringed worm crept inside that mask.

You ‘contemplative’ people deceive! Zarathustra too was once fooled by your divine skins. He did not see the snakes coiled inside them.

Pure knowers, I once thought a God's soul was playing in your games! I thought no art was better than yours!

Distance hid the snakes' dirt and bad smell. It hid the lizard's cunning, creeping around lustfully here.

But I came *close*. Then day came for me, and now it comes for you. The moon's love affair is finished!

Look! Caught out, it stands pale before dawn!

Already she comes, glowing, with *her* love for earth! All of the sun's love is innocent and wants to create!

See how impatiently she comes across the sea! Don't you feel the thirst and hot breath of her love?

She wants to suck at the sea, drinking its depths up into her heights. 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, height, a path for light, and light itself!

Like the sun, I love life and all deep seas.

This is what *I* mean by knowledge: everything deep must come up to my height!

That is what Zarathustra said.

About Scholars

While I was asleep, a sheep ate the ivy wreath on my head. As it chewed it said, "Zarathustra isn't a scholar anymore."

Then it walked away stiffly and proudly. A child told me about it.

I like lying here where children play, beside the broken wall, among thistles and red poppies.

The children still think I am a scholar. So do the thistles and red poppies. They are innocent even in their malice.

But the sheep no longer think so. My fate wants it that way. Good for my fate!

The truth is that I moved out of the scholars' house and slammed the door behind me.

My soul spent too long hungry at their table. Unlike them, I have not been trained for knowledge as though for cracking nuts.

I love freedom and air over fresh ground. I would rather sleep on ox skins than on their honors and respectability.

My own thoughts make me too hot and burn me. They often threaten to stop my breath. Then I need open air, away from every dusty room.

But they sit cool in cool shade. They want only to watch everything. They avoid sitting where sunlight burns the steps.

They are like people standing in the street staring at everyone passing. They wait and stare at thoughts other people had.

Touch them and they unintentionally throw dust around like sacks of flour. Who would guess that dust came from grain and the yellow joy of summer fields?

When they pretend to be wise, their little sayings and truths give me a chill. Their wisdom often smells as though it came from a swamp. I have even heard a frog croak in it!

They are skilled, with clever fingers. What use is *my* simplicity next to their variety? Their fingers know every way to thread, knot, and weave. That is how they make the spirit's stockings!

They are good clocks. Just be sure to wind them correctly! They will tell the time honestly and make a little noise.

They work like grinding mills and crushers. Throw them some grain. They know how to grind it small and turn it into white dust.

They closely watch each other's fingers and do not entirely trust each other. Clever at little tricks, they wait like spiders for people whose knowledge limps.

I always saw them carefully making poison. They always put glass gloves on their fingers to do it.

They know how to play with loaded dice too. I found them playing so eagerly they sweated.

We are strangers to each other. Their virtues displease me even more than their lies and loaded dice.

When I lived with them, I lived above them. That made them resent me.

They do not want to hear about anyone walking over their heads. So they put wood, dirt, and rubbish between my feet and their heads.

That muffled the sound of my steps. The most learned people have so far heard me least well.

They put everyone's faults and weaknesses between themselves and me. They call that the 'false floor' in their houses.

But my thoughts still walk *above* their heads. Even if I walked on my own faults, I would still be above them and their heads.

People are *not* equal. That is what justice says. And *they* have no right to want what I want!

That is what Zarathustra said.

About Poets

"Since I learned more about the body," Zarathustra told a student, "spirit has become only a sort of spirit to me. Everything 'everlasting' is only an image too."

"I heard you say that before," the student replied. "You added then, 'But poets lie too much.' Why did you say poets lie too much?"

"Why?" asked Zarathustra. "You ask why? I am not someone you may ask for my reasons.

"Did I get my experience yesterday? I experienced the reasons for my opinions long ago.

"Wouldn't I need a barrel full of memory to keep my reasons with me too?

"It is already too much to keep my opinions themselves. Many birds fly away.

"Sometimes a strange animal flies into my pigeon house. It shakes when I put my hand on it.

"But what did Zarathustra tell you once? That poets lie too much? Zarathustra is a poet too.

"Do you believe he was telling the truth about this? Why believe it?"

The student said, "I believe in Zarathustra." But Zarathustra smiled and shook his head.

"Belief does not make me happy," he said, "especially belief in me.

"But suppose someone seriously said poets lie too much. They would be right. *We* lie too much.

"We know too little and learn badly. So we have to lie.

“Which of us poets has not tampered with his wine? We have made plenty of poisonous mixtures in our cellars and done things impossible to describe.

“Because we know little, we really like people poor in spirit, especially when they are young women!

“We even want the things old women tell each other in the evening. We call that part of ourselves the Eternal Feminine.

“We believe in the people and their ‘wisdom,’ as if there were a special secret entrance to knowledge that gets *blocked* for anyone who learns something.

“All poets believe that lying in grass or on lonely slopes and listening closely lets you learn something about what lies between heaven and earth.

“When they feel tenderness, poets always think nature herself is in love with them:

“She comes quietly to whisper secrets and loving compliments in their ears. They swell with pride over that before everyone else!

“So many things between heaven and earth have been dreamed of only by poets!

“Especially *above* heaven, because all gods are poets’ images and things poets smuggled in!

“We are always drawn up into the clouds’ kingdom. On the clouds we put our colorful stuffed skins and call them gods and overhumans—

“All those gods and overhumans are just light enough for those seats!

“I am so tired of inadequate things that insist on being great events! So tired of poets!”

Zarathustra’s student grew angry at these words but kept quiet. Zarathustra was quiet too. His eyes turned inward, as though looking far away. Eventually he sighed and took a breath.

“I belong to today and the past,” he said. “But something in me belongs to tomorrow, the day after, and some future day.

“I am tired of poets, old and new. To me they are all shallow people and shallow seas.

“They did not think deeply enough, so their feelings never reached the bottom.

“A bit of lust and a bit of boredom: that has been their best thinking.

“All their harp music is like ghosts breathing and slipping past. What have they known about passionate sound?—

“They are not clean enough for me either. They all stir up their water so it looks deep.

“They like to present themselves as people bringing others together. But to me they remain go-betweens, mixers, people half one thing and half another, unclean!—

“I threw my net into their seas hoping for good fish. I always pulled up an old God’s head.

“The sea gave the hungry man a stone. They themselves may have come from the sea too.

“You can certainly find pearls in them. That makes them all the more like hard shellfish. Instead of a soul, I often found salty slime in them.

“They learned vanity from the sea as well. Isn’t the sea the greatest peacock of all?

“It spreads its tail even before the ugliest buffalo. It never tires of its lace fan of silver and silk.

“The buffalo looks on stubbornly. Its soul is close to sand, closer to thick undergrowth, closest to swamp.

“What does it care about beauty, sea, or peacock decorations? I offer that image to poets.

“Their spirit itself is the greatest peacock and a sea of vanity!

“A poet’s spirit wants an audience, even if the audience is buffalo!—

“But I have grown tired of that spirit. I can see that it will grow tired of itself.

“I have already seen poets change and turn their eyes against themselves.

“I saw people doing penance in spirit emerge from them.”

That is what Zarathustra said.

About Great Events

Not far from Zarathustra’s happy islands is an island in the sea with a volcano always smoking. People, especially the old women, say it sits like a rock in front of the underworld’s gate. A narrow path through the volcano itself leads down to that gate.

While Zarathustra was staying on the happy islands, a ship anchored at the island with the smoking mountain. The sailors went ashore to shoot rabbits. Near noon, when the captain and crew were together again, they suddenly saw a man coming through the air toward them. A voice said clearly, "It is time! It is high time!" As the figure came closest, flying quickly past like a shadow toward the volcano, they were shocked to recognize Zarathustra. Everyone except the captain had seen him before. They loved him in the people's way, with equal parts love and fear.

"Look!" the old helmsman said. "Zarathustra is going to hell!"—

At about the time the sailors landed on the fiery island, a rumor spread that Zarathustra had disappeared. Asked about it, his friends said he had boarded a ship at night without saying his destination.

People became worried. Three days later the sailors' story increased their worry. Now everyone said the devil had carried Zarathustra off. His students laughed at this. One even said, "I would sooner believe Zarathustra carried the devil off." But deep down they were all worried and missed him. They were very happy when he returned on the fifth day.

This is the story of Zarathustra's talk with the fire dog.

"The earth has a skin," he said, "and the skin has diseases. One of them, for example, is called 'humanity.'"

"Another is called 'fire dog.' People have made up many lies about *him* and let themselves be told many more.

"I crossed the sea to get to the bottom of that secret. I saw truth naked, bare-foot all the way up to its neck!

"Now I know about the fire dog and all the devils of spouting and overturning that frighten more than just old women.

"Come out of your depths, fire dog!" I shouted. "Tell me how deep they are! Where does what you blow up here come from?"

"You drink plenty from the sea. Your salty eloquence gives that away! For a dog of the depths, you get too much food from the surface!

"At most you are the earth's ventriloquist. Every devil of upheaval and eruption I heard sounded like you: salty, dishonest, shallow.

“You know how to roar and make things dark with ash! You are the biggest loudmouths. Have you fully learned how to boil mud?

“Wherever you are, mud must be close, along with things spongy, hollow, trapped: they want to get free.

““Freedom” is what you all like shouting best. But I stopped believing in “great events” whenever a lot of shouting and smoke surrounds them.

“Believe me, my noisy friend from hell! The greatest events are not our noisiest hours but our quietest.

“The world turns around people inventing new values, not new noise. It turns *without a sound*.

“Admit it: when your smoke and noise cleared away, little had actually happened. What does it matter if a city turned into a mummy and a statue lies in mud?

“I also say this to people knocking statues down: throwing salt into the sea and statues into mud is the greatest foolishness.

“The statue lay in the mud of your contempt. But its rule is this: life and living beauty grow back from contempt!

“It rises now with more divine features, attractive in its suffering. It will even thank you for knocking it over!

“My advice to kings, churches, and everything weak from age and short on virtue is: let yourselves be knocked down! Then you can return to life, and virtue can return to you!—

“That is what I told the fire dog. He interrupted grumpily, asking, ‘Church? What is that?’

“Church?’ I said. ‘A kind of state, the most dishonest kind. Be quiet, hypocritical dog! Surely you know your own kind best!

“The state is a hypocritical dog just like you. It too likes to speak with smoke and roaring, making people think it speaks from the belly of things.

“The state insists on being the most important animal on earth. People believe it too.’—

“That made the fire dog act mad with envy. ‘What?’ he shouted. ‘The most important animal on earth? And people believe it?’ So much steam and such frightening sounds came from his throat that I thought anger and envy would choke him.

“Eventually he quieted and stopped panting so much. Once he was quiet, I laughed and said:

“‘You are annoyed, fire dog. That proves I am right about you!

“‘To make sure I stay right, listen to this about another fire dog. That one really speaks from the earth’s heart.

“‘His breath blows gold and golden rain. His heart wants it that way. What does he need ash, smoke, or hot slime for?

“‘Laughter flies out of him like a colorful cloud. He dislikes your gurgling, spitting, and stomach cramps!

“‘He gets the gold and laughter from the earth’s heart. Just so you know, *the earth’s heart is gold.*’

“The fire dog could not bear listening anymore. He pulled his tail in, ashamed, said ‘Woof! Woof!’ in a timid voice, and crawled down into his cave.”—

That was Zarathustra’s story. His students hardly listened, so eager were they to tell him about the sailors, the rabbits, and the flying man.

“What should I think about that?” Zarathustra said. “Am I a ghost?

“It must have been my shadow. Perhaps you have heard about the wanderer and his shadow?

“One thing is certain: I must keep him under closer control. Otherwise he will ruin my reputation.”

Zarathustra shook his head again, surprised. “What should I think about that?” he repeated.

“Why did the ghost shout, ‘It is time! It is high time!’?

“High time *for what?*”—

That is what Zarathustra said.

The Prophet

“—I saw a great sadness come over people. The best became tired of their work.

“A teaching spread, and a belief went alongside it: ‘Everything is empty, everything is the same, everything has already been!’

“Every hill echoed, ‘Everything is empty, everything is the same, everything has already been!’

“We have harvested. But why did all our fruit become rotten and brown? What fell last night from the evil moon?

“All our work was wasted. Our wine turned poisonous. An evil eye scorched our fields and hearts yellow.

“We have all dried out. If fire falls on us, we scatter like ash. We have tired out even fire itself.

“All our wells dried up, and even the sea pulled back. All the ground wants to split open, but the depths will not swallow anything!

“‘Where is there still a sea to drown in?’ Our complaint travels over shallow swamps.

“We are already too tired to die. Now we stay awake and go on living in burial rooms!”—

Zarathustra heard a prophet say this. The prediction touched his heart and changed him. He wandered sadly and tiredly, becoming like the people the prophet had described.

“It will not be long before this long twilight comes,” he told his students.

“How will I save my light through it?

“It must not suffocate in this sadness! It is meant to light more distant worlds and even the farthest nights!”

Troubled in this way, Zarathustra wandered about. For three days he did not eat or drink, could not rest, and stopped speaking. Finally he fell deeply asleep. His students sat around him through long nights, worriedly waiting to see if he would wake up, speak again, and recover from his sadness.

This is what Zarathustra said when he woke. His voice sounded to his students as though it came from far away.

“Friends, listen to my dream and help me work out its meaning!

“It is still a puzzle. Its meaning is trapped inside, hidden, and has not yet flown above it on free wings.

"I dreamed I had given up all life. I had become a night watchman and guard of graves in death's lonely mountain castle.

"I guarded its coffins up there. Those musty rooms were full of these signs of victory. Life that had been defeated looked at me from glass coffins.

"I breathed the smell of dusty eternities. My soul felt hot, stale, and dusty. Who could get fresh air for their soul there?

"The brightness of midnight was always around me. Loneliness crouched beside it. With them was rattling deathly silence, the worst of my female friends.

"I carried keys, the rustiest keys of all. I knew how to open the world's creakiest gate with them.

"When the gate's doors lifted, the sound traveled through long corridors like an angry, ugly croak. This bird cried harshly. It did not want waking.

"But it was still more frightening and squeezed my heart harder when the sound stopped, everything grew quiet, and I sat alone in that treacherous silence.

"That was how time passed and crept, if there was still time. What do I know? But finally something happened that woke me.

"Blows hit the gate three times, like thunder. The rooms echoed and howled three times. I went to the gate.

"Alpa!" I shouted. "Who is carrying his ashes up the mountain? Alpa! Alpa! Who is carrying his ashes up the mountain?"

"I pressed the key and strained to lift the gate. It did not open even a finger's width.

"Then a roaring wind tore the doors apart. Whistling, shrieking, cutting, it threw a black coffin toward me.

"Amid the roar, whistle, and shriek, the coffin broke apart and poured out a thousand bursts of laughter.

"A thousand grimacing faces of children, angels, owls, fools, and butterflies as big as children laughed, mocked, and roared at me.

"I was horribly frightened. It knocked me down. I screamed with more horror than ever before.

“But my own scream woke me. I came back to myself.”—

Zarathustra finished telling his dream and fell quiet. He did not understand it yet. But the student he loved most stood up quickly, took his hand, and said:

“Your own life explains this dream to us, Zarathustra!

“Aren’t you the wind with the shrill whistle, tearing open the gates of death’s castles?

“Aren’t you the coffin full of colorful mischief and life’s angels pulling faces?

“Zarathustra enters every room of the dead like a thousand children’s laughs. He laughs at the night watchmen, the guards of graves, and anyone rattling gloomy keys.

“Your laughter will frighten them and knock them over. Their fainting and waking will prove your power over them.

“Even when the long twilight and tiredness of death come, you will not set in our sky, defender of life!

“You showed us new stars and new beautiful things in the night. You spread laughter itself above us like a colorful tent.

“Now children’s laughter will keep pouring from coffins. A strong wind will always arrive to defeat tiredness of death. You yourself are our guarantee and prophet of that!

“*You dreamed your enemies themselves.* That was your most difficult dream!

“But as you woke from them and came back to yourself, they must wake from themselves and come to you!”—

The student said this. All the others crowded around Zarathustra, held his hands, and tried to persuade him to leave his bed and sadness and come back to them. Zarathustra sat upright in bed, looking strange. Like someone home after a long time abroad, he examined his students’ faces without recognizing them yet. When they lifted him onto his feet, his eyes suddenly changed. He understood everything that had happened, stroked his beard, and said firmly, “Good! There is a time for that. But my students, make sure we have a good meal soon! That is how I intend to make up for bad dreams!

“The prophet must eat and drink beside me. I will show him a sea he can drown in!”

That is what Zarathustra said. Then he looked for a long time into the face of the student who had interpreted the dream, shaking his head.—

About Redemption

One day Zarathustra was crossing the big bridge when cripples and beggars surrounded him. A man with a hump on his back said:

“Look, Zarathustra! Even ordinary people are learning from you and believing your teaching. But before they believe completely, something else must happen: you must convince us cripples first! Here is a good selection, an opportunity with several forelocks to grab! You can heal blind people and make lame people walk. You might also take something off a man with too much behind him. That would be the right way to make cripples believe in Zarathustra!”

Zarathustra answered, “People teach that taking a hunchback’s hump takes his spirit away too. Give a blind man his sight and he sees so many bad things that he curses the person who healed him. Making a lame man walk does him the greatest harm: as soon as he can walk, his vices run away with him. That is what people teach about cripples. Why shouldn’t Zarathustra learn from the people if they learn from him?”

“But since I started living among people, seeing that one lacks an eye, another an ear, a third a leg, while others have lost a tongue, nose, or head, is the least of it.

“I see worse and have seen many things so awful that I would not talk about all of them or even stay quiet about some. I mean people lacking everything except one thing they have too much of: nothing but a huge eye, a huge mouth, a huge belly, or something else huge. I call them cripples in reverse.

“When I left my solitude and first crossed this bridge, I could hardly believe my eyes. I looked again and again and finally said, ‘That is an ear! An ear as big as a person!’ Looking more closely, I saw something moving below it, pitifully small, poor, and thin. The enormous ear sat on a little narrow stalk, and the stalk was a human being! With a magnifying glass you could even see a little jealous face and a swollen little soul hanging from the stalk. But people told me

the giant ear was not just a person but a great person, a genius. I never believed them about great people. I kept believing this was a cripple in reverse, with too little of everything and too much of one thing.”

After saying this to the hunchback and the people he spoke for, Zarathustra turned to his students in deep unhappiness and said:

“Friends, walking among people feels like walking among people’s broken pieces and limbs!

“The frightening thing I see is humanity broken and scattered as if across a battlefield and a place of slaughter.

“If my eyes escape from now to the past, they find the same thing: pieces, limbs, terrible accidents, but no human beings!

“Now and the past on earth—that is *my* most unbearable thing, friends. I would not know how to live unless I could also see what has to come.

“A seer, someone willing and creating, a future himself, a bridge to the future, and also a kind of cripple on that bridge: Zarathustra is all of these.

“You have often asked yourselves, ‘Who is Zarathustra to us? What should we call him?’ Like me, you answered with questions.

“Does he promise, or fulfill? Conquer, or inherit? Is he autumn, or a plow blade? A doctor, or someone recovered?

“A poet, or a truthful person? Someone freeing or taming? Good, or evil?

“I walk among people as among fragments of the future, the future I see.

“All my inventing and trying aims to bring together into one what is broken, puzzling, and terribly accidental.

“How could I stand being human unless humanity were also a poet, a puzzle-solver, and someone who saves chance!

“Only this would mean redemption to me: saving those who have gone and turning every ‘It was’ into ‘That is how I wanted it!’

“Will is the name of the thing setting us free and bringing happiness. I taught you that, friends! Learn this too now: will itself remains a prisoner.

“Willing frees us. But what still puts the liberator in chains?

“‘It was’ is the name for the will’s grinding of teeth and its loneliest sadness. Unable to change what is done, it watches everything past with bad feelings.

“The will cannot will backward. Its loneliest sadness comes from not being able to break time and time’s desire.

“Willing frees us. What does willing invent to escape its sadness and laugh at its prison?

“Every prisoner becomes foolish! The imprisoned will frees itself foolishly too.

“It is furious because time does not run backward. ‘What was’ is the stone it cannot roll away.

“So it rolls stones out of anger and discontent. It takes revenge on whatever does not share that anger and discontent.

“The will, which frees us, became something that hurts. It takes revenge on everything capable of pain because it cannot go backward.

“This alone is *revenge*: the will’s bad will against time and its ‘It was.’

“A great foolishness lives in our will. When that foolishness grew clever, it became a curse for all humanity!

“*The spirit of revenge* has been people’s best thinking until now, my friends. Wherever there was pain, people thought there should be punishment.

“Revenge calls itself ‘punishment.’ That dishonest word lets it pretend to have a clear conscience.

“Because the person willing suffers from not being able to will backward, willing itself and all life were supposed to be punishment!

“Cloud after cloud covered the mind. Finally madness preached, ‘Everything passes away, so everything deserves to pass away!’

“‘This law of time, that time must eat its children, is justice itself.’ That is what madness preached.

“‘Things are ordered morally, by justice and punishment. Where can we escape the flow of things and the punishment called existence?’ That is what madness preached.

“‘Can there be redemption if justice lasts forever? We cannot roll away the stone “It was.” Every punishment must last forever too!’ That is what madness preached.

“No act can be destroyed. How could punishment undo it? This is what lasts forever in the punishment called existence: existence must keep becoming act and guilt forever!

“Unless will finally freed itself, and willing became not willing—’ You know that mad fable song, my brothers!

“I led you away from those fable songs when I taught, ‘The will creates.’

“Every ‘It was’ is a piece, a puzzle, a terrible accident, until the creative will says, ‘But I wanted it that way!’

“Until it says, ‘But I want it that way! That is how I will want it!’

“But has it said that yet? When will it happen? Has the will been freed from its own foolishness?

“Has it become its own liberator and source of joy? Has it unlearned revenge and all grinding of teeth?

“Who taught it to make peace with time, and something higher than any making of peace?

“The will to power must want something higher than any making of peace. But how does that happen? Who taught it even to will backward?”

At this point Zarathustra suddenly stopped. He looked like someone terribly frightened. His startled eyes looked at his students, piercing their thoughts and secret thoughts like arrows. After a moment he laughed again and said reassuringly:

“Living with people is hard because keeping quiet is hard. Especially for someone who talks a lot.” —

That is what Zarathustra said. The hunchback had listened with his face covered. Hearing Zarathustra laugh, he looked up curiously and asked slowly:

“But why does Zarathustra speak differently to us than to his students?”

“Why be surprised?” Zarathustra answered. “You can speak crookedly to people with crooked backs!”

“Good,” the hunchback said. “With students you can talk out of school.

“But why does Zarathustra speak differently to his students than to himself?” —

On Dealing Wisely with People

It is not the height that frightens me. It is the steep slope!

On that slope your eyes rush *down* while your hand reaches *up*. The heart grows dizzy with its two wishes.

My friends, can you guess the two wishes in my heart too?

This is *my* steep slope and danger: my eyes rush toward the heights, while my hand wants to hold on to something deep below!

My will clings to humanity. I chain myself to it because I am pulled upward toward the overhuman. That is where my other will wants to go.

That is why I live blindly among people, as though I did not know them. I do not want my hand to lose all belief in something solid.

I do not know you human beings. That darkness and comfort often cover me.

I sit in the entrance for every rogue, asking, "Who wants to trick me?"

My first way of dealing wisely with people is letting myself be tricked, so I do not have to watch out for tricksters.

If I watched out for people, how could they anchor my balloon? I would be pulled up and away too easily!

This is the providence over my fate: I must not take precautions.

Anyone who does not want to die of thirst among people must learn to drink from every glass. Anyone who wants to stay clean must know how to wash even in dirty water.

I have often comforted myself like this: "Come on, old heart! A misfortune failed to happen. Enjoy that as your good luck!"

My second way of dealing wisely with people is sparing the *vain* more than the proud.

Doesn't wounded vanity give birth to all tragedies? But wounding pride may produce something better than pride.

Life's play must be performed well to be enjoyable to watch. That takes good actors.

I found all vain people good actors. They act and want people to enjoy watching them. Their whole spirit goes into that wish.

They put themselves on display and invent themselves. I enjoy watching life near them. It cures sadness.

That is why I spare them. They treat my sadness and keep me attached to humanity as if to a play.

Who can measure all the modesty in a vain person? I like and pity him because of that modesty.

He wants you to teach him to believe in himself. He feeds on your looks and eats praise from your hands.

He even believes your lies when you tell good lies about him. Deep down his heart sighs, "What am I?"

If real virtue does not know itself, then the vain person does not know his modesty!—

My third way of dealing wisely with people is not letting your fear spoil my pleasure in seeing *evil* people.

I am happy to see the wonders a hot sun brings to life: tigers, palms, and rattlesnakes.

People too have beautiful offspring of a hot sun. Evil people have much worth wondering at.

Just as your wisest people did not seem so wise to me, I found human malice less bad than its reputation.

I often shook my head and asked, "Why are you still rattling, rattlesnakes?"

Evil still has a future too! Humanity has not discovered its hottest south yet.

Many things already called the worst evil are only twelve feet wide and three months long! Bigger dragons will be born one day.

The overhuman must have a dragon worthy of it, an overdragon. For that, a great deal of hot sun must still shine on wet ancient forest!

Your wildcats must first turn into tigers, your poisonous toads into crocodiles. A good hunter should have good hunting!

You good and just people have much that makes me laugh, especially your fear of what has been called 'the devil'!

Your souls are so unfamiliar with greatness that the overhuman would be *frightening* to you even in its goodness!

You wise and knowledgeable people would run from the burning sun of wisdom in which the overhuman happily bathes naked!

You highest people I have seen! Here is my doubt about you and my secret laughter: I suspect you would call my overhuman a devil!

I grew tired of these highest and best people. From their ‘height’ I wanted to go up, out, away toward the overhuman!

I felt horror when I saw these best people naked. I grew wings to fly into distant futures.

Farther futures, farther south than any sculptor ever imagined, where gods are ashamed of all clothes!

But I want to see *you*, my neighbors and fellow human beings, in disguise: well dressed, vain, dignified, as ‘the good and the just’—

I want to sit among you in disguise myself, so that I *mistake* you and myself for something else. That is my last way of dealing wisely with people.

That is what Zarathustra said.

The Quietest Hour

“What has happened to me, friends? You see me upset, driven away, obeying against my will, ready to leave—leave *you*!

“Yes, Zarathustra has to go back to being alone. This time the bear does not want to return to his *cave*!

“What happened? Who orders this? My angry mistress wants it. She spoke to me. Have I ever told you her name?

“Yesterday toward evening *my quietest hour* spoke to me. That is my frightening mistress’s name.

“I must tell you how it happened, all of it, so that you will not feel hard toward someone leaving so suddenly!

“Do you know the fright a person gets while falling asleep? They are scared right down to their toes as the ground gives way and the dream starts.

“I use that as an image. Yesterday, at the quietest hour, the ground beneath me gave way. The dream started.

“The hand moved. My life’s clock took a breath. I had never heard such quiet around me. It frightened my heart.

“Then something said to me without a voice, ‘*You know it, Zarathustra?*’—

“I screamed at that whisper in fear. The blood left my face. But I said nothing.

“It said without a voice again, ‘You know it, Zarathustra, but you do not say it!’—

“Finally I answered stubbornly, ‘Yes, I know, but I will not say it!’

“It spoke without a voice again: ‘You do not *want* to, Zarathustra? Is that true? Don’t hide behind being stubborn!’—

“I cried and shook like a child. ‘I would like to, but how can I? Please let me off! It is beyond my strength!’

“It said without a voice, ‘What do you matter, Zarathustra? Say your word and break!’—

“I answered, ‘Is it *my* word? Who am I? I am waiting for someone worthier. I am not even worthy to break on it.’

“It said without a voice, ‘What do you matter? You are not humble enough yet. Humility has the toughest skin.’—

“I answered, ‘What hasn’t the skin of my humility already carried? I live at the foot of my height. How high are my peaks? Nobody has told me yet. But I know my valleys well.’

“It said without a voice, ‘Zarathustra, anyone who has mountains to move moves valleys and low ground too.’—

“I answered, ‘My word has not moved mountains yet. What I said did not reach people. I went to them, but have not arrived among them yet.’

“It said without a voice, ‘What do you know *about that*? Dew falls on the grass when night is most silent.’—

“I answered, ‘They laughed at me when I found and took my own path. My feet really did shake then.

““They told me: you have forgotten the road; now you will forget how to walk too!’

“It said without a voice, ‘What does their mockery matter? You have unlearned obeying. Now you must give orders!

“Do you know who everyone needs most? Someone who orders great things.

“Doing great things is hard. Ordering great things is harder.

“This is what is least forgivable about you: you have the power and do not want to rule.’—

“I answered, ‘I lack a lion’s voice for giving orders.’

“It spoke again like a whisper: ‘The quietest words bring the storm. Thoughts arriving on doves’ feet guide the world.

“Zarathustra, you must go as a shadow of what has to come. In that way you will command and lead the way by commanding.’—

“I answered, ‘I am ashamed.’

“It said without a voice, ‘You still have to become a child and lose your shame.

“You still wear the pride of youth. You became young late. But anyone wanting to become a child must overcome youth as well.’—

“I thought for a long time and shook. Finally I said what I had said at first: ‘I will not.’

“Laughter began around me. How it tore my insides and cut my heart open!

“For the last time it said, ‘Zarathustra, your fruit is ripe, but you are not ripe for your fruit!

“So you must go back to being alone. You still have to soften.’—

“It laughed again and left. Things became quiet around me with a double quiet. I lay on the ground, sweat running from my arms and legs.

“Now you have heard everything, including why I must go back to being alone. Friends, I have hidden nothing.

“But you have also heard from me *who* remains the person who keeps most quiet, and wants to stay that way!

“My friends, I have something else to tell you, something else to give! Why don’t I give it? Am I stingy?”—

When Zarathustra said this, pain and the approaching goodbye to his friends overwhelmed him. He cried loudly. No one knew how to comfort him. In the night he went away alone and left his friends.

Part 3



Third Part

“You look up when you long to be lifted up. And I look down, because I am lifted up.

“Who among you can laugh and be lifted up at once?

“Whoever climbs the highest mountains laughs at all tragic plays and tragic seriousness.”

Zarathustra, On Reading and Writing. (I. p. 53.)

The Wanderer.

It was midnight when Zarathustra set out along the ridge of the island, so that he would reach the other shore by early morning. There he meant to board a ship. A good harbor lay there, where foreign ships liked to drop anchor too. They took along some people who wanted to cross the sea from the Blessed Isles. As Zarathustra climbed the mountain, he thought on the way of all the lonely wandering he had done since youth, and of how many mountains and ridges and peaks he had already climbed.

“I’m a wanderer and a mountain climber,” he said to his heart. “I don’t love the plains, and it seems I can’t sit still for long.

“And whatever may still come to me as fate and experience, there will be wandering in it and mountain climbing. In the end you experience nothing but yourself.

“The time is over when chance events were still allowed to come my way. And what *could* still fall to me now that wasn’t already my own!

“It’s only coming back. At last it’s coming home to me, my own self, and whatever part of it was long abroad, scattered among all things and chance events.

“And I know one thing more: I’m standing now before my last peak and before what was saved up for me longest. Ah, I have to climb my hardest path! Ah, I’ve begun my loneliest walk!

“But whoever is of my kind doesn’t escape an hour like this, the hour that speaks to them: ‘Only now are you going your way to greatness! Peak and abyss are now locked together in one!

“You’re going your way to greatness: what used to be called your last danger has now become your last refuge!

“You’re going your way to greatness: your best courage now has to be that there is no path left behind you!

“You’re going your way to greatness. Here no one is to sneak after you! Your own foot wiped out the path behind you, and over it is written: Impossibility.

“And now that every ladder is missing, you have to know how to climb onto your own head. How else would you climb upward?

“Onto your own head and away over your own heart! Now the gentlest part of you has to become the hardest.

“Whoever has always spared themselves a great deal ends up sickly from all that sparing. Praised be whatever makes hard! I don’t praise the land where butter and honey flow!

“You need to learn to *look away* from yourself in order to see *a lot*. Every mountain climber needs this hardness.

“But whoever pushes in too close with their eyes as a seeker of knowledge, how could they see more in anything than its foregrounds!

“But you, oh Zarathustra, wanted to see the ground of all things and their background. So you have to climb above yourself, up and on up, until even your stars are *below* you!

“Yes! To look down on myself and even on my stars: only that would be my *peak* to me. That was still left for me as my *last peak*!”

That is what Zarathustra said to himself as he climbed, comforting his heart with hard little sayings. For he was wounded in the heart as never before. And when he reached the top of the mountain ridge, there lay the other sea, spread out before him. He stood still and was silent for a long time. The night at this height was cold and clear and bright with stars.

"I know my lot," he said at last, sadly. "Well then! I'm ready. My last loneliness has just begun.

"Ah, this black, sad sea below me! Ah, this pregnant, night-time sullenness! Ah, fate and sea! Now I have to go *down* to you!

"I'm standing before my highest mountain and before my longest walk. So first I have to go down deeper than I ever went:

"—deeper down into pain than I ever went, all the way into its blackest flood! That is what my fate wants. Well then! I'm ready.

"Where do the highest mountains come from?' I asked once. Then I learned that they come from the sea.

"This testimony is written into their rock and into the walls of their peaks. The highest has to come to its height out of the deepest."

That is what Zarathustra said on the top of the mountain, where it was cold. But when he came near the sea and at last stood alone among the cliffs, he had grown tired on the way and was more full of longing than before.

"Everything is still asleep," he said. "The sea is asleep too. Its eye looks at me, drowsy and strange.

"But it breathes warmly, I can feel that. And I feel too that it's dreaming. It twists and turns in its dream on hard pillows.

"Listen! Listen! How it groans with bad memories! Or bad expectations?

"Ah, I'm sad with you, dark monster, and angry with myself for your sake as well.

"Ah, that my hand doesn't have strength enough! Gladly, truly, I'd free you from bad dreams!"

And as Zarathustra spoke this way, he laughed at himself with gloom and bitterness. "What! Zarathustra!" he said. "Do you still want to sing comfort to the sea?

“Ah, you loving fool, Zarathustra, you who are far too blissful in your trust! But you were always like that: you always came up to every terrible thing trustingly.

“You wanted to pet every monster. A breath of warm air, a bit of soft shaggy fur on a paw, and at once you were ready to love it and lure it.

“*Love* is the danger of the loneliest one, love for everything, *if only it lives!* My foolishness and my modesty in love are truly laughable!”

That is what Zarathustra said, and he laughed as he said it, for the second time. But then he thought of his abandoned friends. And as if he had wronged them with his thoughts, he was angry with himself over those thoughts. And at once the one who laughed was weeping. Zarathustra wept bitterly, from anger and longing.

On the Vision and the Riddle.

- ¹ When word got around among the sailors that Zarathustra was on the ship—for a man who came from the Blessed Isles had gone on board together with him—great curiosity and expectation arose. But Zarathustra was silent for two days, cold and deaf with sadness, so that he answered neither looks nor questions. On the evening of the second day, though, he opened his ears again, although he was still silent. For there was much strange and dangerous to hear on this ship, which came from far away and wanted to go farther still. And Zarathustra was a friend of all who make long journeys and don’t care to live without danger. And look! At last, as he listened, his own tongue was loosened, and the ice of his heart broke. Then he began to speak like this:

To you, the bold seekers and testers, and to anyone who has ever set sail with cunning sails on terrible seas,

to you who are drunk on riddles, glad in the half-light, whose souls are lured by flutes to every chasm that leads astray, because you don’t want to grope along a thread with a cowardly hand, and where you can *guess*, you hate to *deduce*,

to you alone I tell the riddle that I *saw*, the vision of the loneliest one.

Gloomy, I walked lately through corpse-colored twilight, gloomy and hard, with pressed lips. More than one sun had set for me.

A path climbing defiantly through rubble, a spiteful, lonely one that no herb or shrub spoke to any more: a mountain path crunched under the defiance of my foot.

Walking silently over the mocking clatter of pebbles, crushing the stone that made it slip: that is how my foot forced itself upward.

Upward, in defiance of the spirit that pulled it down, pulled it toward the abyss, the spirit of gravity, my devil and archenemy.

Upward, although he sat on me, half dwarf, half mole; lame; making me lame; dripping lead through my ear, lead-drop thoughts into my brain.

“Oh Zarathustra,” he whispered mockingly, syllable by syllable, “you stone of wisdom! You threw yourself high, but every thrown stone must fall!

“Oh Zarathustra, you stone of wisdom, you sling stone, you star-smasher! You threw yourself so high, but every thrown stone must fall!

“Condemned to yourself and to your own stoning: oh Zarathustra, you threw the stone far indeed, but it will fall back on *you*!”

Then the dwarf was silent, and it lasted a long time. His silence weighed on me, though. And with two of us like this, you are truly lonelier than with one!

I climbed, I climbed, I dreamed, I thought, but everything weighed on me. I was like a sick person, worn out by terrible pain, who is woken again by a worse dream just as sleep comes.

But there is something in me that I call courage. Until now it has killed every discouragement in me. In the end this courage told me to stand still and say: “Dwarf! You! Or I!”

For courage is the best killer, courage that *attacks*. In every attack there is marching music.

But man is the most courageous animal, and with that he overcame every animal. To marching music he overcame even every pain. And human pain is the deepest pain.

Courage also kills dizziness at the edge of abysses. And where does a person not stand at abysses! Isn't seeing itself seeing abysses?

Courage is the best killer. Courage kills pity too. And pity is the deepest abyss. As deep as a person looks into life, that is how deep they look 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!"

There is a lot of marching music in a saying like that. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

² "Stop! Dwarf!" I said. "I! Or you! But I'm the stronger of the two of us. You don't know my abyssal thought. *That* one you couldn't bear!"

Then something happened that made me lighter: the dwarf jumped off my shoulder, the curious one! He squatted on a stone in front of me. And right where we had stopped there was a gateway.

"Look at this gateway! Dwarf!" I went on. "It has two faces. Two paths meet here, and no one has ever walked either of them to its end.

"This long lane going back lasts an eternity. And that long lane going out ahead is another eternity.

"They contradict each other, these paths. They run head-on into each other. And here, at this gateway, is where they meet. The name of the gateway is written above it: 'Moment.'

"But if someone walked one of them farther, and always farther and farther away, do you believe, dwarf, that these paths contradict each other forever?"

"Everything straight lies," the dwarf murmured with contempt. "All truth is crooked. Time itself is a circle."

"You spirit of gravity!" I said angrily. "Don't make it too easy on yourself! Or I'll leave you squatting where you squat, lamefoot, and I carried you *high*!"

"Look," I went on, "at this moment! From this gateway called Moment a long, eternal lane runs *backward*: an eternity lies behind us.

"Mustn't whatever *can* run, of all things, have run down this lane once already? Mustn't whatever *can* happen, of all things, have happened already, been done, run past once before?

"And if everything has been here before, what do you make of this moment, dwarf? Mustn't this gateway, too, have been here before?

"And aren't all things so tightly knotted together that this moment pulls *all* coming things after it? *Therefore...* itself too?"

“For whatever *can* run, of all things, in this long lane *ahead* too, it *must* run once more!

“And this slow spider crawling in the moonlight, and this moonlight itself, and you and I in the gateway, whispering together, whispering of eternal things: mustn’t all of us have been here before?

“—and come again and run in that other lane, out ahead of us, in this long, dreadful lane: mustn’t we come again forever?”

That is how I spoke, and ever more softly, for I was afraid of my own thoughts and the thoughts behind them. Then, suddenly, I heard a dog *howling* close by. Had I ever heard a dog howl like that? My thought ran back. Yes! When I was a child, in my farthest childhood:

then I heard a dog howl like that. And I saw it too, bristling, its head up, trembling, in the stillest midnight, when even dogs believe in ghosts, so that I felt pity. For just then the full moon was passing over the house, silent as death. Just then it stood still, a round glow, still on the flat roof, as if on someone else’s property.

That was why the dog was horrified then, for dogs believe in thieves and ghosts. And when I heard it howl like that again, I felt pity again.

Where had the dwarf gone? And the gateway? And the spider? And all the whispering? Was I dreaming? Was I waking up? All at once I stood among wild cliffs, alone, desolate, in the most desolate moonlight.

But there lay a human being! And there! The *dog*, jumping, bristling, whimpering. Now it saw me coming. Then it howled again, then it *screamed*. Had I ever heard a dog scream for help like that?

And truly, I had never seen the like of what I saw. I saw a young shepherd, writhing, choking, twitching, his face distorted, a heavy black snake hanging out of his mouth.

Had I ever seen so much disgust and pale horror on one face? He had probably been asleep. Then the snake crawled into his throat, and there it bit itself fast.

My hand pulled at the snake and pulled, in vain! It didn’t pull the snake out of the throat. Then a cry came out of me: “Bite! Bite!

“Bite its head off! Bite!” So it cried out of 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, testers, and whoever among you set sail with cunning sails into unexplored seas! You who are glad of riddles!

So guess the riddle for me that I saw then, explain to me the vision of the loneliest one!

For it was a vision and a foreseeing. *What* did I see then, in a parable? And *who* is the one who must still come someday?

Who is the shepherd into whose throat the snake crawled like that? *Who* is the person into whose throat everything heaviest, blackest will crawl like that?

But the shepherd bit as my cry advised him. He bit with a good bite! Far away he spat the snake’s head. And he leaped up.

No longer shepherd, no longer human: a transformed one, 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’s laughter. And now a thirst gnaws at me, a longing that never grows quiet.

My longing for this laughter gnaws at me: oh how can I bear to go on living!

And how could I bear to die now!

That is what Zarathustra said.

On Bliss Against One’s Will.

With such riddles and bitterness in his heart, Zarathustra crossed the sea. But when he was four days’ journey away from the Blessed Isles and from his friends, he had overcome all his pain. Victorious and with firm feet, he stood again on his fate. And then Zarathustra spoke like this to his rejoicing conscience:

I’m alone again and I want to be, alone with a clear sky and the open sea. And again it’s afternoon around me.

In the afternoon I first found my friends, once; in the afternoon the second time too, at the hour when all light grows quieter.

For whatever happiness is still on its way between heaven and earth now looks for a bright soul as a lodging. *From happiness* all light has grown quieter now.

Oh afternoon of my life! Once *my* happiness too came down into the valley to look for lodging, and found these open, hospitable souls.

Oh afternoon of my life! What didn't I give up to have one thing: this living plantation of my thoughts and this morning light of my highest hope!

The creator once looked for companions and children of *his* hope. And look, it turned out that he couldn't find them unless he first created them himself.

So I'm in the middle of my work, going to my children and coming back from them. For the sake of his children Zarathustra must complete himself.

For you love thoroughly only your child and your work. And where there is great love for oneself, it's the sign of pregnancy. That's how I found it.

My children are still green in their first spring, standing close together and shaken by the same winds, the trees of my garden and my best soil.

And truly! Where such trees stand together, there *are* Blessed Isles!

But one day I'll dig them up and set each one by itself, so that each learns solitude and defiance and caution.

Each one is to stand there by the sea for me, gnarled and bent, with flexible hardness, a living lighthouse of unconquerable life.

There, where the storms rush down into the sea and the mountain's snout drinks water, each one is to keep their day and night watches once, for *their* testing and recognition.

Each is to be recognized and tested, to see whether they are of my kind and descent, whether they are master of a long will, silent even when they speak, and yielding in such a way that in giving they *take*,

—so that they may someday become my companion and a co-creator and co-celebrant of Zarathustra, one who writes my will on my tablets, for the fuller completion of all things.

And for their sake and the sake of those like them I must complete *myself*. That is why I now avoid my happiness and offer myself to all misfortune, for *my* last testing and recognition.

And truly, it was time for me to go. The wanderer's shadow and the longest while and the quietest hour all urged me: "It's high time!"

The wind blew through the keyhole and said, "Come!" The door sprang open slyly and said, "Go!"

But I lay chained by love for my children. Desire laid this snare for me, desire for love, so that I would become my children's prey and lose myself in them.

Desire means to me already: I've lost myself. *I have you, my children!* In this having, everything is to be security and nothing desire.

But the sun of my love lay brooding on me, Zarathustra boiled in his own juice, and shadows and doubts flew over me.

I already craved frost and winter: "Oh, if only frost and winter would make me crack and creak again!" I sighed. Then icy mists rose out of me.

My past broke open its graves. Many a pain buried alive woke up. It had only slept its fill, hidden in burial clothes.

So everything called to me in signs: "It's time!" But I didn't hear, until at last my abyss stirred and my thought bit me.

Ah, abyssal thought, you who are *my* thought! When will I find the strength to hear you digging and not tremble any more?

My heart beats up to my throat when I hear you digging! Your silence even wants to choke me, you abyssal silent one!

I've never yet dared to call you *up*. It was enough that I carried you with me! I wasn't yet strong enough for the lion's last high spirits and mischief.

Your heaviness was always terrible enough for me. But someday I'll still find the strength and the lion's voice that calls you up!

When I've first overcome myself in this, then I'll overcome myself in something greater too. And a *victory* is to be the seal of my completion!

In the meantime I still drift on uncertain seas. Chance flatters me, the smooth-tongued one. I look forward and back, and I still see no end.

The hour of my last battle hasn't yet come, or is it perhaps coming to me right now? Truly, with treacherous beauty sea and life look at me all around!

Oh afternoon of my life! Oh happiness before evening! Oh harbor on the high seas! Oh peace in uncertainty! How I distrust all of you!

Truly, I'm distrustful of your treacherous beauty! I'm like the lover who distrusts a smile that is too velvety.

As the jealous one pushes his dearest away from him, tender even in his hardness, so I push this blissful hour away from me.

Away with you, blissful hour! With you came a bliss against my will! Ready for my deepest pain I stand here. You came at the wrong time!

Away with you, blissful hour! Better take lodging there, with my children! Hurry! And bless them before evening with *my* happiness!

Evening is already drawing near: the sun is sinking. Gone, my happiness!

That is what Zarathustra said. And he waited for his misfortune the whole night. But he waited in vain. The night stayed bright and still, and happiness itself came closer and closer to him. Toward morning, though, Zarathustra laughed to his heart and said mockingly: "Happiness is running after me. That comes from my not running after women. And happiness is a woman."

Before Sunrise.

Oh sky above me, you pure one! Deep one! You abyss of light! Looking at you, I shudder with divine desires.

To throw myself into your height: that is *my* depth! To hide myself in your purity: that is *my* innocence!

A god's beauty veils him: so you hide your stars. You don't speak: *that* is how you proclaim your wisdom to me.

Silent over the roaring sea you have risen for me today. Your love and your shame speak revelation to my roaring soul.

That you came to me beautiful, veiled in your beauty, that you speak to me silently, revealed in your wisdom:

Oh, how could I not guess everything bashful in your soul! You came to me, the loneliest one, before the sun.

We're friends from the beginning. Sorrow and dread and ground are common to us; even the sun is common to us.

We don't speak to each other, because we know too much. We're silent to each other, we smile our knowledge to each other.

Aren't you the light for my fire? Don't you have the sister soul for my insight?

Together we learned everything. Together we learned to climb above ourselves to ourselves and to smile cloudlessly,

to smile cloudlessly down from bright eyes and from a distance of miles, while below us compulsion and purpose and guilt steam like rain.

And when I wandered alone, for *what* did my soul hunger in nights and on wrong paths? And when I climbed mountains, whom did I ever look for on mountains, if not you?

And all my wandering and mountain climbing was only a need, a makeshift of the clumsy. 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? And I even hated my own hatred, because it stained you!

I bear a grudge against the passing clouds, these sneaking predator cats. They take from you and me what we have in common: the huge, boundless saying of Yes and Amen.

We bear a grudge against these mediators and mixers, the passing clouds: these half-and-half ones, who have learned neither to bless nor to curse from the ground up.

I'd rather sit in a barrel under a closed sky, I'd rather sit in the abyss without any sky, than see you, sky of light, stained with passing clouds!

And often I longed to pin them down with jagged lightning-gold wires, so that I, like thunder, could beat the kettledrum on their kettle bellies, an angry drummer, because they rob me of your Yes! and Amen!, you sky above me, you pure one! Bright one! You abyss of light! Because they rob you of *my* Yes! and Amen!

For I'd rather have noise and thunder and storm curses than this cautious, doubting cat calm. And among people too, what I hate most are all the tiptoes and half-and-half ones and doubting, hesitating, passing clouds.

And "whoever can't bless should *learn* to curse!" This bright teaching fell to me out of a bright sky. This star stands in my sky even in black nights.

But I'm one who blesses and one who says Yes, if only you're around me, you pure one! Bright one! You abyss of light! Into all abysses I then carry my blessing Yes-saying.

I've become one who blesses and one who says Yes. And for that I wrestled long and was a wrestler, so that someday I would get my hands free for blessing.

And this is my blessing: to stand over every single thing as its own sky, as its round roof, its azure bell and eternal security. And blessed is whoever blesses like this!

For all things are baptized at the spring of eternity and beyond good and evil. Good and evil themselves, though, are only passing shadows and damp sorrows and passing clouds.

Truly, it's a blessing and no blasphemy when I teach: "Above all things stands the sky of chance, the sky of innocence, the sky of happenstance, the sky of high spirits."

"By happenstance": that is the world's oldest nobility. I gave it back to all things; I freed them from slavery under purpose.

I placed this freedom and sky-cheerfulness over all things like an azure bell, when I taught that above them and through them no "eternal will" wills.

I put these high spirits and this foolishness in the place of that will, when I taught: "In everything one thing is impossible: reasonableness!"

A *little* reason, to be sure, a seed of wisdom scattered from star to star: this leaven is mixed into all things. For the sake of foolishness, wisdom is mixed into all things!

A little wisdom is possible, yes. But this blissful certainty I found in all things: that they would rather *dance* on the feet of chance.

Oh sky above me, you pure one! High one! This is your purity to me: that there is no eternal spider of reason and no cobwebs of reason, that you are a dance floor to me for divine chances, that you are a gods' table to me for divine dice and dice players!

But you're blushing? Did I say the unsayable? Did I blaspheme while wanting to bless you?

Or is it the shame of being two together that made you blush? Are you telling me to go and be silent, because now the *day* is coming?

The world is deep, and deeper than day ever thought. Not everything may have words before day. But day is coming. So now we part!

Oh sky above me, you shy one! Glowing one! Oh you, my happiness before sunrise! The day is coming. So now we part!

That is what Zarathustra said.

On the Shrinking Virtue.

- ¹ When Zarathustra was back on solid land, he didn't head straight for his mountains and his cave. Instead he took many roundabout ways and asked many questions and found out this and that, so that he said of himself as a joke: "Look, a river that flows back to its source in many windings!" For he wanted to learn what had happened *to humankind* in the meantime: whether it had grown greater or smaller. And once he saw a row of new houses. He was amazed and said:

What do these houses mean? Truly, no great soul put them up as a likeness of itself!

Did some silly child take them out of a toy box? I wish another child would put them back in the box!

And these rooms and chambers: can *men* go in and out of them? They seem to me made for silk dolls, or for sweet-toothed cats who let others nibble on them too.

And Zarathustra stood still and thought. At last he said sadly: "*Everything* has become smaller! I see lower gates everywhere. Anyone of *my* kind can still get through, but has to stoop!

"Oh, when will I get back to my homeland, where I don't have to stoop anymore, don't have to stoop *before the small ones!*" And Zarathustra sighed and looked into the distance.

But on that same day he gave his speech on the shrinking virtue.

- ² I walk through these people and keep my eyes open. They don't forgive me for not being envious of their virtues.

They snap at me because I say to them: small people need small virtues. And because I find it hard to accept that small people are needed!

I'm still like a rooster in a strange farmyard, whom even the hens peck at. But I don't hold it against these hens.

I'm polite to them, as to every small annoyance. Being prickly toward what is small seems to me a wisdom for hedgehogs.

They all talk about me when they sit around the fire in the evening. They talk about me, but no one thinks of me!

This is the new quiet I have learned: their noise around me spreads a cloak over my thoughts.

They make a racket among themselves: "What does this gloomy cloud want with us? Let's make sure it doesn't bring us a plague!" And recently a woman pulled her child close when it wanted to come to me. "Take the children away!" she cried. "Eyes like those scorch children's souls."

They cough when I speak. They think a cough is an objection to strong winds. They have no idea of the roaring of my happiness!

"We don't have time for Zarathustra yet," they object. But what does a time matter that "has no time" for Zarathustra?

And when they even praise me: how could I fall asleep on *their* fame? Their praise is a belt of spikes to me: it still scratches me when I take it off.

And I learned this among them too: someone who praises pretends to be giving something back, but in truth wants to be given more!

Ask my foot whether it likes their tune of praise and temptation! Truly, to such a beat and tick-tock it wants neither to dance nor to stand still.

They would like to lure and praise me into small virtue. They would like to talk my foot into the tick-tock of small happiness.

I walk through these people and keep my eyes open: they have become *smaller* and keep getting smaller. *And their teaching about happiness and virtue is the cause.*

You see, they are modest even in virtue, because they want comfort. And only modest virtue goes together with comfort.

They too learn to stride and to stride forward, in their own way. I call that their *limping*. With it they become a stumbling block to anyone in a hurry.

And some of them walk forward while looking back, with stiff necks. I like to run right into them.

Foot and eye should not lie, nor prove each other liars. But there is a lot of lying among small people.

Some of them will things, but most are only willed. Some of them are genuine, but most are bad actors.

Among them there are actors who don't know they're acting and actors against their will. The genuine are always rare, especially the genuine actors.

There is little of the man here, so their women make themselves manly. For only someone who is man enough will *save* the *woman* in woman.

And I found this hypocrisy the worst among them: that even those who give orders fake the virtues of those who serve.

"I serve, you serve, we serve": that is how the hypocrisy of the rulers prays here too. And woe if the first master is *only* the first servant!

Ah, my eye's curiosity also flew astray into their hypocrisies, and I guessed well at all their fly-happiness and their buzzing around sunlit windowpanes.

I see as much weakness as kindness. As much weakness as justice and pity.

They are round, decent, and kind to one another, the way grains of sand are round, decent, and kind to grains of sand.

Modestly embracing a small happiness: they call that "resignation"! And all the while they modestly squint around for a new small happiness.

At bottom they simple-mindedly want one thing most: that no one hurt them.

So they get in first with everyone and are kind to them.

But that is *cowardice*, even if it is called "virtue."

And when these small people do speak roughly for once, *I* hear only their hoarseness in it. Every draft makes them hoarse, you see.

They are clever. Their virtues have clever fingers. But they lack fists. Their fingers don't know how to tuck themselves behind fists.

To them virtue is whatever makes people modest and tame. With it they turned the wolf into a dog, and humans themselves into humankind's best domestic animal.

"We put our chair in the *middle*," their smirk tells me, "and just as far from dying fighters as from contented sows."

But that is *mediocrity*, even if it is called moderation.

3 I walk through these people and let many a word fall. But they know neither how to take it nor how to keep it.

They're surprised that I didn't come to curse pleasures and vices. And truly, I didn't come to warn against pickpockets either!

They're surprised that I'm not ready to sharpen their cleverness and give it more wit and point, as if they didn't already have enough smart alecks, whose voices scratch at me like slate pencils!

And when I cry out: "Curse all the cowardly devils in you, who would like to whimper and fold their hands and worship!" then they cry: "Zarathustra is godless."

And their teachers of resignation cry it especially. But it is precisely in their ears that I like to shout: Yes! I *am* Zarathustra, the godless!

These teachers of resignation! They crawl like lice to every place that is small and sick and scabby. Only my disgust keeps me from cracking them.

Well then! This is my sermon for *their* ears: I am Zarathustra, the godless, who says: "Who is more godless than I, that I may delight in his instruction?"

I am Zarathustra, the godless. Where do I find my equals? And all those are my equals who give themselves their own will and cast off all resignation.

I am Zarathustra, the godless: I cook every chance event in *my* pot. And only when it is thoroughly cooked there do I welcome it as *my* food.

And truly, many a chance event came to me with a commanding air. But my *will* spoke to it more commandingly still, and there it lay already, on its knees, begging to find shelter and a heart with me, and coaxing me with flattery: "Look, Zarathustra, this is how one friend comes to another!"

But why am I talking, where no one has ears like *mine*! So I will shout it out into all the winds:

You keep getting smaller, you small people! You crumble away, you comfortable ones! You will yet go under,

by your many small virtues, your many small things left undone, your many small acts of resignation!

Too sparing, too yielding: that's what your soil is like! But for a tree to grow *great*, it wants to put down hard roots around hard rock!

What you leave undone also weaves at the fabric of all human future. Even your nothing is a spiderweb, and a spider that lives on the blood of the future.

And when you take, it is like stealing, you small virtuous ones. But even among rogues *honor* speaks: “You should only steal where you can’t rob.”

“It will sort itself out”: that too is a teaching of resignation. But I tell you, you comfortable ones: *it takes for itself*, and it will take more and more from you!

Oh, if only you would cast off all *half* willing and become resolute, in idleness as in action!

Oh, if only you understood my word: “Do whatever you like, by all means, but first be people who *can will*!”

“Love your neighbor as yourselves, by all means, but first be people for me who *love themselves*,

“love with the great love, love with the great contempt!” That is what Zarathustra says, the godless.

But why am I talking, where no one has ears like *mine*! Here it is still an hour too early for me.

I am my own forerunner among these people, my own rooster’s crow through dark alleys.

But *their* hour is coming! And mine is coming too! Hourly they grow smaller, poorer, more barren: poor plants! Poor soil!

And *soon* they will stand before me like dry grass and steppe, and truly, tired of themselves, and craving *fire* more than water!

Oh blessed hour of lightning! Oh secret before noon! One day I will make racing fires of them, and heralds with tongues of flame:

one day they will proclaim with tongues of flame: It is coming, it is near, *the great noon*!

That is what Zarathustra said.

On the Olive Mountain.

Winter, a bad guest, is sitting in my house. My hands are blue from the handshake of his friendship.

I honor him, this bad guest, but I like to leave him sitting alone. I like to run away from him, and if you run *well*, you do escape him!

With warm feet and warm thoughts I run to where the wind stands still, to the sunny corner of my Olive Mountain.

There I laugh at my stern guest, and I'm still fond of him because he catches the flies at home for me and quiets many small noises.

He won't stand it if a gnat wants to sing, or even two. He even makes the street so lonely that the moonlight is afraid in it at night.

He is a hard guest, but I honor him, and I don't pray, like the pampered ones, to the pot-bellied fire idol.

I'd rather chatter my teeth a little than worship idols! That's how I am. And I especially resent all the fervent, steaming, stuffy fire idols.

I love the ones I love better in winter than in summer. I mock my enemies better now, and more heartily, since winter has been sitting in my house.

Heartily, truly, even when I *crawl* into bed. There my tucked-away happiness still laughs and plays pranks. My lying dream still laughs.

Me, a crawler? I have never crawled before the powerful in my life. And if I ever lied, I lied out of love. That is why I'm cheerful even in my winter bed.

A poor bed warms me more than a rich one, for I'm jealous of my poverty. And in winter it is most faithful to me.

I begin every day with a wickedness: I mock winter with a cold bath. My stern house friend grumbles at that.

I also like to tickle him with a little wax candle, so that he will finally let the sky out for me from the ash-gray twilight.

I'm especially wicked in the morning, you see: at the early hour when the bucket clanks at the well and the horses whinny, warm, through gray streets.

Impatiently I wait then for the bright sky to finally rise for me, the snow-bearded winter sky, the old man, the white-head, the winter sky, the silent one, who often still keeps his sun secret!

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, playful things leap into being out of joy. How could they do it only once!

The long silence is also a good, playful thing, and so is looking like the winter sky out of a bright, round-eyed face, keeping one's sun secret, like him, and one's unbending sun-will. Truly, I learned this art and this winter playfulness *well*!

My favorite wickedness and art is this: that my silence has learned not to give itself away by being silent.

Rattling with words and dice, I outwit the solemn lookouts. My will and purpose shall slip away from all these stern watchers.

So that no one can look down into my depths and my last will, I invented the long bright silence for myself.

I found many a clever person who veiled their face and clouded their water, so that no one could see through and down into them.

But it was precisely to such a person that the cleverer distrusters and nutcrackers came. It was precisely from them that people fished out their most hidden fish!

No: the bright ones, the upright ones, the transparent ones are to me the cleverest at keeping silent: those whose bottom is so *deep* that even the clearest water doesn't give it away.

You snow-bearded, silent winter sky, you round-eyed white-head above me! Oh you heavenly likeness of my soul and its playfulness!

And don't I *have to* hide myself, like someone who has swallowed gold, so that no one slits my soul open?

Don't I *have to* wear stilts, so that they *overlook* my long legs, all these envy-mongers and misery-lovers around me?

These sooty, room-warm, used-up, moldy-green, grief-worn souls: how *could* their envy bear my happiness!

So I show them only the ice and the winter on my peaks, and *not* that my mountain still winds all the belts of sun around itself!

They hear only my winter storms whistling, and *not* that I also sail over warm seas, like yearning, heavy, hot south winds.

They still feel sorry for my misfortunes and accidents. But *my* word is: "Let chance come to me. It's innocent, like a little child!"

How *could* they bear my happiness if I didn't wrap my happiness in misfortunes and winter hardships and polar-bear caps and snow-sky coverings!

If I didn't myself take pity on their *pity*, the pity of these envy-mongers and misery-lovers!

If I didn't myself sigh before them and chatter with cold and patiently *let* myself be wrapped in their pity!

This is the wise playfulness and goodwill of my soul: that it *doesn't hide* its winter and its frost storms. It doesn't hide its frost sores either.

One person's solitude is the flight of the sick. Another's solitude is flight from the sick.

Let them *hear* me chatter and sigh with winter cold, all these poor, sidelong-eyed rogues around me! With such sighing and chattering I still flee from their heated rooms.

Let them pity me and sigh along with me over my frost sores: "On the ice of knowledge he will *freeze to death* on us yet!" That's how they lament.

Meanwhile I run back and forth on my Olive Mountain with warm feet. In the sunny corner of my Olive Mountain I sing, and I mock all pity.

That is what Zarathustra sang.

On Passing By.

So, walking slowly through many peoples and many kinds of cities, Zarathustra went back by roundabout ways to his mountains and his cave. And look, on the way he came unexpectedly to the city gate of the *great city*. But here a foaming fool with outspread hands sprang toward him and blocked his way. This was the very same fool whom the people called "Zarathustra's ape." For he had picked up something of the phrasing and cadence of his speech, and he also liked to borrow from the treasure of his wisdom. And the fool spoke to Zarathustra like this:

"Oh Zarathustra, here is the great city. Here you have nothing to look for and everything to lose.

"Why would you wade through this mud? Have some pity on your foot! Better to spit on the city gate and turn back!

“Here is hell for hermit thoughts: here great thoughts are boiled alive and cooked down small.

“Here all great feelings rot. Here only rattle-thin little feelings may rattle!

“Don’t you already smell the slaughterhouses and cookshops of the spirit? Doesn’t this city steam with the vapor of slaughtered spirit?

“Don’t you see the souls hanging like limp, dirty rags? And they even make newspapers out of these rags!

“Don’t you hear how spirit has turned into wordplay here? It vomits out disgusting word-slops! And they even make newspapers out of these word-slops.

“They hound one another and don’t know where to. They heat one another up and don’t know why. They clink their tin, they jingle their gold.

“They are cold and look for warmth in burnt waters. They are heated and look for 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. There is a lot of capable, salaried virtue:

“A lot of capable virtue with writing fingers and hard sitting-and-waiting flesh, blessed with little stars on the chest and with padded, rumpled daughters.

“There is also a lot of piety here, and a lot of faithful spit-licking, flattery-baking before the God of armies.

“It is ‘from above’ that the star and the gracious spit drip down. Every starless chest longs upward.

“The moon has its court, and the court has its moon-calves. And to everything that comes from the court, the beggar-people pray, and all capable beggar-virtue.

“‘I serve, you serve, we serve,’ prays all capable virtue up to the prince, that the deserved star may finally pin itself to the narrow chest!

“But the moon still revolves around everything earthly, and so the prince still revolves around the most earthly thing of all: that is the gold of the shopkeepers.

“The God of armies is not a god of gold bars. The prince thinks, but the shopkeeper steers!

“By everything that is bright and strong and good in you, Zarathustra: spit on this city of shopkeepers and turn back!

“Here all blood flows rotten and lukewarm and foamy through all veins. Spit on the great city, which is the great rubbish heap, where all the scum foams together!

“Spit on the city of caved-in souls and narrow chests, of sharp eyes, of sticky fingers,

“on the city of pushy people, of the shameless, of scribblers and screamers, of the overheated ambitious,

“where everything rotting, disreputable, lustful, gloomy, overripe, ulcerous, and conspiratorial festers together,

“spit on the great city and turn back!”

But here Zarathustra interrupted the foaming fool and held the fool’s mouth shut.

“Stop at last!” Zarathustra cried. “I’ve been disgusted by your speech and your ways for a long time!

“Why did you live by the swamp so long that you had to turn into a frog and a toad yourself?

“Doesn’t a rotten, foamy swamp-blood flow through your own veins now, so that you learned to croak and slander like this?

“Why didn’t you go into the forest? Or plow the earth? Isn’t the sea full of green islands?

“I despise your despising. And if you warned me, why didn’t you warn yourself?

“My despising and my warning bird should fly up for me out of love alone, but not out of the swamp!

“People call you my ape, you foaming fool. But I call you my grunting pig. With your grunting you will yet spoil my *praise* of foolishness for me.

“What was it that first made you grunt? That nobody *flattered* you enough. So you sat down by this filth, so that you would have reason to grunt a lot,

“so that you would have reason for much *revenge*! For revenge, you vain fool, is all your foaming. I’ve guessed you well!

“But your fool’s word does *me* harm, even where you’re right! And even if Zarathustra’s word *were* right a hundred times over, *you* would always *do* wrong with my word!”

That is what Zarathustra said; and he looked at the great city, sighed, and was silent for a long time. At last he spoke like this:

I’m disgusted by this great city too, and not only by this fool. Here and there nothing can be improved, nothing made worse.

Woe to this great city! And I wish I could already see the pillar of fire in which it will be burned!

For such pillars of fire must come before the great noon. But this has its time and its own fate.

But I give you this lesson as a farewell, you fool: where you can no longer love, you should *pass by*!

That is what Zarathustra said, and he walked past the fool and the great city.

On the Deserters.

¹ Ah, does everything already lie withered and gray that only recently stood green and colorful in this meadow? And how much honey of hope I carried from here into my beehives!

These young hearts have all grown old already,
and not even old! Just tired, common, comfortable:
they call it “we have become pious again.”

Only recently I saw them running out early in the morning on brave feet. But their feet of knowledge grew tired, and now they even slander their morning bravery!

Truly, many of them once lifted their legs like dancers, and the laughter in my wisdom beckoned to them. Then they reconsidered. Just now I saw them bent double, crawling to the cross.

They once fluttered around light and freedom like gnats and young poets. A little older, a little colder, and already they are dark ones and mumblers and stove-sitters.

Did their hearts lose courage because solitude swallowed me like a whale? Did their ears listen longingly for a long time *in vain* for me and my trumpet calls and herald's cries?

Ah! There are always only a few whose hearts have a long-lasting courage and high spirits, and in such people the spirit stays patient too. But the rest are *cowardly*.

The rest: those are always the great majority, the everyday, the surplus, the far-too-many. All of them are cowardly!

Whoever is of my kind will meet experiences of my kind on the way, so that the first companions are bound to be corpses and clowns.

But the second companions will call themselves that person's *believers*: a living swarm of much love, much folly, much beardless reverence.

Someone of my kind among humans should not bind their heart to these believers. Someone who knows the fleeting, cowardly human type should not believe in these springtimes and colorful meadows!

If they *could* do otherwise, they would also *want* otherwise. Halves and half-measures ruin everything whole. That leaves wither: what is there to complain about!

Let them drift off and fall, Zarathustra, and don't complain! Better still, blow among them with rustling winds,
blow among these leaves, Zarathustra, so that everything *withered* runs away from you even faster!

² "We have become pious again," these deserters confess. And some of them are still too cowardly to confess it.

I look those in the eye. I say it to their faces and to the red of their cheeks: you are people who *pray* again!

But praying is a disgrace! Not for everyone, but for you and me and whoever keeps their conscience in their head too. For *you* praying is a disgrace!

You know it well: your cowardly devil inside you, who would like to fold hands and put hands in the lap and have things comfortable, this cowardly devil talks you into it, saying "There *is* a God!"

But with that you belong to the light-shy kind, to whom light never gives rest.
Now you have to stick your head deeper into night and haze every day!

And truly, you chose the hour well: for just now the night birds are flying out again. The hour has come for all the light-shy people, the evening and holiday hour, when they don't "take a holiday."

I hear and smell it: their hour has come for a hunt and a procession. Not a wild hunt, to be sure, but a tame, lame, sniffing hunt of tiptoes and whisper-prayers,

a hunt for soulful cringing mice: all the heart-mousetraps are set again now!
And wherever I lift a curtain, a little moth comes tumbling out.

Was it perhaps crouching there together with another little moth? For everywhere I smell small hidden congregations. And wherever there are little chambers, there are new prayer-brothers inside, and the fumes of prayer-brothers.

They sit together through long evenings and say: "Let us become like little children again and say 'dear God!'" Their mouths and stomachs ruined by the pious confectioners.

Or they watch for long evenings a crafty, lurking cross spider, who preaches cleverness to the spiders themselves and teaches: "Spinning is good under crosses!"

Or they sit by swamps all day with fishing rods and believe themselves *deep* for it. But someone who fishes where there are no fish, I don't even call shallow!

Or they learn to play the harp, piously and cheerfully, from a song poet who would like to harp his way into the hearts of young females, because he grew tired of old females and their praising.

Or they learn to shudder from a learned half-madman who waits in dark rooms for the spirits to come to him, and the spirit goes running off altogether!

Or they listen to an old, restless drone-and-growl piper, who learned the sorrow of tones from gloomy winds. Now he pipes after the wind and preaches sorrow in gloomy tones.

And some of them have even become night watchmen. They now know how to blow horns and go about at night and wake up old things that fell asleep long ago.

Last night at the garden wall I heard five remarks about old things. They came from such old, sad, dried-up night watchmen.

“For a father he doesn’t care enough about his children. Human fathers do that better!”

“He is too old! He no longer cares about his children at all,” the other night watchman answered.

“Does he *have* children at all? No one can prove it if he doesn’t prove it himself! I’ve wanted him to prove it thoroughly for a long time.”

“Prove it? As if *that* one had ever proved anything! Proving is hard for him. He sets great store on being *believed*.”

“Yes, yes! Faith saves him, faith in him. That is how old people are! It’s the same with us!”

So the two old night watchmen and light-scarers spoke to each other, and then they tooted sadly on their horns. That is what happened last night at the garden wall.

But my heart twisted with laughter and wanted to burst, and didn’t know where to go, and sank into my diaphragm.

Truly, this will yet be my death: that I choke with laughter when I see donkeys drunk and hear night watchmen doubt God like this.

Isn’t it *long* over, even for all such doubts? Who may still wake such old, sleeping, light-shy things!

The old gods came to their end long ago. And truly, they had a good, cheerful gods’ end!

They didn’t “twilight” themselves to death. People lie about that! Rather, they once *laughed* themselves to death!

That happened when the most godless word came out of a god himself, the word: “There is One God! You shall have no other god beside me!”

An old grim-beard of a god, a jealous one, forgot himself like that:

And all the gods laughed then and rocked on their chairs and cried: “Isn’t this precisely divinity, that there are gods but no God?”

Whoever has ears should listen.

That is how Zarathustra spoke in the city he loved, the city called “the Colorful Cow.” For from here he had only two more days to walk before he came back to his cave and his animals. But his soul kept rejoicing at the nearness of his homecoming.

The Homecoming.

Oh solitude! You, my *home*, solitude! I lived too long wild in a wild foreign land not to come home to you in tears!

Now go ahead and wag a finger at me, the way mothers do. Now smile at me, the way mothers smile. Now just say: “And who was it that tore away from me like a storm wind?—

—who cried out as he left: I sat too long with solitude, and I forgot how to be silent! *That*: have you learned it now?

“Oh Zarathustra, I know everything. I know that among the many you were *more abandoned*, you one man, than you ever were with me!

“Being abandoned is one thing, solitude is another. *That* you have learned now! And you have learned that among people you will always be wild and strange:

—wild and strange even when they love you. For above all else they want to be *spared*!

“But here you are at home with yourself. Here you can say everything out loud and pour out all your reasons. Nothing here is ashamed of hidden, hardened feelings.

“Here all things come to your speech with caresses and flatter you, because they want to ride on your back. Here you ride on every metaphor to every truth.

“You may speak upright and honest to all things here. And truly, it sounds like praise in their ears when someone talks to all things—straight!

“But being abandoned is something else. For do you remember, Oh Zarathustra? Back then your bird cried out over you, when you stood in the forest, undecided where to go, not knowing the way, near a corpse:—

—when you said: Let my animals lead me! I found it more dangerous among people than among animals. That was abandonment!

“And do you remember, Oh Zarathustra? When you sat on your island, a well of wine among empty buckets, giving and giving out, pouring and pouring out among the thirsty:

“—until at last you sat thirsty and alone among the drunk, and complained in the night: ‘Isn’t taking more blessed than giving? And stealing more blessed still than taking?’ *That* was abandonment!

“And do you remember, Oh Zarathustra? When your quietest hour came and drove you away from yourself, when it spoke with an evil whisper: ‘Speak and break!’—

“—when it made you sorry for all your waiting and silence, and discouraged your humble courage: that was abandonment!”—

Oh solitude! You, my home, solitude! How blissfully and tenderly your voice speaks to me!

We don’t question each other, we don’t complain to each other. We walk openly with each other through open doors.

For it is open with you, and bright. Even the hours run on lighter feet here. In the dark, you see, people carry time more heavily than in the light.

Here the words of all being, and the shrines of words, spring open for me. All being wants to become word here. All becoming wants to learn from me how to speak.

But down there, all talk is for nothing! There, forgetting and walking past is the best wisdom. *That* I have learned now!

Whoever wanted to grasp everything about people would have to lay hands on everything. But my hands are too clean for that.

I can’t even stand to breathe in their breath. Ah, that I lived so long among their noise and their foul breath!

Oh blissful stillness around me! Oh pure scents around me! Oh, how this stillness draws pure breath from a deep chest! Oh, how it listens, this blissful stillness!

But down there everything talks, and everything goes unheard. You can ring in your wisdom with bells, and the shopkeepers in the marketplace will out-jingle it with pennies!

Everything with them talks, and no one knows how to understand any more.
Everything falls into the water. Nothing falls into deep wells any more.

Everything with them talks, and nothing turns out well any more or comes to an end. Everything cackles, but who still wants to sit quietly on the nest and hatch eggs?

Everything with them talks, and everything gets talked to pieces. What was still too hard yesterday for time itself and its tooth hangs today scraped and gnawed from the mouths of today's people.

Everything with them talks, and everything gets betrayed. What was once called a secret, the hidden privacy of deep souls, belongs today to the street trumpeters and other butterflies.

Oh humankind, you strange thing! You noise on 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 humankind wants to be spared and tolerated.

With withheld truths, with a fool's hand and a besotted heart, and rich in the small lies of pity:—that is how I always lived among people.

I sat among them in disguise, ready to *misjudge myself* so that I could bear *them*, and gladly telling myself: "You fool, you don't know people!"

You unlearn people when you live among people. There is too much foreground in all people, and what use are far-sighted, far-craving eyes *there*!

And when they misjudged me, I, the fool, spared them more for it than I spared myself. I was used to being hard on myself, and often I still took revenge on myself for this sparing.

Stung by poisonous flies and hollowed out like a stone by many drops of malice, I sat among them and still talked myself into it: "Everything small is innocent in its smallness!"

Especially those who call themselves "the good" I found to be the most poisonous flies. They sting in all innocence, they lie in all innocence. How *could* they be just to me!

Whoever lives among the good, pity teaches to lie. Pity makes stuffy air for all free souls. The stupidity of the good, you see, is unfathomable.

To hide myself and my riches: *that* I learned down there. For I found everyone still poor in spirit. That was the lie of my pity, that with everyone I knew, —that I saw in everyone, and smelled on them, how much spirit was *enough* for them and how much was already *too much*!

Their stiff wise men: I called them wise, not stiff. That is how I learned to swallow words. Their gravediggers: I called them researchers and examiners. That is how I learned to swap words.

Gravediggers dig diseases onto themselves. Under old rubble lie foul vapors. You shouldn't stir up the swamp. You should live on mountains.

With blissful nostrils I breathe mountain freedom again! My nose is freed at last from the smell of all humankind!

Tickled by sharp air, as by foaming wines, my soul *sneezes*, sneezes and cheers itself: Health!

That is what Zarathustra said.

On the Three Evils.

¹ In a dream, in my last morning dream, I stood today on a headland, beyond the world, held a pair of scales and *weighed* the world.

Oh, that the dawn came too early for me! She glowed me awake, the jealous one! She is always jealous of the glows of my morning dreams.

Measurable for anyone who has time, weighable for a good weigher, reachable by flight for strong wings, guessable for divine nutcrackers: that is how my dream found the world:—

My dream, a bold sailor, half ship, half gale, silent like butterflies, impatient like noble falcons: how patient it was today, and how much time it had, for weighing the world!

Did my wisdom perhaps whisper to it, my laughing, wide-awake daytime wisdom, which mocks all “infinite worlds”? For it says: “Where there is strength, *number* becomes master too: number has more strength.”

How securely my dream looked at this finite world, not curious, not craving the old, not fearing, not begging:—

—as if a full apple offered itself to my hand, a ripe golden apple with cool, soft, velvety skin: that is how the world offered itself to me:—

—as if a tree beckoned to me, a broad-branched, strong-willed one, bent into a backrest and even a footrest for the road-weary: that is how the world stood on my headland:—

—as if dainty hands carried a shrine toward me, a shrine open for the delight of shy, reverent eyes: that is how the world came toward me today:—

—not riddle enough to scare human love away, not solution enough to put human wisdom to sleep: a humanly good thing the world was to me today, this world that people speak such evil of!

How I thank my morning dream that I weighed the world like this today in the early hours! It came to me as a humanly good thing, this dream and comforter of the heart!

And so that I do the same by day, and learn and copy its best from it, I will now put the three most evil things on the scales and weigh them in a humanly good way.—

Whoever taught blessing also taught cursing. Which are the three most cursed things in the world? These I will put on the scales.

Lust, craving to rule, selfishness: these three have been cursed best until now and given the worst names and the most lies. These three I will weigh in a humanly good way.

Well then! Here is my headland and there is the sea. *That* rolls toward me, shaggy and fawning, the faithful old hundred-headed dog-monster that I love.

Well then! Here I will hold the scales over the rolling sea. And I choose a witness too, to watch: you, hermit tree, you strong-scented, broad-vaulted one, that I love!—

Over what bridge does the Now go to the Someday? Under what compulsion does the high compel itself down to the low? And what does even the highest still mean: growing upward?—

Now the scales stand even and still. I threw three heavy questions in, and the other pan carries three heavy answers.

² Lust: for all hair-shirted despisers of the body, its sting and stake, and cursed as “the world” by all otherworld believers, because it mocks and fools all teachers of confusion and error.

Lust: for the rabble, the slow fire on which they are burned. For all wormy wood and all stinking rags, the ready furnace of heat and seething.

Lust: for free hearts, innocent and free, the garden-happiness of the earth, the overflowing thanks of all the future to the Now.

Lust: only to the withered a sweetish poison, but for those with a lion’s will the great strengthening of the heart, and the wine of wines, reverently saved.

Lust: the great happiness of metaphor for a higher happiness and the highest hope. For to many things marriage is promised, and more than marriage, —to many things that are more foreign to themselves than man and woman. And who has fully grasped *how foreign* man and woman are to each other!

Lust: but I want fences around my thoughts, and around my words too, so that pigs and fanatics don’t break into my gardens!—

Craving to rule: the glowing scourge of the hardest of hard hearts. The grim torment that saves itself up for the cruelest man himself. The dark flame of living pyres.

Craving to rule: the spiteful gadfly set on the vainest peoples. The mocker of all uncertain virtue. It rides on every horse and every pride.

Craving to rule: the earthquake that breaks and breaks open everything rotten and hollow. The rolling, rumbling, punishing smasher of whitewashed graves. The flashing question mark beside premature answers.

Craving to rule: before whose gaze man crawls and cowers and slaves and becomes lower than snake and pig,—until at last the great contempt cries out of him,

Craving to rule: the terrible teacher of the great contempt, who preaches to cities and empires in their faces, “Away with you!”—until it cries out of them themselves, “Away with *me!*”

Craving to rule: but it also climbs, tempting, up to the pure and the solitary and the self-sufficient heights, glowing like a love that paints purple blisses on the skies of earth.

Craving to rule: but who would call it *craving* when the high longs to go down for power! Truly, there is nothing sick or craving in such longing and descending!

That the lonely height may not isolate itself forever and be content with itself. That the mountain may come to the valley, and the winds of the heights to the lowlands:—

Oh, who could find the right name, for baptism and for virtue, for such a longing! “Giving virtue”: that is how Zarathustra once named the unnameable.

And it was then too that this happened,—and truly, it happened for the first time!—that his word praised *selfishness* as blessed, the whole, healthy selfishness that wells up from a mighty soul:—

—from a mighty soul, to which the high body belongs, the beautiful, victorious, refreshing body, around which every thing becomes a mirror:

—the supple, persuasive body, the dancer, whose image and summary 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 the names of its happiness it banishes everything contemptible from itself.

It banishes everything cowardly from itself. It says: Bad—*that is* cowardly! The ever-worried, the sighing, the pitiful seem contemptible to it, and so does anyone who picks up even the smallest advantages.

It also despises all woeful wisdom. For truly, there is also wisdom that blooms in the dark, a nightshade wisdom, which always sighs: “Everything is vain!”

Shy mistrust counts for little to it, and so does everyone who wants oaths instead of looks and hands. All too-mistrustful wisdom counts for little as well, for that is the way of cowardly souls.

It counts even less the quick-to-please, the doglike one who lies down on his back right away, the humble. And there is also wisdom that is humble and dog-like and pious and quick to please.

Hateful to it and disgusting is anyone who never wants to defend himself, who swallows poisonous spit and evil looks, the too patient, the all-endurer, the all-contented. That, you see, is the servile kind.

Whether someone is servile before gods and divine kicks, or before people and dim human opinions: this blissful selfishness spits on *every* servile kind!

Bad: that is what it calls everything bent and stingily servile, unfree blinking eyes, oppressed hearts, and that false, yielding kind that kisses with wide, cowardly lips.

And sham wisdom: that is what it calls everything that slaves and old men and tired people joke about, and especially the whole bad, mad, over-clever priestly folly!

But the sham-wise, all the priests, the world-weary, and anyone whose soul is of the womanly and servile kind,—oh, how their game has always treated selfishness badly!

And this exactly was supposed to be virtue and be called virtue, *that* one treats selfishness badly! And “selfless”—that is how all these world-weary cowards and cross spiders rightly wished themselves to be!

But for all of them the day is now coming, the transformation, the executioner’s sword, *the great noon*. Much shall be revealed then!

And whoever calls the I whole and holy and selfishness blessed, truly, speaks also what he knows, a prophet: “*Look, it is coming, it is near, the great noon!*”

That is what Zarathustra said.

On the Spirit of Gravity.

¹ My mouth is the people’s. I speak too roughly and warmly for the silk bunnies. And my word sounds even stranger to all ink-fish and pen-foxes.

My hand is a fool’s hand. Woe to all tables and walls, and anything that still has room for fool’s decoration, fool’s scrawl!

My foot is a horse’s foot. With it I clatter and trot over stick and stone, across the fields every which way, and I’m wild as the devil with delight in all fast running.

My stomach: is it an eagle's stomach, perhaps? For what it likes best is lamb. But certainly it is a bird's stomach.

Fed on innocent things and on little, ready and impatient to fly, to fly away: that is my way now. How could there not be something bird-like in that!

And above all, that I am an enemy of the spirit of gravity: that is bird-like. And truly, a mortal enemy, an arch enemy, a first enemy! Oh, where has my enmity not flown and flown astray already!

I could sing a song about that already, and I *will* sing it, even though I'm alone in an empty house and have to sing it to my own ears.

There are other singers, of course, whose throats only get soft from a full house, whose hands get talkative, whose eyes get expressive, whose hearts wake up. I'm not like them.—

- ² Whoever teaches people to fly someday will have moved all the boundary stones. All the boundary stones themselves will fly up into the air for him. He will christen the earth anew: “the Light One.”

The ostrich runs faster than the fastest horse, but even it still sticks its head heavily into heavy earth. That is how the man is who can't fly yet.

Earth and life are called heavy by him. And so the spirit of gravity *wants* it! But whoever wants to become light and a bird must love himself. That is what I teach.

Not with the love of the sick and the craving, of course, for with them even self-love stinks!

You must learn to love yourself, that is what I teach, with a whole and healthy love, so that you can stand being with yourself and don't wander around.

Such wandering around baptizes itself “love of neighbor.” With this word people have lied and pretended best so far, and especially those who were a burden to the whole world.

And truly, this is no commandment for today and tomorrow, to *learn* to love yourself. It is rather, of all the arts, the finest, the trickiest, the last, and the most patient.

For to its owner everything that is his own is well hidden. And of all treasure pits, your own is dug up last. That is how the spirit of gravity arranges it.

Almost in the cradle we are given heavy words and values to take along: “good” and “evil,” that is what this dowry is called. Because of it we are forgiven for living.

And besides, people let the little children come to them, so that they can keep them in good time from loving themselves. That is how the spirit of gravity arranges it.

And we, we faithfully drag along what people give us, on hard shoulders and over rough mountains! And when we sweat, they tell us: “Yes, life is hard to carry!”

But it is only man who is hard to carry for himself! The reason is that he drags too much that is foreign on his shoulders. Like the camel he kneels down and lets himself be loaded up well.

Especially the strong man who can bear a lot, in whom reverence lives: he loads too many *foreign* heavy words and values on himself, and now life seems like a desert to him!

And truly! Much that is one’s *own* is hard to carry too! And much of what is inside a person is like the oyster, that is, disgusting and slippery and hard to grasp,

—so that a noble shell with noble decoration has to plead for it. But this art too must be learned: to *have* a shell and a fair appearance and clever blindness!

Again, many things about people are deceptive, because many a shell is paltry and sad and too much merely shell. Much hidden goodness and strength is never guessed. The most delicious tidbits find no tasters!

Women know that, the choicest ones: a little fatter, a little leaner. Oh, how much fate lies in so little!

Man is hard to discover, and hardest of all for himself. Often the spirit lies about the soul. That is how the spirit of gravity arranges it.

But he has discovered himself who says: This is *my* good and evil. With that he has silenced the mole and the dwarf who say “Good for all, evil for all.”

Truly, I don't like those either for whom every thing is good, and this world even the best. Those I call the all-contented.

All-contentedness, which knows how to taste everything: that is not the best taste! I honor the stubborn, picky tongues and stomachs that learned to say "I" and "Yes" and "No."

But to chew and digest everything: that is truly the pig's way! Always saying Hee-haw: only the donkey learned that, and whoever has his spirit!—

The deep yellow and the hot red: that is what *my* taste wants. It mixes blood into all colors. But whoever whitewashes his house shows me a whitewashed soul.

Some are in love with mummies, others with ghosts. And both are equally enemies of all flesh and blood. Oh, how both go against my taste! For I love blood. And I don't want to live and linger where everybody spits and spews. That is *my* taste now: I would rather live among thieves and perjurers. Nobody carries gold in the mouth.

But more repulsive still to me are all the spit-lickers. And the most repulsive beast of a man that I found, I baptized parasite: it wouldn't love and yet wanted to live from love.

I call wretched all who have only one choice: to become evil animals or evil animal-tamers. With such people I would build myself no huts.

I also call wretched those who always have to *wait*. They go against my taste: all the toll collectors and shopkeepers and kings and other keepers of lands and keepers of shops.

Truly, I learned waiting too, and thoroughly, but only waiting for *myself*. And above all I learned to stand and walk and run and jump and climb and dance.

But this is my teaching: whoever wants to learn to fly someday must first learn to stand and walk and run and climb and dance. You can't fly your way to flying!

With rope ladders I learned to climb up to many a window. On nimble legs I climbed high masts. To sit on the high masts of knowledge seemed to me no small bliss,

—to flicker like small flames on high masts: a small light, to be sure, but still a great comfort for storm-driven sailors and the shipwrecked!

I came to my truth by many ways and means. I did not climb on one ladder to the height from which my eye roams into my distance.

And I always asked about ways only reluctantly. That always went against my taste! I preferred to ask and try the ways themselves.

All my walking was a trying and asking. And truly, one must also *learn* to answer such asking! But this is my taste:

—not good, not bad, but *my* taste, of which I have neither shame nor secret any more.

“This is *my* way now. Where is yours?” That is how I answered those who asked me “for the way.” For *the* way, you see, does not exist!

That is what Zarathustra said.

Old Tablets and New Ones.

- ¹ Here I sit and wait. Old broken tablets are around me, and new tablets too, only half written on. When will my hour come?

—the hour of my going down, my going under: for I want to go to people one more time.

That is what I’m waiting for now. First the signs must come to me that it is *my* hour, namely the laughing lion with the flock of doves.

Meanwhile I talk to myself, like someone who has time. Nobody tells me anything new, so I tell myself about myself.

- ² When I came to people, I found them sitting on an old conceit. They had all imagined for a long time that they knew what is good and evil for a human being.

All talk about virtue seemed to them an old, tired business. And anyone who wanted to sleep well still spoke of “good” and “evil” before going to bed.

I shook up this sleepiness when I taught: what is good and evil, *nobody knows yet*, except the creator!

—And the creator is the one who makes the goal of humanity, and gives the earth its meaning and its future. Only this one *creates* the fact *that* anything is good and evil.

And I told them to overturn their old lecture chairs, and every place where that old conceit had sat. I told them to laugh at their great masters of virtue, and their saints and poets and world-redeemers.

I told them to laugh at their gloomy sages, and at anyone who had ever sat in the tree of life as a black scarecrow, giving warnings.

I sat down beside their great road of graves, even among the carrion and the vultures, and I laughed at their whole past and its crumbling, decaying glory.

Truly, like preachers of repentance and like fools, I screamed anger and alarm over everything they had, great and small. Their best is so very small! Their worst is so very small! That is how I laughed.

My wise longing cried and laughed out of me like that. It was born on the mountains, a wild wisdom, truly! My great longing with its roaring wings.

And often it tore me away, upward and off, right in the middle of laughing. Then I flew, shuddering, like an arrow, through sun-drunk delight:

—out into distant futures that no dream has yet seen, into hotter souths than any sculptor ever dreamed of: to the place where gods, dancing, are ashamed of every piece of clothing.

—That is to say, I speak in parables, and I limp and stammer like the poets. And truly, I am ashamed that I still have to be a poet!

Where all becoming seemed to me a dance of gods and a mischief of gods, and the world loose and unleashed and fleeing back to itself:

—like an eternal fleeing from each other and seeking each other again among many gods, like the blissful contradicting each other, hearing each other again, belonging to each other again among many gods:

Where all time seemed to me a blissful mockery of moments, where necessity was freedom itself, which played blissfully with the sting of freedom:

Where I also found again my old devil and archenemy, the spirit of gravity, and everything he made: compulsion, rule, need, consequence, purpose, will, good and evil.

For must there not be something to dance over, to dance away across? Must there not be moles and heavy dwarfs, for the sake of the light ones, the lightest ones?

- 3 That was also where I picked up the word “overhuman” from the road, and the thought that the human being is something that must be overcome, —that the human being is a bridge and not a goal: calling itself blessed for its noon and its evening, as a road to new dawns:

—Zarathustra’s word about the great noon, and whatever else I hung above humanity, like second purple sunsets.

Truly, I also let them see new stars along with new nights. And over clouds and day and night I stretched laughter out like a colorful tent.

I taught them all of *my* poetry and striving: to compose into one and carry together what is fragment in the human being, and riddle, and dreadful accident.

—As a poet, a reader of riddles and a redeemer of accident, I taught them to work on the future by creating, and to redeem, by creating, everything that *was*. To redeem what is past in the human being, and to remake every “It was,” until the will says: “But I wanted it that way! I will want it that way.”

—This is what I called redemption for them. Only this did I teach them to call redemption.

Now I wait for *my* redemption, so that I may go to them for the last time.

For I want to go to people once more. *Among* them I want to go under. Dying, I want to give them my richest gift!

I learned this from the sun, when it goes down, the overrich one: then it pours gold into the sea out of inexhaustible wealth,

—so that even the poorest fisherman rows with a *golden* oar! I saw this once, and I did not stop crying as I watched.

Like the sun, Zarathustra too wants to go under. Now he sits here and waits, with old broken tablets around him, and new tablets too, half written on.

- 4 Look, here is a new tablet. But where are my brothers, who will carry it with me down into the valley and into hearts of flesh?

So my great love for the farthest ones demands: *do not spare your neighbor!* The human being is something that must be overcome.

There are many roads and ways of overcoming: *you* see to that! But only a clown thinks: “The human being can also be *jumped over*.”

Overcome yourself even in your neighbor. And a right that you can seize, you should not let anyone give you!

What you do, no one can do back to you. Look, there is no repayment.

Whoever can’t command themselves should obey. And many a person *can* command themselves, but still lacks a great deal before they also obey themselves!

- ⁵ That is how noble souls are: they want to have nothing *for free*, least of all life. Whoever belongs to the rabble wants to live for free. But we others, to whom life has given itself, are always thinking about *what* is the best thing to give *in return*!

And truly, this is a noble saying: “What life promises *us*, *we* want to keep, for life!”

One should not want to enjoy where there is nothing given to enjoy. And one should not *want* to enjoy at all!

Pleasure and innocence are the shyest things there are: neither wants to be sought. One should *have* them, but one should rather *seek* guilt and pain!

- ⁶ Oh my brothers, whoever is a firstborn is always sacrificed. And we are the first-born now.

We all bleed at secret sacrificial tables. We all burn and roast in honor of old idols.

Our best is still young, and that tempts old palates. Our flesh is tender, and our skin is only a lamb’s skin. How could we not tempt old idol priests!

He still lives *in ourselves*, the old idol priest, who roasts our best for his feast.

Ah, my brothers, how could the firstborn not be sacrifices!

But that is how our nature wants it. And I love those who do not want to protect themselves. I love those who go under with all my love, for they are going across.

7 Being truthful: few people *can* do that! And whoever can, doesn't want to yet!
But the good can do it least of all.

Oh, these good ones! *Good people never tell the truth.* For the spirit, being good in this way is a sickness.

They give in, these good ones. They surrender. Their heart repeats what it hears, their depths obey. But whoever obeys *does not hear themselves!*

Everything the good call evil must come together before one truth can be born.

Oh my brothers, are you evil enough for *this* truth?

The daring venture, the long mistrust, the cruel No, the weariness, the cutting into what is alive: how seldom *that* comes together! But from such seed truth is begotten!

All *knowledge* has grown up *next to* the bad conscience until now! Break, break the old tablets for me, you who seek knowledge!

8 When the water has beams across it, when footbridges and railings leap over the river: truly, no one will believe the person who says, "Everything is in flux."

Instead the dolts themselves contradict that person. "What?" say the dolts. "Everything is in flux? But the beams and railings are *over* the river!" "*Over* the river everything is firm: all the values of things, the bridges, the concepts, all 'good' and 'evil.' All of that is *firm!*"

And when the hard winter comes, the tamer of the river, then even the cleverest learn mistrust. And truly, not only the dolts then say: "Shouldn't everything *stand still?*"

"Basically everything stands still." That is a proper winter teaching, a good thing for barren times, a good comfort for hibernators and people who sit by the stove.

"Basically everything stands still": but the thaw wind preaches *against* that!

The thaw wind, a bull, but no plowing bull. A raging bull, a destroyer, who breaks ice with angry horns! And ice *breaks footbridges!*

Oh my brothers, *now* isn't everything *in flux?* Haven't all railings and footbridges fallen into the water? Who would *still hold on* to "good" and "evil"?

“Woe to us! Salvation for us! The thaw wind is blowing!” Preach it to me like that, oh my brothers, through all the streets!

- 9 There is an old delusion called good and evil. Until now the wheel of this delusion has turned around fortune-tellers and astrologers.

Once people *believed* in fortune-tellers and astrologers, and *so* they believed: “Everything is fate. You should, because you must!” Then again they mistrusted all fortune-tellers and astrologers, and *so* they believed: “Everything is freedom. You can, because you will!”

Oh my brothers, about the stars and the future there has only been presuming until now, never knowing. And *so* about good and evil there has only been presuming until now, never knowing!

- 10 “You shall not rob! You shall not kill!” Such words were once called holy. People bent their knees and heads before them and took off their shoes.

But I ask you: where in the world have there ever been better robbers and killers than such holy words were?

Isn’t there robbing and killing in all of life itself? And because such words were called holy, wasn’t *truth* itself killed by that?

Or was it a sermon of death, that what contradicted and advised against all of life was called holy? Oh my brothers, break, break the old tablets for me!

- 11 This is my pity for everything past, that I see it is abandoned,
—abandoned to the mercy, the spirit, the madness of every generation that comes and reinterprets everything that was as its bridge!

A great tyrant could come, a cunning monster, who with his favor and disfavor would force and squeeze everything past, until it became a bridge for him, and a sign, and a herald, and a rooster’s crow.

But this is the other danger and my other pity: whoever belongs to the rabble, their memory goes back as far as the grandfather. And with the grandfather, time ends.

So everything past is abandoned. For it could happen one day that the rabble became master and drowned all time in shallow waters.

That is why, oh my brothers, a *new nobility* is needed, one that is the enemy of all rabble and all violent rule, and that writes the word “noble” anew on new tablets.

Many noble people are needed, and many kinds of noble people, *so that there is nobility!* Or, as I once said in a parable: “That is exactly what divinity is: that there are gods, but no God!”

- 12 Oh my brothers, I consecrate you and lead you to a new nobility. You shall become begetters and breeders for me, and sowers of the future, —truly, not a nobility that you could buy like shopkeepers, with shopkeepers’ gold. For everything that has its price is worth little.

From now on, your honor should not be where you come from, but where you are going! Your will and your foot, which wants to go beyond yourselves: let that be your new honor!

Truly, not that you served a prince (what do princes matter now!), or that you became a bulwark for whatever stands, to make it stand firmer!

Not that your family became courtly at courts, and that you learned, colorful like a flamingo, to stand for long hours in shallow ponds.

—For *being able* to stand counts as a merit among courtiers. And all courtiers believe that bliss after death includes being *allowed* to sit!

Nor that a spirit they call holy led your ancestors into promised lands, which 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 his knights, on such campaigns goats and geese and cross-headed cranks always ran *in front!*

Oh my brothers, your nobility should not look back, but *outward!* You should be driven out of all fatherlands and forefathers’ lands!

You should love the *land of your children*. Let this love be your new nobility: the undiscovered land in the farthest sea! I tell your sails to search for it, and search!

In your children you should *make up for* being the children of your fathers. *This* is how you should redeem everything past! I set this new tablet above you!

- 13 “What is living for? Everything is vain! Living is threshing straw; living is burning yourself and still not getting warm.”

Such ancient-sounding chatter still passes as “wisdom.” But because it is old and smells musty, *for that reason* it is honored more. Even mold makes noble.

Children were allowed to talk like that: they *shy away* from fire, because it burned them! There is a lot of childishness in the old books of wisdom.

And whoever is always “threshing straw,” how could they be allowed to slander threshing! One ought to muzzle such a fool!

Such people sit down at the table and bring nothing with them, not even a good hunger. And now they slander: “Everything is vain!”

But eating and drinking well, oh my brothers, is truly no vain art! Break, break the tablets of the never-joyful for me!

- 14 “To the pure, everything is pure.” So say the people. But I tell you: to the swine, everything turns to swine!

That is why the fanatics and head-hangers, whose hearts hang down too, preach: “The world itself is a filthy monster.” For all of these have an unclean spirit. But especially those do who have neither rest nor peace unless they see the world *from behind*, the backworlders!

I say it *to them*, right to their faces, even if it doesn’t sound lovely: the world is like the human being in that it has a behind. *That much* is true!

There is a lot of dung in the world: *that much* is true! But that does not make the world itself a filthy monster!

There is wisdom in the fact that many things in the world smell bad. Disgust itself creates wings and powers that sense springs!

Even in the best there is still something to be disgusted by. And the best is still something that must be overcome!

Oh my brothers, there is a lot of wisdom in the fact that there is a lot of dung in the world!

- 15 I heard pious backworlders speak such sayings to their conscience. And truly, they spoke without malice or deceit, although there is nothing more deceitful in the world, and nothing more wicked.

“Let the world be the world! Don’t lift even a finger against it!”

“Let anyone who wants to strangle and stab and cut and scrape people do it. Don’t lift even a finger against it! That will teach them to renounce the world.”

“And your own reason: you should throttle and choke it yourself. For it is a reason of this world, and by that you will learn to renounce the world yourself.”

—Break, break these old tablets of the pious for me, oh my brothers! Tear apart with your words the sayings of the world-slanderers!

16 “Whoever learns a lot unlearns every violent craving.” That is what people whisper to each other today in all the dark alleys.

“Wisdom makes you tired. Nothing is worth it. You shall not crave!” I found this new tablet hanging even in open marketplaces.

Break this *new* tablet for me too, oh my brothers, break it! The world-weary hung it up, and the preachers of death, and the jailers too. For look, it is also a sermon for slavery!

They learned badly, and not the best things, and everything too early and everything too fast. They *ate* badly. That is where their spoiled stomach came from, —for their spirit is a spoiled stomach. It advises death! For truly, my brothers, the spirit *is* a stomach!

Life is a well of pleasure. But for the one out of whom the spoiled stomach speaks, the father of gloom, all springs are poisoned.

Knowing: that is *pleasure* for those with a lion’s will! But whoever has grown tired is only “willed” themselves, and all the waves play with them.

And that is always the way of weak people: they lose themselves on their paths. And in the end their weariness even asks: “Why did we ever go on paths at all! It’s all the same!”

It sounds sweet in *their* ears when it is preached: “Nothing is worth it! You shall not will!” But this is a sermon for slavery.

Oh my brothers, Zarathustra comes like a fresh, roaring wind to all the way-weary. He will make many noses sneeze yet!

My free breath blows even through walls, and into prisons and captured spirits!

Willing frees, for willing is creating. That is what I teach. And you should learn *only* for the sake of creating!

And even the learning you must first *learn* from me, the learning well!
Whoever has ears, let them hear!

- 17 There stands the boat. Over there it perhaps leads into the great Nothing. But who wants to climb into this “perhaps”?

None of you wants to climb into the boat of death! How can you claim to be *world-weary*, then!

World-weary! And you haven’t even been carried away from the earth! I always found you still lusting after the earth, still in love with your own weariness of the earth!

Not for nothing does your lip hang down. A small earthly wish still sits on it! And in your eye, doesn’t a little cloud of unforgotten earthly pleasure float there?

On earth there are many good inventions, some useful, others pleasant. For their sake the earth is to be loved.

And there are so many things so well invented that they are like a woman’s breast: useful and pleasant at once.

But you world-weary ones! You earth-lazy ones! You should be whipped with switches! Whipping with switches should give you lively legs again.

For if you are not sick and worn-out wretches that the earth is tired of, then you are sly sloths or sweet-toothed pleasure-cats that have crept into hiding. And if you don’t want to *run* about merrily again, then you should depart!

One should not want to be the doctor of the incurable. So Zarathustra teaches: so you should depart!

But it takes more *courage* to make an ending than a new verse. All doctors and poets know that.

- 18 Oh my brothers, there are tablets that weariness made, and tablets that laziness made, the rotten kind. Although they speak alike, they want to be heard differently.

Look at this one here, wasting away! He is only a span from his goal, but out of weariness he has lain down here in the dust, stubborn: this brave one!

Out of weariness he yawns at the road and the earth and the goal and himself.

He doesn't want to take another step: this brave one!

Now the sun glows down on him, and the dogs lick at his sweat. But he lies there in his stubbornness and would rather waste away,

—waste away a span from his goal! Truly, you will have to pull him by the hair into his heaven: this hero!

Better still, leave him lying where he lay down, so that sleep may come to him, the comforter, with cooling, rustling rain.

Leave him lying until he wakes by himself, until he takes back all weariness by himself, and what weariness taught through him!

Only, my brothers, drive the dogs away from him, the lazy sneaks, and all the swarming vermin,

—all the swarming vermin of the “educated,” who make themselves comfortable on the sweat of every hero!

¹⁹ I draw circles around me and holy boundaries. Fewer and fewer climb with me up higher and higher mountains. I am building a mountain range out of ever holier mountains.

But wherever you may climb with me, oh my brothers: make sure that no *parasite* climbs with you!

A parasite is a worm, a creeping, clinging one, that wants to get fat in your sick, sore corners.

And *this* is its art: it guesses where rising souls are tired. In your grief and ill humor, in your tender shame, it builds its disgusting nest.

Where the strong are weak and the noble are too gentle, there it builds its disgusting nest. The parasite lives where the great have small sore corners.

What is the highest kind of everything that is, and what is the lowest? The parasite is the lowest kind. But whoever is of the highest kind feeds the most parasites.

For the soul that has the longest ladder and can go down the deepest: how could the most parasites not sit on that one?

—the most spacious soul, which can run and stray and wander furthest within itself. The most necessary soul, which plunges into chance for pleasure:

—the soul that is, which dives into becoming. The soul that has, which *wants* to enter wanting and craving:

—the soul that flees itself and catches up with itself in the widest circle. The wisest soul, to which folly speaks most sweetly:

—the soul that loves itself most, in which all things have their flowing and flowing back, their ebb and flood. Oh, how could *the highest soul* not have the worst parasites?

- 20 Oh my brothers, am I cruel, then? But I say: what is falling, one should also push!

All of today is falling, is decaying. Who would want to hold it up! But I, I *want* to push it too!

Do you know the lust that rolls stones into steep depths? These people of today: just look at how they roll into my depths!

I am a prelude to better players, oh my brothers! An example! *Do* as I do!

And whoever you can't teach to fly, teach for me to *fall faster*!

- 21 I love the brave. But it is not enough to be a hard hitter. You must also know *whom* to hit!

And often there is more bravery in holding yourself back and walking past, *so that* you save yourself for the worthier enemy!

You should have only enemies who are to be hated, never enemies to be despised. You must be proud of your enemy. That is what I taught once before.

For the worthier enemy, oh my friends, you should save yourselves. That is why you must walk past a great deal,

—especially past all the riffraff who bawl in your ears about the nation and the nations.

Keep your eyes clean of their for and against! There is a lot of right and a lot of wrong there, and whoever looks on gets angry.

Looking on and striking out are one and the same there. So go away into the forests and let your sword sleep!

Go *your* ways! And let nation and nations go theirs! Dark ways, truly, on which not one hope flashes like lightning any more!

Let the shopkeeper rule, where everything that still glitters is shopkeepers' gold! The time of kings is over. What calls itself a nation today does not deserve kings.

Just look at how these nations now act like shopkeepers themselves. They pick out the smallest advantages from every pile of rubbish!

They lie in wait for each other, they trick things out of each other, and they call that "good neighborliness." Oh, blessed distant time, when a nation said to itself: "I want to be *master* over nations!"

For, my brothers: the best should rule, and the best also *wants* to rule! And where the teaching says otherwise, the best is *missing*.

- 22 If *those* had bread for free, woe! What would *they* scream for! Their livelihood is their real entertainment, and they should have a hard time of it!

They are beasts of prey. Even in their "working" there is robbing, and even in their "earning" there is cheating! That is why they should have a hard time of it! So they should become better beasts of prey, finer ones, cleverer ones, *more like human beings*. For the human being is the best beast of prey.

The human being has already robbed all the animals of their virtues. That is because, of all the animals, the human being has had it hardest.

Only the birds are still above him. And if the human being ever learned to fly, woe! *How high* his lust for plunder would fly!

- 23 This is how I want man and woman: one fit for war, the other fit for giving birth, but both fit for dancing with head and legs.

And let the day be lost to us on which there was not one dance! And let every truth be called false to us that did not have one laugh in it!

- 24 The way you conclude a marriage: make sure it isn't a bad *concluding*! You concluded too fast, and so what *follows* is adultery!

And adultery is still better than bending a marriage, or lying a marriage! A woman once said to me: “Yes, I broke the marriage, but first the marriage broke me!” I always found badly matched couples to be the most vengeful of all. They make the whole world pay for the fact that they no longer run alone.

For that reason I want honest people to say to each other: “We love each other. Let us *make sure* that we keep loving each other! Or is our promise supposed to be a mistake?”

—“Give us a time limit and a small marriage, so that we can see whether we are fit for the great marriage! It is a big thing, to be two for good!”

That is what I advise all honest people. And what would my love for the over-human and for everything that is to come be, if I advised and spoke otherwise!

Not only to propagate yourselves onward, but *upward*: may the garden of marriage help you to do that, oh my brothers!

- 25 Whoever has become wise about old origins will, look, finally search for the springs of the future and for new origins.

Oh my brothers, it will not be long before *new nations* spring up, and new springs rush down into new depths.

For the earthquake buries many wells and causes much languishing. It also brings inner powers and secrets to the light.

The earthquake makes new springs visible. In the earthquake of old nations, new springs break out.

And whoever calls out there: “Look, here is a well for many thirsty ones, one heart for many longing ones, one will for many tools,” around that one gathers a *nation*, that is: many who experiment.

Who can command and who must obey: *that is what is being tried out there!*

Ah, with what long seeking and guessing and guessing wrong and learning and trying again!

Human society is an experiment, so I teach, a long search. And it searches for the one who commands!

—an experiment, oh my brothers! And *not* a “contract”! Break, break such a word of the soft-hearted and the half-and-half people for me!

26 Oh my brothers! With whom does the greatest danger to all human future lie? Isn't it with the good and the just?

—with those who say and feel in their hearts: “We already know what is good and just, and we have it too. Woe to those who are still searching here!”

And whatever harm the evil may do, the harm done by the good is the most harmful harm!

And whatever harm the world-slanderers may do, the harm done by the good is the most harmful harm.

Oh my brothers, one person once looked into the heart of the good and the just, and said: “They are the Pharisees.” But nobody understood.

The good and the just themselves were not allowed to understand. Their spirit is caught inside 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 the one who invents a virtue of their own! That *is* the truth!

But the second one, who discovered 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: the one who breaks tablets and old values, the breaker. They call that one a lawbreaker.

For the good *cannot* create. They are always the beginning of the end.

—They crucify the one who writes new values on new tablets. They sacrifice the future to *themselves*. They crucify the whole future of humanity!

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”?

With whom does the greatest danger to all human future lie? Isn't it 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 run away from me? You are frightened? You tremble at this word?

Oh my brothers, when I told you to break the good and the tablets of the good,
only then did I set the human being out on its high sea.

And only now does the great terror come to it, the great looking around, the
great sickness, the great disgust, the great seasickness.

The good taught you false shores and false securities. You were born and shel-
tered in the lies of the good. Everything is falsified and warped down to its
ground by the good.

But whoever discovered the land “human being” also discovered the land “hu-
man future.” Now you should be sailors for me, brave and patient ones!

Walk upright for me in good time, oh my brothers, learn to walk upright! The
sea is storming. Many want to prop themselves up on you again.

The sea is storming. Everything is in the sea. Well then! Up and at it! You old
sailors’ hearts!

What does the fatherland matter! Our rudder wants to go *there*, to 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. “Aren’t we close
relatives?”

Why so soft? Oh my brothers, this is what *I* ask you: aren’t you my brothers?

Why so soft, so yielding and giving way? Why is there so much denial and
renouncing in your hearts? So little fate in your gaze?

And if you don’t want to be fates and merciless ones, how could you win with
me?

And if your hardness does not want to flash and divide and cut through, how
could you ever create with me?

For creators are hard. And it must seem like bliss to you to press your hand on
thousands of years as if on wax,

—bliss to write on the will of thousands of years as if on bronze, harder than
bronze, nobler than bronze. Only the noblest is completely hard.

This new tablet, oh my brothers, I set above you: *become hard*!

- 30 Oh my will! You turning point of all need, you *my* necessity! Protect me from
all small victories!

You decree of my soul, which I call fate! You who are inside me! You who are over me! Protect me and save me for one great fate!

And your last greatness, my will, save for your last act, so that you are merciless *in* your victory! Ah, who has not been defeated by their own victory!

Ah, whose eye did not grow dark in this drunken twilight! Ah, whose foot did not stagger and forget, in victory, how to stand!

—That I may one day be ready and ripe in the great noon: ready and ripe like glowing bronze, a cloud pregnant with lightning, and a swelling milk udder,

—ready for myself and for my most hidden will: a bow burning for its arrow, an arrow burning for its star,

—a star ready and ripe in its noon, glowing, pierced through, blissful under annihilating arrows of the sun,

—a sun myself and a merciless sun-will, ready to annihilate in conquering!

Oh will, turning point of all need, you *my* necessity! Save me for one great victory!

That is what Zarathustra said.

The Recovering One.

- ¹ One morning, not long after his return to the cave, Zarathustra jumped up from his bed like a madman, shouted in a terrible voice, and carried on as if someone else were still lying on the bed who didn't want to get up from it. And Zarathustra's voice rang out so loudly that his animals came running in, frightened, and out of all the caves and hiding places near Zarathustra's cave every creature scurried away, flying, fluttering, crawling, jumping, in whatever way its feet and wings allowed. But Zarathustra spoke these words:

Up, abyssal thought, out of my depth! I am your rooster and your gray dawn, sleepy worm. Up! Up! My voice will crow you awake!

Untie the fetters of your ears and listen! For I want to hear you! Up! Up! There is thunder enough here to teach even graves to listen!

And wipe the sleep and all the dullness and blindness out of your eyes! Hear me with your eyes too. My voice is a remedy even for the born blind.

And once you are awake, you shall stay awake for me forever. It is not *my* way to wake great-grandmothers from sleep just to tell them to go on sleeping!

You stir, you stretch, you rattle in your throat? Up! Up! You shall not rattle, you shall speak to me! Zarathustra calls you, the godless one!

I, Zarathustra, the advocate of life, the advocate of suffering, the advocate of the circle: you I call, my most abyssal thought!

Good for me! You are coming, I hear you! My abyss *speaks*, I have turned my last depth inside out into the light!

Good for me! Come here! Give me your hand... ha! Let go!

Haha!... Disgust, disgust, disgust... woe to me!

- ² But hardly had Zarathustra spoken these words when he fell down like a dead man and lay a long time like a dead man. But when he came to himself again, he was pale and trembling, and he stayed lying down and for a long time wouldn't eat or drink. This condition lasted seven days with him. His animals did not leave him by day or by night, except when the eagle flew out to fetch food. And whatever it fetched and snatched together, it laid on Zarathustra's bed, so that Zarathustra finally lay among yellow and red berries, grapes, rose apples, sweet-smelling herbs and pine cones. At his feet, however, two lambs were spread out, which the eagle had taken with difficulty from their shepherds.

At last, after seven days, Zarathustra sat up on his bed, took a rose apple in his hand, smelled it, and found its smell lovely. Then his animals believed the time had come to talk to him.

"Oh Zarathustra," they said, "now you've been lying like this for seven days already, with heavy eyes. Won't you finally stand on your feet again?"

"Step out of your cave. The world is waiting for you like a garden. The wind plays with heavy fragrances that want to reach you, and all the brooks would like to run after you.

"All things long for you, since you stayed alone for seven days. Step out of your cave! All things want to be your doctors!

“Has some new knowledge come to you, a sour, heavy one? You lay like leavened dough, your soul rose and swelled over all its edges.—”

—“Oh my animals,” Zarathustra answered, “keep chattering, then, and let me listen! It refreshes me so that you chatter. Where there is chatter, the world already lies before me like a garden.

“How lovely it is that words and sounds exist! Aren’t words and sounds rainbows and illusory bridges between things that are forever apart?

“To every soul belongs another world. For every soul, every other soul is an otherworld.

“Between the most similar things, illusion lies most beautifully. For the smallest gap is the hardest to bridge.

“For me, how could there be an outside of me? There is no outside! But we forget that with all sounds. How lovely it is that we forget!

“Haven’t names and sounds been given to things so that man can be refreshed by things? Speaking is a beautiful foolishness. With it man dances over all things.

“How lovely is all talking and all the lying of sounds! With sounds our love dances on colorful rainbows.”—

—“Oh Zarathustra,” the animals said then, “to those who think as we do, all things themselves dance. They come and join hands and laugh and flee, and come back.

“Everything goes, everything comes back. The wheel of being rolls forever. Everything dies, everything blooms again. The year of being runs forever.

“Everything breaks, everything is joined anew. The same house of being builds itself forever. Everything parts, everything greets again. The ring of being stays true to itself forever.

“In every instant being begins. Around every Here rolls the ball There. The middle is everywhere. Crooked is the path of eternity.”—

—“Oh you clowns and barrel organs!” Zarathustra answered, and smiled 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 its head off and spat it away from me.

“And you, you already made a hurdy-gurdy song out of it? But now I lie here, still tired from this biting and spitting out, still sick from my own redemption.

“*And you watched all of it?* Oh my animals, are you cruel too? Did you want to watch my great pain, as people do? For man is the cruelest animal.

“At tragedies, bullfights and crucifixions he has so far felt best on earth. And when he invented hell, look, that was his heaven on earth.

“When the great man cries out, right away the little one comes running, and his tongue hangs out of his throat with greed. But he calls it his ‘pity.’

“The little man, especially the poet: how eagerly he accuses life in words! Listen, but don’t fail to hear the pleasure that is in all accusing!

“Such accusers of life: life overcomes them with a wink. ‘You love me?’ says the cheeky one. ‘Wait a little longer, I don’t have time for you yet.’

“Man is the cruelest animal toward himself. And with everything that calls itself ‘sinner’ and ‘cross-bearer’ and ‘penitent,’ don’t fail to hear the lust that is in this lamenting and accusing!

“And I myself, do I want to be man’s accuser by this? Ah, my animals, this alone I have learned so far, that man’s worst is necessary for his best,

“—that everything worst is his best *strength* and the hardest stone for the highest creator, and that man must become better *and* worse. I was not nailed to *this* stake of torment by knowing that man is evil. No, I cried out as no one has cried out yet:

“‘Ah, that his worst is so very small! Ah, that his best is so very small!’

“The great disgust with man, that is what choked me and had crawled into my throat. And what the prophet prophesied: ‘Everything is the same, nothing is worth it, knowing chokes.’

“A long twilight limped ahead of me, a death-weary, death-drunk sadness, which spoke with a yawning mouth.

“‘Forever he returns, the man you are weary of, the small man’: so yawned my sadness and dragged its foot and could not fall asleep.

“The human earth turned into a cave for me, its chest sank in, everything living became to me human rot and bones and rotten past.

“My sighing sat on all human graves and could not stand up any more. My sighing and questioning croaked and choked and gnawed and complained by day and night:

—“‘Ah, man returns forever! The small man returns forever!’—

“Naked I had once seen both, the greatest man and the smallest man: all too like each other,—all too human even the greatest!

“All too small, the greatest!—That was my disgust with man! And eternal return even of the smallest!—That was my disgust with all existence!

“Ah, disgust! Disgust! Disgust!...” So Zarathustra spoke, and sighed and shuddered, for he remembered his sickness. But then his animals would not let him talk any further.

“Don’t talk any further, you recovering one!” his animals answered him, “but go outside, where the world is waiting for you like a garden.

“Go out to the roses and bees and flocks of doves! But especially to the singing birds, so that you learn *singing* from them!

“For singing is for the recovering. The healthy may talk. And even when the healthy want songs, they still want different songs from the recovering.”

—“Oh you clowns and barrel organs, be quiet, then!” Zarathustra answered, and smiled 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 for myself, and *this* recovery. Do you want to make a hurdy-gurdy song out of that right away again?”

—“Don’t talk any further,” his animals answered once more. “Rather, you recovering one, first get a lyre ready for yourself, a new lyre!

“For look, Oh Zarathustra! For your new songs, new lyres are needed.

“Sing and overflow, Oh Zarathustra, heal your soul with new songs, so that you can bear your great fate, which has never yet been any man’s fate!

“For your animals know well, Oh Zarathustra, who you are and must become. Look, *you are the teacher of the eternal return*. That is now *your* fate!

“That you, as the first, must teach this teaching: how could this great fate not also be your greatest danger and sickness!

“Look, we know what you teach: that all things return eternally, and we ourselves with them, and that we have already been here times without end, and all things with us.

“You teach that there is a great year of becoming, a monster of a great year. Like an hourglass, it must turn itself over again and again anew, so that it runs down and runs out anew:—

—so that all these years are equal to themselves, in the greatest and also in the smallest,—so that we ourselves in every great year are equal to ourselves, in the greatest and also in the smallest.

“And if you wanted to die now, Oh Zarathustra: look, we also know how you would speak to yourself then. But your animals beg you not to die yet!

“You would speak without trembling, breathing out rather with bliss, for a great heaviness and sultriness would be 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, and it will create me again! I myself belong to the causes of the eternal return.

“‘I come again, with this sun, with this earth, with this eagle, with this snake, *not* to a new life or a better life or a similar life:

“‘—I come back forever to this same and identical life, in the greatest and also in the smallest, to teach again the eternal return of all things,

“‘—to speak again the word of the great noon of earth and man, to proclaim the overhuman to people again.

“‘I spoke my word, I break on my word: so my eternal lot wills it. As a proclaimer I go under!

“‘The hour has now come when the one who goes under blesses himself. That is how Zarathustra’s going-under *ends*.’”...

When the animals had spoken these words, they fell silent and waited for Zarathustra to say something to them. But Zarathustra did not hear that they were silent. Rather, he lay still, with closed eyes, like someone asleep, though he

was not asleep, for he was just then talking with his soul. But the snake and the eagle, when they found him so silent, honored the great stillness around him and slipped away carefully.

On the Great Longing.

Oh my soul, I taught you to say “Today” the way you say “Someday” and “Once,” and to dance your round dance away over every Here and There and Over There.

Oh my soul, I freed you from all corners. I swept dust, spiders and twilight away from you.

Oh my soul, I washed small shame and corner-virtue off you, and talked you into standing naked before the eyes of the sun.

With the storm that is called “spirit” I blew over your surging sea. I blew all the clouds away. I strangled even the strangler that is called “sin.”

Oh my soul, I gave you the right to say No like the storm and to say Yes the way the open sky says Yes. Still as light you stand, and you walk now through denying storms.

Oh my soul, I gave you back your freedom over what is created and what is uncreated. And who knows, as you know it, the lust of things to come?

Oh my soul, I taught you contempt that doesn’t come like worm-eaten decay, the great, loving contempt, which loves most where it despises most.

Oh my soul, I taught you to persuade so well that you persuade the very grounds to come to you, like the sun, which persuades even the sea up to its height.

Oh my soul, I took all obeying, bowing the knee and saying “Lord” away from you. I myself gave you the names “Turning of Need” and “Fate.”

Oh my soul, I gave you new names and colorful playthings. I called you “Fate” and “Circumference of Circumferences” and “Umbilical Cord of Time” and “Azure Bell.”

Oh my soul, to your soil I gave all wisdom to drink, all new wines and also all the strong wines of wisdom that are old beyond memory.

Oh my soul, I poured every sun onto you and every night and every silence and every longing. Then you grew up for me like a grapevine.

Oh my soul, overrich and heavy you stand there now, a vine with swelling udders and crowded brown-gold grapes:—

—crowded and pressed by your happiness, waiting out of abundance, and still shy about your waiting.

Oh my soul, there is nowhere now a soul that is more loving and more embracing and more spacious! Where would future and past be closer together than with you?

Oh my soul, I gave you everything, and all my hands have become empty on you:—and now! Now you say to me, smiling and full of melancholy: “Which of us has to give thanks?—

“—doesn’t the giver have to give thanks that the taker took? Isn’t giving a need? Isn’t taking—mercy?”—

Oh my soul, I understand the smile of your melancholy. Your overabundance itself now stretches out longing hands!

Your fullness looks out over roaring seas and searches and waits. The longing of overfullness looks out from the sky of your smiling eyes!

And truly, Oh my soul! Who could see your smile and not melt in tears? The angels themselves melt in tears at the over-goodness of your smile.

It is your goodness and over-goodness that doesn’t want to complain and weep. And yet, Oh my soul, your smile longs for tears and your trembling mouth for sobs.

“Isn’t all weeping a complaining? And all complaining an accusing?” That is how you speak to yourself, and that is why, Oh my soul, you would rather smile than pour out your grief,

—pour out all your grief in plunging tears over your fullness and over all the crowding need of the vine for the vintner and the vintner’s knife!

But if you don’t want to weep, don’t want to weep out your purple melancholy, then you will have to *sing*, Oh my soul!—Look, I myself smile, I who foretell this to you:

—sing, with a roaring song, until all seas grow still, so that they listen to your longing,

—until over still, longing seas the boat floats, the golden wonder, around whose gold all good, bad, strange things hop:

—many large and small creatures too, and everything that has light, strange feet, so that it can run on violet-blue paths,

—toward the golden wonder, the willing boat and its master. That is the vintner, who waits with the diamond vintner's knife,

—your great redeemer, Oh my soul, the nameless one... for whom future songs will first find names! And truly, your breath already smells of future songs,

—already you glow and dream, already you drink thirstily at all the deep, ringing wells of comfort, already your melancholy rests in the bliss of future songs!...

Oh my soul, now I have given you everything, and my last too, and all my hands have become empty on you. *That I told you to sing*, look, that was my last!

That I told you to sing: say now, say: *who* of us now has to give thanks? But better still: sing to me, sing, Oh my soul! And let me give thanks!—

That is what Zarathustra said.

The Other Dance Song.

¹ “Not long ago I looked into your eye, oh Life: I saw gold glinting in your night-eye, and my heart stood still at this delight:

“—I saw a golden boat glinting on waters of the night, a sinking, drinking, beckoning-again golden rocking-boat!

“You threw a glance at my foot, my dance-mad foot, a laughing, questioning, melting, rocking glance:

“Only twice did you shake your rattle with your small hands, and already my foot was rocking with dance-fury.

“My heels reared up, my toes listened to understand you: after all, dancers carry their ears—in their toes!

“I leapt toward you, and you fled back from my leap, and the tongue of your fleeing, flying hair flicked out at me!

“I leapt away from you and from your snakes, and there you already stood, half turned, your eye full of longing.

“With crooked glances you teach me crooked paths, and on crooked paths my foot learns tricks!

“I fear you near, I love you far. Your flight lures me, your seeking stops me: I suffer, but what would I not gladly suffer for you!

“Whose coldness kindles, whose hatred seduces, whose flight binds, whose mockery moves:

“—who wouldn’t hate you, great binder, entwiner, tempter, seeker, finder! Who wouldn’t love you, innocent, impatient, wind-swift, child-eyed sinner!

“Where are you pulling me now, you paragon and unruly one? And now you flee from me again, you sweet scamp and ingrate!

“I dance after you, I follow you even on a faint trail. Where are you? Give me your hand! Or just one finger!

“Here are caves and thickets: we will lose our way! Stop! Stand still! Don’t you see owls and bats whirring?

“You owl! You bat! Do you want to mock me? Where are we? You learned this howling and yapping from the dogs.

“You bare your little white teeth at me so sweetly, your wicked eyes leap out at me from your curly little mane!

“This is a dance over sticks and stones: I am the hunter. Do you want to be my hound or my chamois?

“Now beside me! And quick, you spiteful jumper! Now up! And over! Ouch! Then I myself fell down in mid-jump!

“Oh, see me lying here, you cheeky one, begging for mercy! I would gladly walk with you down lovelier paths!

“—paths of love through quiet, colorful bushes! Or over there along the lake, where goldfish swim and dance!

“Are you tired now? Over there are sheep and red evening skies. Isn’t it lovely to sleep while shepherds play their pipes?

“Are you so terribly tired? I’ll carry you there, just let your arms drop! And if you’re thirsty, I might have something, but your mouth doesn’t want to drink it!

“—Oh, this cursed nimble, supple snake and slippery witch! Where did you go? But on my face I feel two dabs and red blotches from your hand!

“I am truly tired of always being your sheepish shepherd! You witch, until now I have sung to you, but now *you* shall scream for me!

“To the beat of my whip you shall dance and scream for me! I didn’t forget the whip, did I? No!”

² Then Life answered me like this, holding her dainty ears shut while she did:

“Oh Zarathustra! Don’t crack your whip so terribly! You know it, after all: noise murders thoughts, and just now such tender thoughts are coming to me.

“We are, the two of us, real good-for-nothings and evil-for-nothings. Beyond good and evil we found our island and our green meadow, just the two of us alone! So we simply have to be good to each other!

“And even if we don’t love each other from the very bottom, must you hold a grudge against someone just because you don’t love them from the very bottom?

“And that I’m good to you, and often too good, you know that. And the reason is that I’m jealous of your wisdom. Ah, this mad old fool of a wisdom!

“If your wisdom ever ran away from you, ah! then my love would quickly run away from you too.”

After that, Life looked thoughtfully behind her and around her and said softly:

“Oh Zarathustra, you aren’t faithful enough to me!

“You don’t love me nearly as much as you say. I know you’re thinking about how you want to leave me soon.

“There is an old, heavy, heavy droning bell. At night it drones all the way up to your cave:

“—when you hear this bell strike the hour at midnight, then between one and twelve you think of it—

“—you think of it, oh Zarathustra, I know it, that you want to leave me soon!”

“Yes,” I answered hesitantly, “but you know it too—” And I said something into her ear, right into the middle of her tangled, yellow, foolish tufts of hair.

“You *know* that, oh Zarathustra? Nobody knows that.”

And we looked at each other and gazed at the green meadow, across which the cool evening was just then running, and we wept together. But at that time Life was dearer to me than all my wisdom ever was.

That is what Zarathustra said.

3 *One!*

Oh human! Pay attention!

Two!

What does deep midnight say?

Three!

“I slept, I slept—

Four!

“I have woken from a deep dream:

Five!

“The world is deep,

Six!

“And deeper than the day thought.

Seven!

“Deep is its woe—

Eight!

“Joy, deeper still 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 seer, and full of that prophetic spirit that walks on a high ridge between two seas,
walks between the past and the future as a heavy cloud, an enemy of sultry low-lands and of everything that is weary and can neither die nor live:
ready for lightning in its dark bosom and for the redeeming ray of light, pregnant with lightning bolts that say Yes! and laugh Yes!, prophetic bolts of lightning:

—but blessed is the one who is pregnant like that! And truly, whoever is one day to kindle the light of the future must hang a long time on the mountain as heavy weather!

Oh, how could I not burn with desire for eternity and for the wedding ring of rings, the ring of return!

Never yet did I find the woman from whom I wanted children, unless it is this woman whom I love: for I love you, oh eternity!

For I love you, oh eternity!

- ² If my anger ever broke open graves, moved boundary stones, and rolled old tablets, broken, into steep depths:

If my scorn ever blew moldered words to pieces, and I came like a broom to the cross-spiders and as a sweeping wind to old, musty burial chambers:

If I ever sat rejoicing where old gods lie buried, blessing the world, loving the world, beside the monuments of old world-slanderers:

—for I love even churches and graves of God, once the sky looks with clear eyes through their broken ceilings. I like to sit on broken churches, like grass and red poppies. Oh, how could I not burn with desire for eternity and for the wedding ring of rings, the ring of return?

Never yet did I find the woman from whom I wanted children, unless it is this woman whom I love: for I love you, oh eternity!

For I love you, oh eternity!

- 3 If a breath ever came to me from the creative breath, and from that heavenly necessity that still forces accidents to dance star-dances:

If I ever laughed with the laughter of the creative lightning, which the long thunder of the deed follows, grumbling but obedient: If I ever played dice with gods at the gods' table of the earth, so that the earth shook and broke and snorted up rivers of fire:

—for the earth is a gods' table, trembling with creative new words and dice-throws of the gods:

Oh, how could I not burn with desire for eternity and for the wedding ring of rings, the ring of return?

Never yet did I find the woman from whom I wanted children, unless it is this woman whom I love: for I love you, oh eternity!

For I love you, oh eternity!

- 4 If I ever drank in a deep gulp from that foaming jug of spice and mixing, in which all things are well mixed:

If my hand ever poured the farthest into the nearest, and fire into spirit, and joy into sorrow, and the worst into the kindest:

If I myself am a grain of that redeeming salt which makes all things in the mixing jug mix well:

—for there is a salt that binds good with evil, and even the most evil is worthy of being used as spice and of the final foaming over:

Oh, how could I not burn with desire for eternity and for the wedding ring of rings, the ring of return?

Never yet did I find the woman from whom I wanted children, unless it is this woman whom I love: for I love you, oh eternity!

For I love you, oh eternity!

5 If I am fond of the sea and of everything that is sea-like, and fondest of all when it angrily contradicts me:

If that searching joy is in me, which drives the sails toward the undiscovered, if a seafarer's joy is in my joy:

If my rejoicing ever cried: "The coast has vanished, now the last chain has fallen from me—

"—the boundless roars around me, far out space and time glitter for me, come on! up! old heart!"

Oh, how could I not burn with desire for eternity and for the wedding ring of rings, the ring of return?

Never yet did I find the woman from whom I wanted children, unless it is this woman whom I love: for I love you, oh eternity!

For I love you, oh eternity!

6 If my virtue is a dancer's virtue, and I have often leapt with both feet into gold-and-emerald rapture: If my malice is a laughing malice, at home among slopes of roses and hedges of lilies:

—for in laughter all evil is together, but declared holy and set free by its own bliss:

And if this is my alpha and omega, that everything heavy become light, every body a dancer, every spirit a bird: and truly, this is my alpha and omega!

Oh, how could I not burn with desire for eternity and for the wedding ring of rings, the ring of return!

Never yet did I find the woman from whom I wanted children, unless it is this woman whom I love: for I love you, oh eternity!

For I love you, oh eternity!

7 If I ever spread quiet skies out above me and flew with my own wings into my own skies:

If, playing, I swam in deep distances of light, and the bird-wisdom of my freedom came:

—but this is what bird-wisdom says: "Look, there is no above, no below! Throw yourself around, out, back, you light one! Sing! Speak no more!"

—“Aren’t all words made for the heavy? Don’t all words lie to the light one!
Sing! Speak no more!”

Oh, how could I not burn with desire for eternity and for the wedding ring of
rings, the ring of return?

Never yet did I find the woman from whom I wanted children, unless it is this
woman whom I love: for I love you, oh eternity!

For I love you, oh eternity!

Part 4



Fourth and Last Part

Where in the world have there been greater foolish acts than among people who pity? What has caused more suffering than their foolish acts?

Trouble awaits every lover who has no height above their pity!

The devil once told me, “God too has a hell: his love for people.”

Recently I heard him say, “God is dead. His pity for humanity caused his death.”

Thus Spoke Zarathustra 2 p. 12.

The Honey Sacrifice

Months and years again passed over Zarathustra’s soul without his noticing. But his hair turned white. One day he sat on a stone in front of his cave, quietly looking out. From there the view crossed twisting drops in the ground and reached the sea. His animals walked thoughtfully around him, then stood in front of him.

“Zarathustra, are you looking for your happiness?” they asked. “What does happiness matter?” he said. “I stopped looking for happiness long ago. I want my work.” “Zarathustra,” they replied, “you speak like someone with too much of a good thing. Aren’t you lying in a sky-blue lake of happiness?” Zarathustra

smiled. “You mischievous fools, that is a good image! But you know my happiness is heavy, not a flowing wave. It presses on me and will not leave, like melted tar.”—

The animals walked around thoughtfully again and came back in front of him. “So *that* is why you keep turning yellower and darker, though your hair looks white like flax! You are sitting in your tar!” “What are you saying, my animals?” Zarathustra laughed. “I spoke badly when I called it tar. What happens to me happens to all ripening fruit. The *honey* in my veins makes my blood thicker and my soul quieter.” “That must be it,” they said, pressing close. “Won’t you climb a high mountain today? The air is clean. You can see more of the world than ever.” “Yes,” he said, “that is good advice, just what my heart wants. I will climb a high mountain! But make sure I have honey up there: yellow, white, good, golden honey in the comb, fresh as ice. I want to offer a honey sacrifice up there.”—

Once he was high up, Zarathustra sent the animals home. They had led him there, but now he was alone. He laughed wholeheartedly, looked around, and said:

“Talking about sacrifices and honey sacrifices was a trick in my speech, a useful bit of foolishness! I can speak more freely here than outside hermits’ caves in front of their pets.

“Sacrifice? I waste what I am given, a waster with a thousand hands. Why call that sacrificing!

“When I asked for honey, I only wanted bait, sweet syrup and sticky stuff that makes even growling bears and odd, grumpy, nasty birds lick their lips—

“The best bait hunters and fishermen need. The world may be like a dark forest of animals, a playground for wild hunters. But I prefer seeing it as a deep sea full of life—

“A sea full of colorful fish and crabs, which could tempt even gods to become fishermen throwing nets. The world has so many strange things, big and small!

“Especially the human world, the human sea: I cast my golden fishing rod into that now and say, Open up, human depths!

“Open and toss me your fish and shining crabs! Today my best bait will catch the strangest human fish!

“I throw my own happiness into every distant place, east, south, and west, to see whether many human fish learn to tug and struggle at it.

“They will bite my hidden sharp hooks and have to come up to *my* height, these colorful bottom-dwellers, to the most malicious human fisherman.

“*That* is what I have been from the start: pulling, drawing nearer, pulling up, raising, cultivating, training. I once told myself for good reason, ‘Become who you are!’

“So let people come *up* to me now. I still wait for signs that it is time for me to go down. I do not yet go down among people myself, as I must.

“I wait here cunningly and mockingly on high mountains. I am neither impatient nor patient. I have unlearned even patience, since I no longer have anything to put up with.

“My fate leaves me time. Has it forgotten me? Or is it sitting behind a big rock in the shade, catching flies?

“I like my eternal fate for not pushing and hurrying me. It leaves time for jokes and mischief. That is why today I climbed a mountain to fish.

“Has anyone caught fish on high mountains? Even if what I want and do here is foolish, that is better than waiting below until I turn solemn, green and yellow—

“All puffed up, snorting with anger at waiting, a holy howling storm from the mountains, someone impatient calling into valleys, ‘Listen or I will whip you with God’s whip!’

“I do not resent those angry people. They are good enough for a laugh! These big noisy drums, who must speak today or never, have to be impatient!

“But my fate and I do not speak to today or never. For talking we have patience, time, and more than enough time. One day he has to come and must not pass us by.

“Who has to come? Our great Hazar: our great, distant human kingdom, Zarathustra’s kingdom lasting a thousand years—

“How far away is that ‘far away’? What do I care? It is no less certain to me. I stand firmly with both feet on this ground—

“Everlasting ground, hard ancient rock, this highest and hardest old mountain range where all winds meet as at a weather divide, asking where, from where, and where next.

“Laugh, laugh here, my bright, healthy malice! Throw your shining, mocking laughter down from high mountains! With your shine, catch the loveliest human fish!

“Whatever belongs to *me* in every sea, the part of all things that is in and for me, fish *that* out and bring *that* up to me. That is what I wait for, the most malicious fisherman.

“Out, out, my hook! In, down, bait of my happiness! Drip your sweetest dew, honey of my heart! Hook, bite the belly of all black sadness!

“Look out, my eye, look out! So many seas around me, so many human futures growing light! Above me, such rose-red quiet, such cloudless silence!”

The Cry for Help

The next day Zarathustra was back on the stone outside his cave. His animals were roaming to bring home fresh food and honey: he had used and wasted the last bit of the old honey. He sat holding a stick, tracing his body’s shadow on the ground, thinking, though not about himself or his shadow. Suddenly he jumped in fright. There was another shadow beside his. Turning quickly and standing up, he saw the prophet next to him, the one he once gave food and drink at his table. This was the prophet of great tiredness, who taught, “Everything is the same, nothing is worthwhile, the world has no meaning, knowledge chokes.” But his face had changed. Looking into his eyes frightened Zarathustra’s heart again. That face carried so many bad predictions and ash-gray flashes.

The prophet noticed what was happening in Zarathustra. He passed his hand over his face as though wiping it off. Zarathustra did the same. After quietly collecting themselves and recovering strength, they shook hands to show that they wanted to recognize each other again.

"Welcome," Zarathustra said. "Prophet of great tiredness, you did not share my table and friendship for nothing. Eat and drink with me today as well. Forgive a happy old man sitting at the table with you!" "A happy old man?" the prophet said, shaking his head. "Whatever you are or want to be, you have been it up here long enough. Soon your boat will no longer be on dry ground!" "Am I on dry ground?" Zarathustra laughed. "The waves around your mountain keep rising," said the prophet. "Waves of great trouble and sadness. They will soon lift your boat and take you away." Zarathustra said nothing, surprised. "Don't you hear anything yet?" the prophet continued. "Isn't something rushing and roaring up from below?" Zarathustra kept quiet and listened. He heard a long, long cry. The deep valleys threw it to each other and passed it on. None wanted to keep it, because it sounded so awful.

"You bring bad news," Zarathustra finally said. "That is a human cry for help. It may come from a black sea. But what does human trouble have to do with me? Do you know the name of my last sin, the one saved for me?"

"*Pity!*" the prophet answered with an overflowing heart, lifting both hands. "Zarathustra, I have come to tempt you into your last sin!"—

As soon as he said it, the cry sounded again, longer, more frightened, and much closer. "Do you hear? Do you hear?" the prophet called. "It is for you, Zarathustra! It calls you! Come, come, come! It is time, high time!"—

Zarathustra stayed quiet, confused and shaken. Finally, as though hesitating with himself, he asked, "Who is calling me there?"

"You know already!" the prophet answered sharply. "Why hide? *The higher human being* is calling for you!"

"The higher human being?" Zarathustra cried in horror. "What does *he* want? What does *he* want? The higher human being! What is he doing here?" Sweat covered him.

The prophet did not answer his fear. He listened down into the valleys. When everything stayed quiet a long time, he looked back and saw Zarathustra standing there shaking.

"Zarathustra," he said sadly, "you do not look like someone made dizzy with happiness. You will have to dance to keep from falling!"

“But even if you danced for me and made all your sideways jumps, nobody could tell me, ‘Look, the last happy human being is dancing here!’

“Anyone coming this high looking for *him* would come for nothing. They might find caves and caves beyond caves, places for hidden people to hide, but not mines of happiness, treasure rooms, or new seams of happiness’s gold.

“How could someone find happiness with buried people and hermits like these? Must I look for the last happiness on happy islands far between forgotten seas?

“But everything is the same, nothing is worthwhile, searching does no good, and there are no happy islands left!” — —

That was the prophet’s sigh. At his last sigh Zarathustra became bright and certain again, like someone climbing from a deep hole into daylight. “No! No! Three times no!” he called loudly, stroking his beard. “I know *that* better! Happy islands still exist! Stop talking *about that*, you sighing sack of sadness!

“Stop raining *about that*, you morning raincloud! Haven’t you already soaked me in sadness and drenched me like a dog?

“I am shaking myself now and running off to get dry. Don’t be surprised! Do I seem rude? This is *my* courtyard.

“As for your higher human being, I will quickly search those woods. His cry came *from there*. A dangerous animal may be attacking him.

“He is in *my* territory. I will not let him be hurt here! And I really do have many dangerous animals.” —

Zarathustra turned to leave. The prophet said, “Zarathustra, you are a rascal!

“I know what you want: to get rid of me! You would rather run into the woods after dangerous animals!

“But what good does that do? This evening you will have me back. I will sit in your own cave, patient and heavy as a log, waiting!”

“All right!” Zarathustra called as he went. “My guest and friend, everything mine in the cave is yours too!

“If you still find honey, lick it up, growling bear, and sweeten your soul! This evening we will both be cheerful—

“Cheerful and glad this day has finished! You will dance to my songs as my dancing bear.

“You don’t believe me? You shake your head? Come on, old bear! I am a prophet too.”

That is what Zarathustra said.

Talking with the Kings

¹ Zarathustra had been walking through his mountains and woods less than an hour when he saw an odd procession. Two kings were coming along the path he meant to take downhill. They wore crowns and purple belts, as colorful as flamingos, and drove a donkey carrying luggage. “What do kings want in my kingdom?” Zarathustra wondered, quickly hiding behind a bush. As they came near, he said half aloud, as though talking to himself, “Strange! Strange! How does that make sense? Two kings, but only one donkey!”

The kings stopped, smiled, looked toward the voice, then at each other. “People among us think that sort of thing too,” said the king on the right. “They just don’t say it.”

The king on the left shrugged. “Probably a goatherd. Or a hermit who lived too long among rocks and trees. No company at all can spoil good manners too.”

“Good manners?” the other king answered angrily and bitterly. “What are we trying to avoid? Isn’t it ‘good manners,’ our ‘good society’?”

“I would rather live among hermits and goatherds than with our gilded, false, painted rabble, even if it calls itself ‘good society’—

“Or ‘nobility.’ Everything there is false and rotten, especially the blood, thanks to old, bad diseases and worse doctors.

“The best person, the one I like most today, is a healthy farmer: rough, clever, stubborn, able to last. That is today’s noblest kind.

“Farmers are the best today, and their kind should rule! But the rabble rules. I won’t be fooled anymore. Rabble means a mixture of everything.

“Everything mixed with everything: saint, criminal, young nobleman, Jew, and every animal from Noah’s ark.

“Good manners! Everything among us is fake and rotten. Nobody knows how to respect anything anymore. *That* is what we are escaping. They are sugary, pushy dogs, covering palm leaves in gold.

“What chokes me with disgust is that even we kings became false. We dress and disguise ourselves in our grandfathers’ old, yellowed splendor, display coins for the stupidest, cleverest, and everyone now trading in power!

“We *are* not the first, but must *represent* being first. At last we are sick and disgusted with the fraud.

“We left the rabble behind: the shouting people and writing blowflies, the merchant smell, wriggling ambition, bad breath. Disgusting to live among them—
“Disgusting to pretend to be first among them! Disgust! Disgust! Disgust! What do we kings matter now?”—

“Your old illness is back,” the king on the left said. “Disgust is attacking you, poor brother. But remember, someone is listening.”

Zarathustra had opened his eyes and ears wide at this speech. He came out of hiding, walked toward the kings, and said:

“The person listening, gladly listening to you kings, is called Zarathustra.

“I am the Zarathustra who once said, ‘What do kings matter now?’ Forgive me: I was delighted when you said, ‘What do we kings matter?’

“But this is *my* kingdom and rule. What are you looking for here? Maybe on your way you *found* what *I* am looking for: the higher human being.”

The kings beat their chests and answered together, “You recognize us!

“Your words cut like a sword through our hearts’ thick darkness. You found our trouble. We are traveling to find the higher human being—

“The person higher than us, even though we are kings. We are bringing him this donkey. The highest person should be the highest ruler on earth too.

“No human misfortune is harder than earth’s powerful people not also being its best people. Everything then turns false, crooked, and monstrous.

“If they are the worst, more animal than human, the rabble’s value keeps rising. Finally even its virtue says, ‘Look, I am the only virtue!’”—

“What did I just hear?” Zarathustra replied. “Such wisdom from kings! I am delighted. I already want to make a rhyme about it—

“Even if it is not a rhyme for everyone’s ears. I stopped taking care of long ears a long time ago. Here goes!”

(The donkey spoke up too at that point. Clearly and nastily it said, “Heehaw.”)

Once, I think in salvation’s year one,

The Sibyl spoke, drunk without wine:

“Disaster! Things are going wrong!

“Collapse! Collapse! The world was never so low!

“Rome became a whore and brothel,

“Rome’s Caesar became a beast; God himself became a Jew!”

- ² The kings enjoyed Zarathustra’s verses. The king on the right said, “We were so right to come and see you, Zarathustra!

“Your enemies showed us your picture in their mirror. You looked like a devil with a sneering laugh, so we were afraid.

“But it didn’t help. Your sayings kept stabbing our ears and hearts. Finally we said: why care what he looks like?

“We must *hear* him, the teacher who says, ‘Love peace as a way to new wars, and short peace more than long peace!’

“Nobody spoke such warlike words: ‘What is good? Being brave is good. A good war makes every cause holy.’

“Those words stirred our fathers’ blood inside us. It felt like spring speaking to old wine barrels.

“Our fathers liked life when swords crossed like red-spotted snakes. Every sun of peace seemed weak and lukewarm. Long peace made them ashamed.

“How they sighed seeing polished, dried-out swords on the wall! Like the swords, they thirsted for war. A sword wants to drink blood and shines with desire.” — —

The kings went on eagerly talking about their fathers’ happiness. Zarathustra badly wanted to make fun of that eagerness: the kings before him were clearly very peaceful, with old, fine faces. But he held back. “Good!” he said. “That

path leads to Zarathustra's cave. This day will have a long evening! Right now a cry for help calls me away urgently.

"It honors my cave if kings want to sit waiting there. But you will have to wait a long time!

"Well, what does it matter? Where can you learn waiting better today than in royal courts? Isn't the only virtue kings have left now called being *able to wait*?" That is what Zarathustra said.

The Leech

Zarathustra kept going thoughtfully down through the woods and past swampy ground. Like anyone thinking about hard matters, he accidentally stepped on someone. A shout of pain, two curses, and twenty nasty insults suddenly flew into his face. Frightened, he lifted his stick and hit the person as well. He immediately realized what he had done and laughed inwardly at his own foolishness.

"Forgive me," he told the man, who angrily sat up. "Forgive me. First let me give you an image.

"A traveler dreams about faraway things and accidentally bumps into a sleeping dog on a lonely road, a dog lying in the sun.

"Both jump up and bark at each other like deadly enemies, scared nearly to death. That is what happened to us.

"And yet! And yet—how little kept that dog and lonely traveler from petting each other! They are both alone!"

"Whoever you are," the man answered, still furious, "your image steps too close to me too, not just your foot!

"Look, am I a dog?" He stood, pulling his bare arm out of the swamp. He had originally been lying stretched out on the ground, hidden and unrecognizable, like a hunter waiting for a marsh animal.

"What are you doing?" Zarathustra asked in alarm. Blood was flowing over the bare arm. "What happened? Did a dangerous animal bite you, poor man?"

The bleeding man laughed, still angry. "None of your business!" He wanted to leave. "I am at home here, in my own territory. Anybody may ask questions, but I probably won't answer a fool."

"You are mistaken," said Zarathustra, feeling sorry for him and holding him back. "You are mistaken. You are not in your own place. This is my kingdom, where nobody is to get hurt.

"Call me anything you want. I am who I must be. My own name for myself is Zarathustra.

"That path goes up to my cave. It isn't far. Would you like to look after your wounds with me?

"Life has treated you badly, poor man. First an animal bit you, then a human being trampled you!" — —

The man changed when he heard Zarathustra's name. "What is happening?" he cried. "*Who* else matters to me now but this one person, Zarathustra, and that one bloodsucking animal, the leech?

"I was lying by this swamp like a fisherman for the leech's sake. My outstretched arm had already been bitten ten times when a better hedgehog came to bite my blood: Zarathustra himself!

"How lucky! What a wonder! Praise this day that drew me into the swamp! Praise the best, liveliest cupping glass alive! Praise the great leech of conscience, Zarathustra!" —

Zarathustra enjoyed the man's words and their careful respect. "Who are you?" he asked, offering his hand. "We have a lot to clear up and brighten between us. But I think a clear, bright day has already begun."

"I am *the conscientious person of the spirit*," the man replied. "In questions of spirit, hardly anyone is stricter, narrower, or harder than I am, except the person who taught me, Zarathustra himself.

"Better to know nothing than know many things halfway! Better to be a fool on my own than wise on somebody else's say-so. I get to the bottom of things.

"Why care whether the bottom is big or small, swamp or sky? A hand's width is enough, if it is real ground!

"Ground a hand's width wide is something to stand on. In truly conscientious knowledge, nothing is big or small."

"Maybe you are an expert in leeches?" Zarathustra asked. "Do you follow the leech down to its final foundations, conscientious man?"

“That would be an enormous task,” the man answered. “How could I try it!

“What I am a master of and know is the leech’s *brain*. That is *my* world!

“It is a world too! Forgive me for being proud. I have no equal here. That is why I said I am at home.

“I have studied this one thing, the leech’s brain, so long that slippery truth cannot slip away from me here. This is *my* kingdom!

“I threw everything else away for it. Everything else became unimportant. My dark ignorance camps right beside my knowledge.

“My conscience of spirit demands that I know one thing and know nothing about everything else. I am disgusted by half-developed spirits, by everything hazy, floating, or overexcited.

“Where my honesty ends, I am blind and want to stay blind. But where I want knowledge I want honesty too: hardness, strictness, narrowness, cruelty, no giving way.

“*You* once said, ‘Spirit is life cutting into life itself.’ That led and tempted me into your teaching. I have increased my own knowledge with my own blood!”

“As we can see,” Zarathustra interrupted. Blood still ran down the man’s bare arm. Ten leeches had fastened their mouths to it.

“Strange fellow, what I can see here teaches me so much. You yourself teach me! Perhaps I should not pour all of it into your strict ears!

“Let us part here. But I would like to meet you again. The path up there goes to my cave. Be my welcome guest tonight!

“I would also like to make up to your body for trampling it. I will think about that. Right now a cry for help calls me away quickly.”

That is what Zarathustra said.

The Magician

- ¹ Rounding a rock, Zarathustra saw a man a little farther down the path. He was throwing his arms and legs about like someone out of control, then fell face down. “Wait,” Zarathustra told himself. “That must be the higher human being who made the terrible cry for help. I will see if I can help him.” He ran to the spot and found an old man shaking, with staring eyes. However hard he

tried, he could not get the man onto his feet. The man did not seem to notice anyone nearby. He kept looking around with touching movements, like someone the whole world had abandoned. After much shaking, twitching, and curling up, he began to cry:

“Who will warm me? Who still loves me?

Give me hot hands!

Give me hot coals for my heart!

Lying here, shaking,

Like someone half dead whose feet are being warmed—

Shaken by fevers I do not know,

Trembling at sharp, icy arrows of cold,

Hunted by you, Thought!

Nameless! Hidden! Frightening!

You hunter behind the clouds!

Your lightning struck me down,

You mocking eye watching from the dark:

Here I lie,

Bending, twisting, tortured

By all the endless pains,

Hit

By you, cruelest hunter,

You unknown *God* ...

“Hit deeper!

Hit me one more time!

Stab this heart! Break it!

Why torture me

With arrows whose teeth are blunt?

Why look again,

Still not tired of human pain,

With gods’ lightning eyes enjoying it?

You do not want to kill,
Only torture and torture?
Why torture *me*,
You unknown God who enjoys pain?—

“Ha-ha!
You creep closer
At a midnight like this? ...
What do you want?
Speak!
You push and squeeze me—
You are already much too close!
You hear my breathing,
You listen in on my heart,
Jealous one!
What are you jealous of?
Go away! Go away!
What is the ladder for?
Do you want to get *inside*,
Climb into my heart,
Into my most secret
Thoughts?
Shameless stranger! Thief!
What do you want to steal?
What do you want to overhear?
What do you want to torture out,
You torturer!
You God who executes!
Or must I, like a dog,
Roll around before you,
Devoted, excited, out of my mind,
Wagging my love at you!

“It will not work!
Keep stabbing,
Cruellest spike!
I am no dog, only your hunted animal,
Cruellest hunter!
Your proudest prisoner,
Robber behind clouds ...
Speak at last,
Hidden by lightning! Unknown! Speak!
What do you want from me, attacker? ...

“What?
A ransom?
How much ransom do you want?
Ask for a lot, my pride advises!
Keep it short, my other pride advises!

“Ha-ha!
You want *me*? Me?
All of me? ...

“Ha-ha!
You fool, why torture me,
Torture my pride?
Give me *love*! Who still warms me?
Who still loves me? —
Give me hot hands,
Give me hot coals for my heart,
Give to me, the loneliest person,
Whom ice, seven layers of ice,
Teaches to long even for enemies,
To yearn even for enemies,
Give, yes, give yourself up,

Cruellest enemy,
Give me *yourself*!— —

“Gone!
He ran away himself,
My only companion,
My great enemy,
The one I do not know,
My executing God! ...

“No!
Come back!
With all your tortures!
All my tears run
Along their road to you!
My heart’s last flame
Flares for *you*!
Come back,
My unknown God! My *pain*!
My last happiness!”

² Zarathustra could no longer hold back. He took his stick and hit the crying man as hard as he could. “Stop!” he shouted, laughing angrily. “Stop, actor! Counterfeiter! Complete liar! I know you!

“I will warm your legs, nasty magician! I know how to give people like you some heat!”

“Stop,” the old man said, jumping up. “Don’t hit me again, Zarathustra! I was only acting!

“This is part of my art. By giving you a sample, I wanted to test you. You certainly saw through me!

“But you gave me quite a sample too. You are *hard*, wise Zarathustra! Your ‘truths’ hit hard. Your club forces *this* truth out of me!”

“Don’t flatter me,” Zarathustra replied, still upset and dark-looking. “Actor through and through! You are false. Why talk about truth!

“You greatest peacock, sea of vanity! *What* were you acting, nasty magician? *Who* was I meant to believe in when you cried like that?”

“*The person doing penance in spirit,*” the old man said. “*That* was my part. You invented the words yourself—

“The poet and magician finally turning his spirit against himself, the changed person freezing from his bad knowledge and conscience.

“Admit it, Zarathustra: it took you a while to see my trick and lie! You *believed* I was suffering when you held my head in both hands—

“I heard you crying, ‘He hasn’t been loved enough, not enough!’ My malice enjoyed having fooled you that much.”

“You may have fooled subtler people,” Zarathustra said harshly. “I do not watch for cheats. I *must* take no precautions. That is my fate.

“But you *must* cheat. I know you that well! You always need two, three, four, five meanings. Even your confession was nowhere near true or false enough!

“Nasty counterfeiter, you could do nothing else! You would even put makeup on your illness while showing your naked body to a doctor.

“You just put makeup on your lie by saying, ‘I was *only* acting!’ There was something *serious* in it too. You *are* partly a person doing penance in spirit!

“I can work you out: you charmed everyone, but have no lies or tricks left for yourself. You cannot charm yourself anymore!

“You harvested disgust as your one truth. No word of yours is genuine now. But your mouth is: the disgust sticking to it.”

“Who are you!” the old magician shouted defiantly. “Who is allowed to speak that way to *me*, the greatest person alive?” A green flash shot from his eye toward Zarathustra. Then he suddenly changed and said sadly:

“Zarathustra, I am tired. My tricks disgust me. I am not *great*. Why pretend? But you know I was looking for greatness!

“I wanted to play a great person, and I convinced many people. But that lie was too much for my strength. It is breaking me.

“Everything in me is a lie, Zarathustra. But my breaking is *real*!”—

“Looking for greatness does you credit,” Zarathustra said darkly, looking down to one side. “But it exposes you too. You are not great.

“Nasty old magician, *this* is your best and most honest part, the part I respect: you got tired of yourself and admitted, ‘I am not great.’

“*For that* I respect you as someone doing penance in spirit. Even if it lasted only a breath, in that one moment you were genuine.

“But tell me what you seek in *my* woods and rocks. If you put yourself in *my* path, what did you want to see me do—

“What were you testing *me* for?”—

Zarathustra’s eyes shone as he spoke. The old magician was quiet a while. Then he said, “Testing you? I am only looking.

“I want someone genuine, true, simple, with one clear meaning, completely honest, a vessel of wisdom, someone holy in knowledge, a great person!

“Don’t you know, Zarathustra? *I am looking for Zarathustra.*”

They both stayed quiet a long time. Zarathustra turned deeply inward and shut his eyes. Returning his attention, he took the magician’s hand and said very politely and cunningly:

“Good! That path up there leads to Zarathustra’s cave. You can look inside for whoever you want to find.

“Ask my eagle and snake for advice too. They will help you look. My cave is big.

“I myself have never seen a great person. Today even the most sensitive eyes are crude about greatness. The rabble rules.

“I have seen plenty of people stretch and inflate themselves while everyone shouted, ‘A great man!’ But what use are bellows? Eventually the air comes out.

“A frog that blows itself up too long finally bursts. The air comes out. I call sticking a swollen person’s belly a fine bit of fun. Listen, boys!

“Today belongs to the rabble. Who still *knows* big from small? Who could successfully look for greatness? Only a fool. Fools get lucky.

“Strange fool, you are looking for great people? Who *taught* you that? Is this the time for it? Bad seeker, why are you testing me?”— —

Zarathustra said this, felt better, and went on laughing.

Out of Work

Soon after leaving the magician, Zarathustra saw another person sitting beside the road: a tall man dressed in black, with a thin, pale face. *He* annoyed Zarathustra greatly. “There sits sadness in disguise,” he thought. “He looks like a priest. What do *they* want in my kingdom?”

“I barely escaped that magician. Must another worker of dark magic cross my road—

“Someone doing spells by laying hands on people, a mysterious miracle worker by God’s grace, an anointed attacker of the world? Let the devil take him!

“But the devil is never where he ought to be. That cursed little man with his clubfoot is always late!”—

Zarathustra swore impatiently to himself, planning to slip past the man without looking at him. It happened differently. The seated man had already spotted him. Like someone suddenly meeting good luck, he jumped up and came toward Zarathustra.

“Traveler, whoever you are,” he said, “help a lost man looking for someone, an old man who can easily get hurt here!

“This place is strange and unfamiliar. I have heard wild animals howling. The person who could have protected me is gone himself.

“I was looking for the last religious person, a holy hermit alone in his woods, who had not heard what everyone knows today.”

“*What* does everyone know?” Zarathustra asked. “That the old God everyone used to believe in is no longer alive?”

“Yes,” the old man said sadly. “I served that old God until his last hour.

“Now I have no job and no master. Still I am not free. The only times I feel happy anymore are when I remember things.

“I climbed these mountains to celebrate again at last, as an old pope and father of the church should. I am the last pope! I wanted a festival of religious memories and worship.

“But now that most religious man is dead too, the holy man in the forest who kept praising God by singing and growling.

“When I found his hut, he was not there anymore. But two wolves were there, howling over his death. Every animal loved him. I ran away.

“Had I come into these mountains and woods for nothing? I decided to look for someone else: the most religious person among those who do not believe in God. I decided to find Zarathustra!”

The old man looked sharply at the person in front of him as he spoke. Zarathustra took the old pope’s hand and admired it for a long time.

“Look at that,” he said. “What a lovely, long hand, respected old man! The hand of someone who always gave blessings. Now it is holding the person you want, me, Zarathustra.

“I am godless Zarathustra, who asks: who is more godless than I am, so I can enjoy learning from him?”—

Zarathustra looked through the old pope’s thoughts and secret thoughts. Finally the pope said:

“The one who loved and had him most has lost him most now—

“Perhaps I am the more godless of the two of us? But who could enjoy that?”—

After a long, quiet pause Zarathustra asked thoughtfully, “You served him until the end. Do you know *how* he died? Is it true that pity choked him—

“That he could not bear seeing *humanity* hanging on the cross? That love for humanity became his hell and finally his death?”— —

The old pope did not answer. He looked shyly away, his face painful and dark.

“Let him go,” Zarathustra said after thinking a long time, still looking straight into his eye.

“Let him go. He is gone. It does you credit to speak only well of the dead, but you know as well as I do *who* he was and the strange paths he took.”

“Speaking privately among three eyes,” the old pope said, cheering up—he was blind in one eye—“I know more about God’s affairs than Zarathustra himself. I am entitled to.

“My love served him many years. My will followed everything he wanted. A good servant knows everything, even things a master hides from himself.

“He was a hidden God with many secrets. Even his son came to him by sneaking ways. Adultery stands at the door of his faith.

“Anyone praising him as a God of love does not think highly enough of love itself. Didn’t this God also want to judge? A lover loves beyond rewards and repayment.

“When this eastern God was young, he was harsh and vengeful. He built hell to entertain his favorites.

“Eventually he became old, soft, frail, and full of pity. He was more a grandfather than a father, most like a shaky old grandmother.

“He sat withered by the stove, worrying about weak legs, tired of the world and of willing. One day he choked on too much pity.”

“Old pope,” Zarathustra interrupted, “did you see *that* yourself? It could have happened that way, *and* other ways too. Gods always die in many ways.

“But however it happened, he is gone. I did not like what I heard or saw of him. I would say nothing worse.

“I love everything that looks clearly and speaks honestly. But you know he was a bit like you, old priest, priestlike: he had many meanings.

“He was unclear as well. He was so angry with us for misunderstanding him! Why didn’t he speak more clearly?

“If our ears were the problem, why give us ears that heard him badly? If there was mud in them, who put it there?

“Too many things went wrong for him, that potter who had not learned his job! Taking revenge on his pots and creatures for turning out badly was a sin against *good taste*.

“Even religious feeling can have good taste. At last it said, ‘Away with *that sort of* God! Better no God, better to make fate myself, better to be a fool, better to be God myself!’”

“What am I hearing?” the old pope asked, listening closely. “Zarathustra, that unbelief makes you more religious than you think! Some God in you converted you to godlessness.

“Isn’t your religious feeling itself what stops you believing in God? Your extreme honesty will lead you even beyond good and evil!

“Look at what has been saved for you. Your eyes, hand, and mouth have been meant for blessing forever. People do not bless with the hand alone.

“Near you, even though you want to be the most godless, I smell a secret holiness and sweetness from long blessings. It makes me feel good and bad.

“Let me be your guest for just one night! Right now there is nowhere on earth I would feel better than with you!” —

“Amen! All right!” Zarathustra said, very surprised. “The path up there leads to my cave.

“I would gladly guide you, respected old man. I love all religious people. But a cry for help calls me away urgently.

“Nobody is to be harmed in my territory. My cave is a safe harbor. I would like to put every sad person back on solid ground and steady feet.

“But who could take *your* sadness off your shoulders? I am too weak. We might have to wait a long time for someone to wake your God again.

“That old God is no longer alive. He is completely dead.” —

That is what Zarathustra said.

The Ugliest Person

Zarathustra’s feet kept moving through mountains and woods. His eyes searched everywhere for the great sufferer crying for help, but did not find him. Still, he felt happy and grateful the whole way. “This day has given me good things in return for starting badly!” he said. “I have met such strange people to talk to!

“I will chew their words for a long time like good grain. My teeth will grind them small until they flow into my soul like milk!” —

The path turned around a rock and the scene suddenly changed. Zarathustra entered a land of death. Black and red cliffs stuck up, with no grass, trees, or birdsong. Every animal avoided this valley, even predators, except one kind of ugly, fat, green snake that came here to die when old. Shepherds therefore called it Snakes’ Death.

Zarathustra sank into a dark memory. He felt he had stood in this valley before. Heavy thoughts came over him. He walked more and more slowly and finally stopped. Opening his eyes, he saw something sitting beside the road. It had a human shape, though barely human, something he could not describe. He was suddenly terribly ashamed to have looked at it. Blushing right up to his white

hair, he looked away and lifted his foot to leave. Then the dead emptiness made a noise. Gurgling and rattling rose from the ground, like water struggling through blocked pipes at night. Finally it became a human voice saying:

“Zarathustra! Zarathustra! Solve my puzzle! Speak, speak! Tell me: what is *revenge on a witness*?

“I am calling you back. The ice is slippery here! Watch out, watch out, or your pride may break its legs!

“You think you are wise, proud Zarathustra! Then solve the puzzle I am, you hard nutcracker! Tell me who *I* am!”

What do you think happened to Zarathustra when he heard this? *Pity attacked him*. He fell suddenly like an oak that had resisted many woodcutters for a long time, so heavily and quickly that even the people trying to cut it down would be frightened. But he stood again immediately and his face hardened.

“I know you,” he said in a voice like metal. “*You murdered God!* Let me go.

“You could not *bear* the one who saw *you*, who always saw right through you, ugliest person! You took revenge on that witness!”

Zarathustra started to leave. The indescribable person caught a corner of his clothes and gurgled again, looking for words. Finally he said, “Stay—

“Stay! Don’t walk past! I know what ax knocked you down. Well done for standing again!

“You understood how the person who killed him feels, God’s murderer. Stay! Sit beside me. It will not be wasted.

“Who else would I go to? Stay, sit down! But don’t look at me. Respect my ugliness that way!

“They are chasing me. *You* are my last shelter. *Not* with their hatred, *not* with their hunters—I would laugh at that kind of chase and feel proud and happy!

“Haven’t people well pursued always had success? A good pursuer easily learns to *follow*: he is already behind! But their *pity*—

“I run from their pity and come to you. Protect me, Zarathustra, my last shelter, the only one who understood me—

“You know how the person who killed *him* feels. Stay! If you must go, impatient man, do not take the road I came along. *That* road is bad.

“Are you angry because I have talked badly and brokenly too long? Because I already advise you? Remember, I am the ugliest person—

“With the biggest, heaviest feet as well. Any road *I* take is bad. I trample every road to death and ruin.

“But you passed me quietly and blushed. I saw that. That is how I knew you were Zarathustra.

“Anyone else would have thrown me charity, pity, through words and looks. You realized I am not enough of a beggar for that—

“I am too *rich*: rich in great things, frightening things, the ugliest things, things beyond speech! Your shame *respected* me!

“I barely escaped the crowd of pitying people to find the one person teaching that pity is pushy: you, Zarathustra!

“Whether a God’s pity or human pity, it disregards a person’s shame. Not wanting to help can be nobler than the virtue that jumps in to help.

“But *that*, pity, is what all small people now call virtue itself. They have no respect for great misfortune, great ugliness, great failure.

“I look over them as a dog looks over a crowd of sheep. Small, kindly, well-meaning gray people! Like a heron looking down over shallow pools with its head drawn back, I look past these crowds of little gray waves and wills and souls.

“People agreed these small people were right for too long. Finally they gave them power. Now they teach, ‘Only what small people call good is good.’

“Today ‘truth’ means what the preacher said, who came from them, that odd holy man defending small people, who said of himself, ‘I am the truth.’

“That immodest man has long made small people proud. It was no small error to teach, ‘I am the truth.’

“Was an immodest person ever answered more politely? But you passed him and said, ‘No! No! Three times no!’

“You warned against his mistake. You were the first to warn against pity—not everybody and not nobody, but yourself and your kind.

“You feel ashamed at the great sufferer’s shame. When you say, ‘A big cloud is coming from pity: watch out, people!’—

“When you teach, ‘All creators are hard, all great love is above its pity,’ you seem very well trained in weather signs to me!

“But warn yourself against *your own* pity too! Many people are coming to you: suffering, doubting, despairing, drowning, freezing—

“I warn you against me too. You solved my best and worst puzzle: myself and what I did. I know the ax that can fell you.

“He *had* to die. His eyes saw *everything*: people’s deepest parts and foundations, every hidden shame and ugliness.

“His pity had no shame. He crawled into my dirtiest corners. So curious, so intrusive, so full of pity: he had to die.

“He always saw *me*. I wanted revenge on that kind of witness, or not to live myself.

“The God who saw everything, *including human beings*, had to die! A human being *cannot stand* such a witness living.”

The ugliest person finished. Zarathustra stood up to leave: the cold had reached his insides.

“You whom I cannot describe,” he said, “you warned me about your road. In thanks I recommend mine. Zarathustra’s cave is up there.

“It is big and deep, with many corners. The person most in need of hiding can hide there. Nearby are a hundred places and secret paths for crawling, flying, and jumping animals.

“Outcast who cast yourself out, you do not want to live among human beings and their pity? Do what I do! You will learn from me that way. Only someone who acts learns.

“First speak to my animals. The proudest and cleverest animals may be the right advisers for both of us!”

Zarathustra left more slowly and thoughtfully than before. He had many questions and could not easily answer them.

“How poor human beings are!” he thought. “So ugly, rattling, full of hidden shame!

“People tell me humanity loves itself. That must be an enormous love! It has so much contempt against it!

“This man too loved himself as he despised himself. I see a great lover and a great despiser in him.

“I never found anyone who despised himself more deeply. Even *that* is a height. Could *he* be the higher human being whose cry I heard?

“I love the people who deeply despise. But the human being is something to overcome.” — —

The Beggar by Choice

Leaving the ugliest person made Zarathustra cold and lonely. So many cold, lonely things went through his mind that his arms and legs grew colder too. He kept climbing up and down, past green pastures and rough stones where an impatient stream had once made its bed. Suddenly he felt warmer and happier.

“What happened?” he wondered. “Something warm and alive refreshes me. It must be close.

“I already feel less alone. Companions and brothers I do not know are moving around me. Their warm breath touches my soul.”

Looking for what comforted his loneliness, he saw cows together on a hill. Their closeness and smell had warmed him. They seemed interested in someone speaking and ignored his approach. Close by, he clearly heard a person’s voice among them. All the cows had turned their heads to the speaker.

Zarathustra hurried up and pushed between them. He feared someone was hurt and could hardly be helped by cows feeling sorry for him. But he was wrong. A peaceful man sat on the ground, apparently telling the animals not to fear him. He was a preacher on mountains, and goodness itself spoke from his eyes. “What are you looking for here?” Zarathustra asked, surprised.

“What am I looking for? The same thing you are, troublemaker: happiness on earth.

“I want these cows to teach me about it. I have been talking to them for half the morning. They were about to answer. Why interrupt?

“We will not enter heaven unless we change and become like cows. We should learn one thing from them: chewing the cud.

“What good would winning the whole world do a person who did not learn that? It would not free him from sadness—

“The great sadness we call *disgust* today. Who does not have their heart, mouth, and eyes full of disgust? You too! You too! But look at these cows!”—

The mountain preacher turned his eyes from the cows, which he had been watching lovingly, to Zarathustra. He suddenly changed. “Who am I talking to?” he cried, startled, jumping up.

“This is the man free from disgust, Zarathustra himself, who overcame the great disgust! These are Zarathustra’s own eyes, mouth, and heart!”

He kissed Zarathustra’s hands with tears filling his eyes. He behaved as though a valuable gift, a jewel, had suddenly fallen from heaven. The cows watched in surprise.

“Don’t talk about me, strange, lovable man!” Zarathustra said, holding off his affection. “Tell me about yourself first! Aren’t you the beggar by choice who once gave up a great fortune—

“Who was ashamed of his wealth and the rich and ran to the poorest to give them his plenty and heart? But they would not accept him.”

“They would not accept me,” the beggar answered. “You know. Finally I went to animals, these cows.”

“Then you learned,” Zarathustra interrupted, “that giving well is harder than receiving well. Giving properly is an *art*, goodness’s final and cleverest skill.”

“Especially today,” the beggar replied, “when everything low has grown rebellious, shy, and proud in its own way, the rabble’s way.

“You know the hour has come for the great, bad, long, slow uprising of rabble and slaves. It keeps growing!

“Now doing favors and giving little things angers the lowly. People with too much wealth had better watch out!

“People today like breaking the necks of those who drip like fat bottles through necks that are too narrow.

“Greedy desire, bitter envy, resentful revenge, rabble pride: all jumped in my face. It is no longer true that the poor are blessed. But heaven’s kingdom is among cows.”

“Why isn’t it among the rich?” Zarathustra asked to test him, keeping back cows that were breathing trustingly at the peaceful man.

“Why test me?” he answered. “You know better than I do. What drove me to the poorest? Disgust with our richest people—

“Prisoners of wealth, picking advantages from every rubbish heap, cold eyes and lustful thoughts, rabble whose smell reaches heaven—

“Fake, gilded rabble whose fathers were thieves, vultures, or rag collectors, whose women are willing, lustful, forgetful, all of them not far from prostitution—

“Rabble at the top, rabble at the bottom! What do ‘poor’ and ‘rich’ mean now? I unlearned the difference and ran farther and farther away, until I reached these cows.”

The peaceful man panted and sweated at his own words. The cows were surprised again. Zarathustra watched his face with a smile, silently shaking his head at the harsh speech.

“You force yourself to use those hard words, mountain preacher. Your mouth and eyes did not grow for harshness.

“I don’t think your stomach did either. *It* objects to this anger, hate, and overflow. It wants gentler things. You are no butcher.

“You seem more a man of plants and roots. Perhaps you grind grain. You certainly dislike fleshly pleasures and love honey.”

“You guessed me right,” the beggar said, relieved. “I love honey and grind grain. I looked for what tastes pleasant and keeps the breath clean—

“What takes time, a day’s mouth-work for gentle people who like idling and wasting time.

“These cows have gone farthest. They invented chewing the cud and lying in the sun. They avoid heavy thoughts that puff up the heart.”

“Good!” Zarathustra said. “You should see *my* animals, my eagle and snake. Nothing like them lives on earth today.

“That road leads to my cave. Stay as their guest tonight. Talk with them about animals’ happiness—

“Until I return. A cry for help calls me away now. You will find new honey there too, golden honey in the comb, fresh as ice. Eat it!

“Now say goodbye quickly to your cows, strange, lovable man, even if it is hard. They are your warmest friends and teachers!”—

“Except one I love more,” the beggar answered. “You yourself are good, even better than a cow, Zarathustra!”

“Go away, go away, awful flatterer!” Zarathustra shouted with malice. “Why spoil me with praise and honeyed compliments?”

“Away, away from me!” he shouted again, swinging his stick at the affectionate beggar, who quickly ran off.

The Shadow

The beggar had barely run away and left Zarathustra alone when a new voice called from behind, “Stop, Zarathustra! Wait for me! It is me, Zarathustra, your shadow!” Zarathustra did not wait. He was suddenly annoyed by everyone crowding his mountains. “Where has my time alone gone?” he said.

“This is too much. The mountains are crowded. My kingdom no longer belongs to *this* world. I need new mountains.

“My shadow is calling? What do I care about it? Let it chase me. I will run away.”

He told himself that and ran. The person behind followed. Soon three people ran one after another: the beggar first, Zarathustra next, his shadow last. Before long Zarathustra noticed how foolish this was and shook away all irritation and disgust.

“Have the funniest things not always happened among us old hermits and saints?” he asked.

“My foolishness has grown tall in the mountains! I hear six old fools’ legs clattering after each other!

“Should Zarathustra be afraid of a shadow? Besides, its legs seem longer than mine.”

Laughing with his eyes and whole insides, he stopped and turned quickly. He almost knocked his shadow down. It was so close behind him and so weak. Looking at it scared him as if he had suddenly seen a ghost: his follower was thin, dark, hollow, worn out.

“Who are you?” he asked sharply. “What are you doing? Why call yourself my shadow? I don’t like you.”

“Forgive me for being that,” the shadow answered. “If you dislike me, I congratulate you on your good taste.

“I am a wanderer who followed your heels a long time, always traveling, with neither goal nor home. I am almost the Wandering Jew, except I do not live forever and am not a Jew.

“Must I always travel? Every wind whirls me around, unsettled, driven on! Earth, you have become too round!

“I sat on every surface and slept like tired dust on mirrors and windows. Everything takes, nothing gives. I grow thin, almost like a shadow.

“But I followed you longest, Zarathustra. Though I hid, I was your best shadow. I sat wherever you sat.

“With you I traveled through the farthest, coldest worlds, like a ghost choosing to cross winter roofs and snow.

“With you I aimed at everything forbidden, worst, most distant. If I have any virtue, it is not being afraid of any ban.

“With you I broke what my heart had respected, knocked over every boundary stone and image, pursued the most dangerous desires. I crossed over every crime at least once.

“With you I stopped believing words, values, and famous names. When the devil changes skins, doesn’t he lose his name too? It is also skin. Perhaps the devil himself is skin.

“‘Nothing is true, everything is allowed,’ I told myself. I jumped into the coldest waters, head and heart together. So often afterward I stood naked as a red crab!

“Where did all my good, shame, and belief in good people go? Where is the false innocence I once had, the innocence of good people and their noble lies?

“I followed truth too closely, too often. It kicked me in the head. Sometimes I thought I was lying. Then I finally hit the truth.

“I had too many things explained to me. Now nothing interests me. Nothing I love lives anymore. How could I love myself?

“Live how I want, or not live at all’: that is what I want, what the holiest person wants too. But what do *I* still want?

“Do *I* have a goal left? A harbor *my* sail heads toward?

“A favorable wind? Only knowing *where* you are going tells you which wind is good for your trip.

“What is left? A tired, rude heart, a restless will, fluttering wings, a broken back.

“Looking for *my* home has been *my* affliction, Zarathustra. It eats me up.

“Where is *my* home?’ I ask and keep looking. I have never found it. Forever everywhere, forever nowhere, forever for nothing!”

The shadow finished, and Zarathustra’s face grew long. Finally he said sadly,

“You are my shadow!

“You face a serious danger, free spirit and wanderer. You had a bad day. Make sure the evening is not worse!

“Even prison eventually feels happy to someone as restless as you. Have you seen captured criminals sleep? They sleep peacefully, enjoying a new safety.

“Take care not to get caught at last in a narrow belief, a hard, strict delusion. Everything narrow and solid now tempts you.

“You lost your goal. How will you laugh off and bear that loss? You lost your path along with it!

“Poor wanderer, dreamer, tired butterfly! Do you want somewhere to rest and stay this evening? Go up to my cave!

“That path leads there. Now I want to run from you again. Something already hangs over me like a shadow.

“I want to run alone until it is bright around me again. I must stay happily on my feet a long time for that. But this evening there will be dancing at my home!” — —

That is what Zarathustra said.

Midday

Zarathustra ran and ran and found nobody else. He was alone, kept finding himself, and enjoyed drinking in his solitude and thinking of good things for hours. Around midday, with the sun directly overhead, he passed an old, crooked, knotted tree. A vine’s great love wrapped around it, hiding it even

from itself. Plenty of yellow grapes hung toward the traveler. He wanted to pick a bunch to quench a little thirst. But as he reached, something else seemed even better: lying beside the tree at perfect noon and sleeping.

He lay down. In the quiet shelter of the colorful grass he immediately forgot his thirst and fell asleep. As his saying goes, one thing is more necessary than another. But his eyes stayed open: they could not stop looking at and praising the tree and the vine's love. As he fell asleep, he told himself:

"Quiet! Quiet! Didn't the world just become perfect? What is happening?"

"Sleep dances over me like a delicate, invisible wind dancing on a sea patterned like panels, light as a feather.

"It does not close my eyes. My soul stays awake. It is light, truly feather-light.

"It persuades me somehow, touches me inside with a gentle hand, forces me. Yes, it forces my soul to stretch out—

"My odd soul is becoming so long and tired! Has the evening of a seventh day arrived right at noon? Has it spent too long happily among good, ripe things?

"It stretches long, long—longer! It lies quiet. It has tasted too much goodness. This golden sadness weighs on it and twists its mouth.

"A ship reaches its quietest bay. It leans against earth, tired of long trips and uncertain seas. Isn't earth more faithful?

"When that ship snuggles close to shore, a spider's thread spun from land is enough. It needs no stronger ropes.

"Like a tired ship in that quiet bay, I rest close to earth, faithful, trusting, waiting, fastened to it with the slightest threads.

"Happiness! Happiness! Do you want to sing, my soul? You are lying in grass. But this is the private, solemn hour when no shepherd plays a flute.

"Be respectful! Hot noon sleeps in the fields. Don't sing! Quiet! The world is perfect.

"Don't sing, bird in the grass, my soul! Don't even whisper! Look quietly. Old noon sleeps and moves his mouth. Isn't he drinking a drop of happiness—

"An old brown drop of golden happiness, golden wine? Something passes quickly over him. His happiness laughs. That is how a God laughs. Quiet!—

“How little it takes to be happy!” I once said, thinking myself clever. But that was blasphemy: I have learned *that* now. Clever fools say it better.

“The smallest, quietest, lightest thing, a lizard rustling, a breath, a quick movement, a glance—*little* makes up the *best* happiness. Quiet!

“What happened? Listen! Did time fly away? Am I falling? Listen, did I fall into eternity’s well?

“What is happening? Quiet! Something stabs my heart. My heart! Break, heart, break after such happiness, such a stab!

“Hasn’t the world just become perfect, round and ripe? That round golden hoop, where is it flying? Let me run after it! Quickly!

“Quiet—” Zarathustra stretched here and felt he was asleep.

“Get up, sleeper!” he told himself. “Noon sleeper! Get going, old legs! It is time, past time. A good stretch of road remains—

“You have slept enough. How long was it? Half an eternity! Get up, old heart! After sleeping like that, how long can you stay awake now?”

(He fell asleep again already. His soul resisted, speaking back and lying down.)

“Leave me alone! Quiet! Didn’t the world just become perfect? That golden, round ball!”—

“Stand up, little thief, time-waster!” Zarathustra said. “Still stretching, yawning, sighing, falling into deep wells?

“Who are you, my soul!” He jumped here as sunlight fell on his face from the sky.

“Sky above me,” he sighed, sitting up, “are you watching me? Listening to my odd soul?

“When will you drink this dewdrop that fell on everything earthly? When will you drink this odd soul—

“When, well of eternity, you bright and frightening depth of noon? When will you drink my soul back into yourself?”

Zarathustra got up from his bed by the tree as though leaving an unfamiliar drunkenness. The sun was still right above his head. It would be fair to conclude he had not slept long.

The Greeting

It was late afternoon before Zarathustra reached his cave after a long, unsuccessful search. Less than twenty steps away, he heard what he least expected: the great *cry for help* again. This time, amazingly, it came from his own cave. It was a long, strange cry in many parts. He clearly heard several voices, though from a distance they could sound like one mouth.

He hurried to the cave. What a sight followed that sound! Everyone he had passed that day sat together: the king on the right, the king on the left, the old magician, the pope, the beggar by choice, the shadow, the conscientious person of the spirit, the sad prophet, and the donkey. The ugliest man wore a crown and two purple belts. Like everyone ugly, he liked dressing up and trying to look beautiful. Zarathustra's eagle stood in the middle, nervous, feathers raised. Too many questions were asked of it for its pride to answer. The clever snake hung around its neck.

Zarathustra was very surprised. He studied each guest with friendly interest, read their souls, and became surprised again. They stood up, waiting respectfully for him to speak. He said:

"You despairing, strange people! It was *your* cry for help I heard? Now I know where to find the person I searched for in vain: *the higher human being*—

"He is sitting in my own cave! Why am I surprised? Didn't I lure him here with a honey sacrifice and my happiness's clever calls?

"But you do not seem good company for one another. Sitting together like this, you make each other's hearts miserable, you people crying for help. Someone must come—

"Someone to make you laugh again, a cheerful clown, a dancer, a wind, a wild fellow, some old fool. What do you think?

"Forgive such little words, despairing people. They are unworthy of guests like you. But you cannot guess *what* makes me playful—

"It is you and the sight of you. Forgive me! Seeing somebody desperate makes anyone brave. Everyone feels strong enough to encourage a desperate person.

"You gave me that strength, a good gift, my important guests! A proper present from guests! Don't be angry if I offer some of what I have too.

“This is my kingdom and rule. This evening and night everything I own is yours. My animals will serve you. Rest in my cave!

“Nobody should despair in my home. In my territory I protect everyone from their wild beasts. The first thing I offer is safety.

“The second is my little finger. Once you have *that*, take my whole hand and my heart too! Welcome here, welcome, my guests and friends!”

Zarathustra laughed with love and malice as he said it. His guests bowed and fell respectfully quiet again. The king on the right answered for them.

“We know you are Zarathustra by your handshake and greeting. You lowered yourself before us and almost hurt our respect for you—

“But who else could lower himself with such pride? *That* lifts us up and refreshes our eyes and hearts.

“We would gladly climb higher mountains just to see that. We came to look, to see what makes sad eyes bright.

“Already our crying for help has stopped. Our minds and hearts are open and happy. Our courage is almost turning playful.

“Nothing growing on earth brings more pleasure than a high, strong will. It is earth’s most beautiful plant. One such tree refreshes a whole landscape.

“I compare someone growing like you, Zarathustra, to a pine: tall, quiet, hard, alone, magnificent, made of the best and most flexible wood—

“Finally stretching strong green branches toward *its own* rule, asking powerful questions of winds, storms, and everything living high up—

“Giving more powerful answers, commanding, winning: who wouldn’t climb high mountains to see trees like that?

“Your tree refreshes gloomy people and failures too. Seeing you steadies even restless people and heals their hearts.

“Many eyes now turn to your mountain and tree. A great longing has started traveling. Many have learned to ask, Who is Zarathustra?

“Everyone whose ears you ever filled with song and honey, all the hidden people, hermits, and pairs living alone, suddenly told themselves:

“‘Is Zarathustra still alive? Life is not worth living, everything is the same, everything wasted—or we must live with Zarathustra!’

“‘Why doesn’t he come?’ many ask. ‘He announced himself so long ago. Did solitude swallow him? Or should we go to him?’

“Now solitude itself softens and breaks like a grave breaking open, unable to keep the dead inside. Everywhere people are rising.

“The waves keep rising around your mountain. However high you are, many must climb to you. Your boat will not stay on dry land much longer.

“Our coming here in despair and already losing that despair is only a true sign of what is coming: better people are on their way—

“He himself is coming, the last bit of God among people: everyone with great longing, disgust, and weariness—

“Everyone unwilling to live unless they learn to *hope* again, or learn from you the *great* hope!”

The king took Zarathustra’s hand to kiss it. But Zarathustra rejected that worship and stepped back in alarm. He went quiet, seeming suddenly far away. Soon he returned his attention to his guests, looked at them carefully with bright eyes, and said:

“My guests, higher human beings, I will speak clearly in German to you. I was not waiting for *you* in these mountains.”

(“Clear German? God help us!” the king on the left said aside. “This wise man from the East plainly does not know the dear Germans!

“He means German and blunt. Well, that is not the worst taste nowadays!”)

“You may all be higher human beings,” Zarathustra continued, “but you are not high or strong enough for me.

“By ‘me’ I mean the uncompromising thing inside me, silent but not always going to be silent. If you belong to me, you still are not my right arm.

“People standing on weak, delicate legs like yours chiefly want to be *spared*, whether they know it or hide it.

“I do not spare my arms or legs. *I do not spare my warriors*. How could you fit *my* war?

“You would ruin every victory for me. Some of you would fall just from hearing my loud drums.

“You are not beautiful or well-born enough either. My teachings need clean, smooth mirrors. Your surfaces distort my own picture.

“Many burdens and memories press your shoulders. Bad little dwarfs hide in your corners. There is rabble hidden in you too.

“Though you are high and of a higher kind, much of you is crooked and badly shaped. No smith could beat you straight and right for me.

“You are only bridges. Let higher people cross on you! You are steps. Don’t resent anyone climbing over you to *their own* height!

“One day a real son and perfect heir may grow from your seed for me. But that is far away. You yourselves do not inherit my property and name.

“I am not waiting for you in these mountains. I cannot go down for the last time with you. You only show that higher people are coming—

“*Not* the people of great longing, disgust, and weariness, what you called God’s leftover part.

“No! No! Three times no! I wait for *others* here and will not take a step away without them—

“Higher, stronger, more victorious, happier people, built square and solid in body and soul. *Laughing lions* must come!

“My strange guests, haven’t you heard of my children? Don’t you know they are coming?

“Tell me about my gardens, happy islands, and beautiful new kind. Why don’t you speak about them?

“I ask your love for this guest’s gift: speak of my children. This is why I am rich and why I became poor. What haven’t I given—

“What wouldn’t I give to have this one thing: *these* children, *this* living garden, *these* living trees of my will and highest hope!”

Zarathustra suddenly stopped. Longing overwhelmed him. His heart’s feelings made him shut his eyes and mouth. His guests stood silent and upset too. Only the old prophet made signals with his hands and body.

The Evening Meal

At this point the prophet interrupted the greetings between Zarathustra and his guests. He pushed forward like a man in a hurry, took Zarathustra's hand, and called, "But Zarathustra!

"You say one thing is more necessary than another. One thing is now more necessary to *me* than anything else.

"A timely word: didn't you invite me for *food*? Many people here have traveled a long way. Surely you will not give us speeches to eat?

"You have all talked too much about freezing, drowning, suffocating, and other bodily troubles. Nobody considered *my* trouble: starving!"

(His words frightened Zarathustra's animals into running away. They saw that all the food they had collected that day would not be enough to fill this one prophet.)

"Dying of thirst too," the prophet continued. "I hear water splashing like words of wisdom, plenty of it, never stopping. But I want *wine*!

"Not everybody is born to drink water like Zarathustra. Water is not for tired, withered people. Wine is for *us*. *It* brings sudden recovery and instant health!"

The prophet's demand for wine made the quiet king on the left speak at last. "*We* took care of wine," he said. "My brother and I have plenty, a whole donkey-load. Only bread is missing."

"Bread?" Zarathustra laughed. "Bread is exactly what hermits do not have. But people do not live on bread alone. Good lamb meat helps too, and I have two lambs—

"Kill *them* quickly and cook them with spices and sage. That is how I like it. We also have roots and fruit good enough for picky eaters and people who know good food. We have nuts and other puzzles to crack too.

"We will soon have a good meal. Anyone wanting to eat must help, kings included. A king can cook at Zarathustra's home."

Everybody liked that suggestion. Only the beggar by choice objected to meat, wine, and spices.

"Listen to this gourmet Zarathustra!" he joked. "Do people go to caves high in the mountains to eat meals like this?

“Now I understand his old teaching, ‘Praise a modest poverty!’ And why he wants to get rid of beggars.”

“Be happy, as I am,” Zarathustra answered. “Keep your ways, excellent man. Grind grain, drink water, praise your cooking, as long as it makes you happy!

“I make rules for my people only, not everybody. Those belonging to me need strong bones and light feet—

“Happy at wars and celebrations, not gloomy or dreamy, ready for the hardest task as for a party, healthy and whole.

“My people and I deserve the best. If it is not given, we take it: the best food, cleanest sky, strongest thoughts, most beautiful women!” —

Zarathustra said that. The king on the right replied, “Strange! Have such sensible things ever come from a wise man’s mouth?

“The strangest thing is a wise man also being sensible, not a donkey.”

The king on the right said this in surprise. The donkey answered unpleasantly, “Hee-haw.” That was how the long meal began that history books call ‘the Evening Meal.’ They talked about nothing except *the higher human being*.

About the Higher Human Being

- ¹ “When I first came to people, I made the great mistake of a hermit. I stood in the marketplace.

“I spoke to everyone and reached nobody. By evening my friends were tightrope walkers and dead bodies. I was nearly dead myself.

“The next morning brought a new truth. I learned to say, ‘What do I care about the marketplace, the rabble, its noise, and its long ears!’

“Higher human beings, learn this from me: nobody in the marketplace believes in higher human beings. Speak there if you like! The rabble just blinks, ‘We are all equal.’

“‘Higher human beings,’ it blinks, ‘there are no higher human beings. We are all equal. A person is a person. We are all equal before God!’

“Before God! But that God has died. We do not want equality before the rabble. Higher human beings, leave the marketplace!

2 “Before God! That God has died! Higher human beings, he was your greatest danger.

“Only after he went into the grave did you rise again. Only now does the great noon come, only now can the higher human being rule!

“Did you understand, my brothers? You are frightened. Are your hearts dizzy? Does a deep hole open here? Does hell’s dog bark here?

“Get going, higher human beings! Only now does the mountain of humanity’s future begin giving birth. God died. Now *we* want the overhuman to live.

3 “The most worried people ask today, ‘How can humanity survive?’ Zarathustra is the first and only one to ask, ‘How can humanity be *overcome*?’

“The overhuman matters to me. *That* is my first and only concern, *not* humanity: not my neighbor, the poorest, the person hurting most, or the best—

“My brothers, what I can love about human beings is their crossing over and going under. Much in you also makes me love and hope.

“Your contempt gives me hope, higher human beings. People who despise greatly also respect greatly.

“Your despair deserves respect. You did not learn to give in. You did not learn the little clever tricks.

“Small people rule today. They preach giving in, modesty, caution, hard work, consideration, and the long list of other small virtues.

“Everything womanish, everything servile, especially the mixed-up rabble: *that* wants to rule all human fate. Disgust! Disgust! Disgust!

“*That* keeps asking, ‘How can people survive best, longest, most comfortably?’ That makes them today’s rulers.

“Overcome today’s rulers, my brothers, these small people. *They* are the overhuman’s greatest danger!

“Higher human beings, overcome the little virtues and tricks, considerations as small as sand, the fussing of ants, miserable contentment, and ‘happiness for most people’!

“Better to despair than give in. I love you for not knowing how to live today! That is how *you* live best!

- 4 “Are you brave, my brothers? Do you have courage? *Not* courage in front of witnesses, but a hermit’s and eagle’s courage that not even a God watches?
 “Cold souls, mules, blind people, and drunks are not brave to me. A brave person knows fear but *controls* it, sees the depths but with *pride*.
 “Someone seeing the depths with an eagle’s eyes and *grasping* them with eagle claws has courage.— —
- 5 “All the wisest comforted me by saying, ‘People are evil.’ If only that were still true today! Evil is humanity’s best strength.
 “*I* teach, ‘Humanity must become better and more evil.’ The worst is necessary for the overhuman’s best.
 “It may have suited that preacher of small people to suffer and carry humanity’s sin. But great sin gives me great *comfort*.—
 “That is not for long ears. Not every word belongs in every mouth. These are subtle, faraway things. Sheep’s hooves should not grab them!
- 6 “Higher human beings, do you think I am here to fix what you did badly?
 “To give you sufferers more comfortable beds? To show easier paths to people restless, lost, stranded high up?
 “No! No! Three times no! More and more, better and better people like you must die. Your lives must get harder and worse. Only this way—
 “Only this way does humanity grow high enough for lightning to hit and break it!
 “My thoughts and longing concern a few things, lasting things, distant things. Why care about your many small, short troubles!
 “You do not suffer enough yet! You suffer from yourselves. You have not suffered *from humanity*. You would be lying to say otherwise. None of you hurts from what *I* hurt from.— —
- 7 “Making lightning harmless is not enough for me. I do not want to redirect it. It must learn to work for *me*.—
 “My wisdom has been collecting like a cloud, getting darker and quieter. Every wisdom that will give birth to *lightning* does that.—

"I do not want to be *light* for people today, or to be called light. I want to blind *them*. Lightning of my wisdom, put out their eyes!

- 8 "Do not want more than you can do. There is a dangerous dishonesty in people wanting things beyond their ability.

"Especially when they want great things! Those skilled counterfeiters and actors make people distrust greatness—

"Until finally they are dishonest with themselves, cross-eyed, rotten wood covered in whitewash, wrapped in big words, showy virtues, and shiny fake works.

"Be very careful about that, higher human beings! Nothing seems rarer or more valuable today than honesty.

"Doesn't today belong to the rabble? The rabble does not know what is big or small, straight or honest. It is innocently crooked and always lies.

- 9 "Be properly suspicious today, higher human beings, brave and openhearted people! Keep your reasons private. Today belongs to the rabble.

"Who could overturn with reasons what the rabble never learned to believe without reasons?

"Gestures convince people in the marketplace. Reasons make the rabble suspicious.

"If truth wins there, ask suspiciously, 'What strong mistake fought on its side?'

"Watch out for scholars too. They hate you because they cannot produce anything. Their eyes are cold and dry. Every bird before them has its feathers pulled out.

"They boast that they do not lie. But being unable to lie is not the same as loving truth. Be careful!

"Not having a fever is not the same as knowledge. I do not believe cold spirits. A person unable to lie does not know what truth is.

- 10 "Want to climb high? Use your own legs! Do not let anybody *carry* you. Do not sit on other people's backs or heads!

"Did you get on a horse? Are you riding fast to your goal? Good, friend! But your lame foot is on the horse too!

“When you reach the goal and get off, right there on your *height*, higher human being, you will stumble!

- 11 “Creators, higher human beings, you can be pregnant only with your own child.

“Do not let anyone talk you into things! Who is *your* neighbor? Even if you act ‘for your neighbor,’ you are not creating for him!

“Creators, unlearn that ‘for.’ Your virtue demands that you do nothing ‘for,’ ‘in order to,’ or ‘because.’ Block your ears against those false little words.

“‘For the neighbor’ is only small people’s virtue. It means ‘like goes with like’ and ‘one hand washes the other.’ They have no right or strength for *your* self-interest!

“Your self-interest includes a pregnant woman’s care and planning. All your love protects, spares, and feeds the fruit nobody has seen yet.

“All your virtue is where all your love is: with your child. Your work and will are *your* ‘neighbor.’ Do not let people put false values into you!

- 12 “Creators, higher human beings, someone who has to give birth is sick. Someone who has given birth is unclean.

“Ask women: giving birth is not done for pleasure. Pain makes hens and poets cackle.

“Much in you creators is unclean because you had to become mothers.

“A new child brings so much new dirt into the world! Step aside! Anyone who gave birth should wash their soul clean!

- 13 “Do not demand more virtue than you have strength for! Do not want something from yourself that goes against what is likely!

“Follow the footprints of your fathers’ virtues. How could you climb high without their will climbing with you?

“Anyone wanting to be the firstborn should avoid becoming the lastborn too! Where your fathers had vices, do not try to pass as saints!

“If someone’s fathers loved women, strong wine, and wild boar, what would it mean for him to demand chastity of himself?

“It would be foolish! I would think it a lot if that man were husband to one, two, or three women.

“Even if he founded monasteries and wrote ‘The road to holiness’ over their doors, I would ask why. It is another foolish act!

“He built himself a prison and a place to hide. I hope it suits him! But I do not believe in it.

“Whatever people bring into solitude grows there, including the animal inside. That is why many should avoid it.

“Has anything dirtier lived on earth than desert saints? Around *them*, not just the devil but pigs ran loose.

14 “Higher human beings, I have often watched you sneak away shyly, ashamed and clumsy, like tigers failing a jump. A *throw* failed for you.

“But you dice players, why care? You did not learn to play and laugh as you should. Aren’t we always at a great table for games and mockery?

“If something great failed, are you a failure too? If you failed, did humanity fail? Even if humanity failed, get up and get going!

15 “The higher the kind, the less often a thing turns out well. Haven’t all you higher human beings here failed?

“Be brave. Why care? So much remains possible! Learn to laugh at yourselves properly!

“Why be surprised you failed and half succeeded, you half-broken people? Doesn’t humanity’s *future* push and crowd inside you?

“Humanity’s farthest reaches, deepest depths, starry heights, its enormous strength: isn’t all that foaming against itself in your pot?

“Why be surprised some pots break? Learn how to laugh at yourselves! So much remains possible, higher human beings!

“So much has already turned out well! This earth has so many good, small, perfect things, things that succeeded!

“Put good, small, perfect things around you. Their golden ripeness heals the heart. Perfect things teach hope.

16 “What has been the biggest sin on earth? Wasn’t it the saying, ‘Trouble for those who laugh here!’?”

“Couldn’t that speaker find a reason to laugh on earth? Then he did not look properly. A child can find reasons here.

“He did not love enough. Otherwise he would have loved us laughing people too! Instead he hated and mocked us, promising crying and grinding teeth.

“Must you curse what you do not love? That seems bad taste. But this man who insisted on absolutes did it. He came from the rabble.

“He himself did not love enough. Otherwise not being loved would have made him less angry. Great love does not *want* love. It wants more.

“Avoid all people like that who insist on absolutes! They are a poor, sick, common kind. They look at life badly and give this earth evil looks.

“Avoid all people like that who insist on absolutes! Their feet are heavy, their hearts hot and airless. They cannot dance. How could earth feel light to them!

17 “All good things approach their goals crookedly. Like cats, they arch their backs and purr inside at the happiness coming. All good things laugh.

“A person’s step shows whether they are on *their own* path. Watch me walk! Near a goal, people dance.

“I have not become a statue. I do not stand there stiff, dull, stony, like a column. I like running fast.

“Even if the ground has swamps and thick sadness, light feet run over mud and dance as though on clean ice.

“Raise your hearts, brothers, high, higher! Do not forget your legs! Lift them too, good dancers. Better yet, stand on your heads!

18 “This crown of laughter, this crown of roses: I put it on myself. I declared my own laughter holy. Nobody else I found today was strong enough.

“Zarathustra dances, is light, waves his wings, gets ready to fly, waves to every bird, prepared and ready, happily lighthearted—

“Zarathustra predicts truth and laughs truth, neither impatient nor demanding everything be absolute, enjoying jumps and sideways jumps. I put this crown on myself!

19 “Raise your hearts, brothers, high, higher! Do not forget your legs! Lift them too, good dancers. Better yet, stand on your heads!

“There are heavy animals even in happiness, clumsy-footed from birth. They struggle strangely, like elephants trying to stand on their heads.

“Better foolish with happiness than with misery. Better dancing clumsily than walking with a limp. Learn my wisdom: even the worst thing has two good reverse sides—

“Even the worst thing has good legs for dancing. Higher human beings, learn to stand on your own proper legs!

“Stop blowing bubbles of gloom and sharing the rabble’s sadness! Even its clowns seem sad to me today. But today belongs to the rabble.

20 “Act like wind rushing out of mountain caves. It dances to its own tune, and seas shake and jump under its feet.

“It gives donkeys wings and milks lionesses. Praise this good, wild spirit, coming like a storm to everything of today and all the rabble—

“It opposes thistle-heads, nitpickers, dead leaves, and weeds. Praise this wild, good, free storm-spirit dancing over marshes and sadness as if over meadows!

“It hates the rabble’s sickly dogs and every badly formed, gloomy brood. Praise the spirit of all free spirits, the laughing storm blowing dust into the eyes of people seeing only darkness and feeling misery!

“Your worst problem, higher human beings, is not learning how to dance beyond yourselves. Why care that you failed!

“So much is still possible! *Learn* to laugh beyond yourselves! Lift your hearts high, higher, good dancers! Don’t forget a good laugh!

“This crown of laughter, this crown of roses: I throw it to you, my brothers! I made laughter holy. Higher human beings, *learn* to laugh!”

The Song of Sadness

1 Zarathustra stood near the cave entrance while speaking. With his last words, he slipped away from his guests and went outside for a little while.

“Clean smells around me!” he cried. “Happy quiet around me! But where are my animals? Come here, my eagle and snake!

“Tell me, my animals, do these higher human beings perhaps *smell* bad? What clean smells here! Only now do I know and feel how much I love you.”

He repeated, “I love you, my animals!” The eagle and snake moved close and looked up at him. The three stayed quietly together, sniffing and drinking the good air. It was better outside than among the higher human beings.

² Zarathustra had hardly left when the old magician stood, looked around cunningly, and said, “He’s gone!

“Already, higher human beings—let me flatter you with that name and tickle you as he does—my evil spirit of trickery and magic is attacking me, my sad devil—

“He opposes this Zarathustra completely. Forgive him! He *wants* to do magic before you. This is *his* hour. I cannot win my struggle against him.

“All of you, whatever honors you give yourselves, whether you call yourselves ‘free spirits,’ ‘truthful,’ ‘people doing penance in spirit,’ ‘unchained,’ or ‘people of great longing’—

“All of you who suffer like me *from great disgust*, whose old God died while no new God yet lies in a cradle or diapers, my evil spirit and magical devil likes you.

“I know you, higher human beings. I know him. I know this monster I love against my will, this Zarathustra. Often he looks like a beautiful saint’s mask—

“A new, strange costume in which my evil spirit, the sad devil, likes to dress. I often think I love Zarathustra for my evil spirit’s sake.—

“Now *he* attacks and forces me, this spirit of sadness, this devil of evening twilight. He wants something, higher human beings—

“Open your eyes! He wants to come *naked*. I do not yet know whether male or female. But he comes, he forces me. Open your senses!

“The day is ending. Evening comes for everything, even the best. Listen and watch, higher human beings, to find what devil, man or woman, this spirit of evening sadness is!”

The old magician looked around cunningly and picked up his harp.

³ “When the air has cooled,

And the comfort of dew
Flows down to earth,
Not seen or heard—
For soft shoes are worn
By comforting Dew, like every gentle comforter—
Do you remember, remember, hot heart,
How you once thirsted,
For heaven's tears and dripping dew,
Thirsted scorched and tired,
While on yellow grass paths
Nasty evening sun-glances
Ran through black trees around you,
Blinding, glowing looks enjoying your pain?

“Someone courting *truth*? You?’ they mocked.

‘No! Just a poet!
An animal, cunning, hunting, sneaking,
That has to lie,

“That must lie knowingly and willingly,
Wanting prey,
Wearing bright masks,
Its own mask,
Its own prey—
That courts truth?

No! Just a fool! Just a poet!
Saying only colorful things,
Shouting colorfully out of fools' masks,
Climbing over lying bridges of words,
Over colorful rainbows,
Between false skies
And false earths,

Wandering, floating—
Just a fool! Just a poet!

“*That* courts truth?
Not quiet, stiff, smooth, cold,
Turned into an image,
A pillar of God,
Not set outside temples,
A God’s doorkeeper:
No! Hating those statues of truth,
More at home in wilderness than outside temples,
Full of a cat’s mischief,
Jumping through every window,
Quickly into every chance,
Sniffing toward every ancient forest,
Hunggrily, longingly sniffing,
So that in ancient forests
Among predators with colorful spots

“You could run sinfully healthy, colorful, beautiful,
With hungry lips,
Happily mocking, happily hellish, happily bloodthirsty,
Robbing, sneaking, lying as you ran—

“Or like an eagle that for a long,
Long time stares into deep holes,
Into *its own* depths— —
How they twist down here,
Down, in,
Into ever deeper depths!—
Then,
Suddenly, straight down,
In a darting flight,

To attack lambs,
Quickly down, hungry,
Wanting lambs,
Hating all lamb souls,
Fiercely hating everything looking
Sheeplike, lamb-eyed, curly-wooled,
Gray, with the kindness of lambs and sheep!

“That is how,
Like eagles and panthers,
The poet’s desires are,
How *your* desires are under a thousand masks,
You fool! You poet!

“You saw humanity
As God and sheep together—
To *tear apart* the God in people

“And the sheep in people too,
And *laugh* while tearing—

“*That, that* is your happiness!
A panther’s and eagle’s happiness!
A poet’s and fool’s happiness!’ — —

“When the air has cleared,
And the moon’s sickle
Slips green among purple reds,
Enviously, quietly—
Hating the day,
Secretly with every step
Slicing at rose hammocks
Until they fall,
Fall pale down into night—

“That is how I once sank
From my obsession with truth,
From my daylight desires,
Tired of day, sick from light,
Down, toward evening and shadow:
From one truth
Burned and thirsty—
Do you remember, remember, hot heart,
How you thirsted then?—
To be shut out
From *all* truth!
Just a fool! Just a poet!”

About Science

Everyone listening to the magician’s song slipped into his clever, sad net of desire like birds without noticing. Only the conscientious person of the spirit escaped. He quickly grabbed the harp and shouted, “Air! Let fresh air in! Let Zarathustra in! You are making the cave hot and poisonous, nasty old magician! “You liar, you clever man, you lead us toward unfamiliar desires and wildernesses. It is bad when someone like you makes a show of talking about *truth*!

“Trouble for free spirits that do not watch out for *magicians like that*! Their freedom is gone. You teach and tempt people back into prison—

“Old sad devil, your complaints sound like a pipe used as bait. You resemble people who secretly invite sexual pleasure by praising chastity!”

The old magician looked around, enjoying his victory, and swallowed his annoyance with the conscientious man. He answered modestly, “Quiet! Good songs want a good echo. A good song should be followed by a long silence.

“That is what all these higher human beings are doing. Perhaps you understood little of my song? You have little magic in you.”

“You praise me by separating me from yourself,” the conscientious man said.

“Good! But the rest of you still sit there with hungry eyes—

“Free souls, where did your freedom go? You look like people who spent too long watching bad, naked dancing girls. Your souls are dancing themselves!

“You higher human beings must have more of what the magician calls his evil spirit of magic and tricks. We must be different.

“We certainly talked and thought together enough before Zarathustra returned for me to know: we *are* different.

“We *want* different things even up here. I want more *safety*. That is why I came. Zarathustra is still the strongest tower and will—

“In a time when everything shakes, when the whole earth moves. But your looks almost make me think you want *less safety*—

“More shuddering, danger, and earthquakes. Forgive me for thinking this about you, higher human beings—

“You seem to want the worst and most dangerous life, the one that frightens *me* most: wild animals’ lives, forests, caves, steep mountains, confusing deep holes.

“You like best not guides *out* of danger, but people leading you away from every road, the seducers. If that desire in you is *real*, it still seems *impossible* to me.

“Fear is humanity’s inherited, basic feeling. It explains everything, inherited sin and virtue. *My* virtue grew out of fear too. Its name is science.

“Fear of wild animals has been bred into people longest. That includes the animal they keep inside and fear. Zarathustra calls it ‘the animal within.’

“That long, old fear, finally refined into something spiritual and intellectual, is what I think people now call *science*.”—

Zarathustra had just come back and heard and understood the last words. He tossed a handful of roses to the conscientious man and laughed at his ‘truths.’

“What did I hear?” he asked. “Either you or I must be a fool. I turn your ‘truth’ upside down immediately.

“For us, *fear* is the exception. Courage, adventure, enjoyment of uncertainty and things not attempted: *courage* seems to me the whole early history of humanity.

“Humanity envied and stole every virtue from the wildest, bravest animals. Only that made it human.

“*That* courage, eventually made spiritual and intellectual, human courage with eagle wings and a snake’s cleverness: *that* is what I think people now call—”

“*Zarathustra!*” everyone shouted together. They burst out laughing. A heavy cloud seemed to lift from them. The magician laughed and said cleverly, “Good! My evil spirit has gone!

“Didn’t I warn you that he was a cheat, a lying and tricking spirit?

“Especially when he appears naked. How can *I* help his tricks? Did *I* create him and the world?

“Let’s be friendly and happy again! Even if Zarathustra looks annoyed—look, he is angry with me—

“He will learn to love and praise me again before night. He cannot live long without such foolish acts.

“*He* loves his enemies. He does that better than anyone I know. But he gets his revenge for it on his friends!”

Everyone applauded the old magician. Zarathustra went around shaking his friends’ hands with love and malice, as if he had to apologize and make amends to every one. Reaching the cave’s door, he already wanted fresh air and his animals again. He was about to slip outside.

Among the Desert’s Daughters

¹ “Don’t leave!” said the wanderer calling himself Zarathustra’s shadow. “Stay, or that old, heavy sadness may return.

“The old magician already gave us a sample of his worst. Look, the good religious pope is crying. He has sailed back onto the sea of sadness.

“These kings may still keep up appearances in front of us. *They* learned that better than anyone today! Without witnesses, I bet their bad game would start again—

“The bad game of drifting clouds, wet sadness, covered skies, stolen suns, howling autumn winds!

“The bad game of our crying and calling for help. Stay, Zarathustra! So much hidden misery wants to speak here, so much evening, cloud, and stale air!

“You gave us strong food for men and powerful sayings. Don’t let soft, womanish spirits attack us again at dessert!

“You alone make the surrounding air clear and strong. Have I ever found air as good as in your cave?

“I have seen many countries. My nose knows how to test and judge different air. But here my nostrils enjoy it most!

“Unless—unless—forgive an old memory! Let me give you an old dessert song I wrote among daughters of the desert—

“They had just as good and bright an eastern air. There I was farthest from cloudy, wet, sad old Europe!

“I loved those eastern girls then, and other blue heavens where neither clouds nor thoughts hang.

“You would not believe how nicely they sat when they were not dancing: deep but without thoughts, like little secrets, puzzles tied with ribbons, nuts for dessert—

“Colorful and foreign, but cloudless, puzzles that can be solved. I wrote a dessert psalm for love of girls like that.”

Before anyone could answer the wanderer and shadow, he took the old magician’s harp and crossed his legs. He looked calmly and wisely around. His nostrils slowly tested the air, like someone tasting unfamiliar air in a new country. Then he began singing with something like a roar.

² “*The desert is spreading: trouble for anyone hiding deserts inside!*

“Ha! Solemn!

Very solemn!

A worthy start!

Solemn in an African way!

Worthy of a lion,

Or a howler monkey preaching morals—

But not for you,

My dearest women friends,

At whose feet
For the first time
I, a European under palms,
Am allowed to sit. Selah.

“It really is wonderful!
Here I am sitting,
Close to the desert, already
So far from the desert again,
Not yet ruined in any way:
I have been swallowed
By this tiny oasis—
It was just yawning open
Its lovely mouth,

“The sweetest-smelling little mouth:
I fell inside,
Down and through, among you,
My dearest friends! Selah.

“Praise, praise that whale,
If it made its visitor
As comfortable! You understand
My learned reference?—
Good for its belly,
If it was
A lovely oasis-belly
Like this. But I doubt it,
Since I come from Europe,
More obsessed with doubt than all
The older married women.
May God make it better!
Amen!

“Here I am sitting,
In this tiny oasis,
Like a date,
Brown, sweet all through, with golden sores, wanting
A girl’s round mouth,
But still more wanting her
Ice-cold, snow-white, sharp
Biting teeth. For those
Every hot date’s heart longs. Selah.

“Like those southern fruits,
Similar, too similar,

“I lie here as little
Winged beetles
Dance and play around me,
As do even smaller,
Sillier, nastier
Wishes and ideas—
Surrounded by you,
Silent, sensing what is coming,
Girl-cats,
Dudu and Suleika,
Sphinx-surrounded, to put
Many feelings in one word:
(May God forgive
This sin against language!)

I sit sniffing the best air,
Truly the air of paradise,
Clear, light air with gold stripes,
Air as good as any
That fell down from the moon—

Whether by chance
Or because of high spirits,
As old poets say.
But as a doubter, I cast
Doubt on it, because I come
From Europe,
More obsessed with doubt than all
The older married women.
May God make it better!
Amen!

“Drinking this beautiful air,

“My nostrils open like cups,
Without future or memories,
I sit here, my
Dearest friends,
Watching the palm
Bend and lean like a dancer,
Swaying its hips—
You do it too after watching long!—
Like a dancer who seems
To have stood too long, dangerously long,
Always, always on one leg,
And so seems to have forgotten
Her other leg?
At least I looked
In vain for the missing
Twin jewel—
The other leg—
In the holy space close to
Her lovely, delicate

Fanning, fluttering, glittering skirt.
Yes, beautiful friends,
If you fully believe me:
She has lost it!
It has gone!
Gone forever!
The other leg!
What a pity for that lovely other leg!
Where does it stay, lonely and sad,
That leg alone?
Perhaps afraid of a
Fierce, yellow, blond-curved

“Lion-monster? Or already
Chewed and nibbled away—
Pitiful, how awful! How awful! Nibbled away! Selah.

“Do not cry,
Soft hearts!
Do not cry, you
Date-hearts, milk-breasts!
You little licorice-heart
Bags!
Stop crying,
Pale Dudu!
Be a man, Suleika! Be brave! Be brave!
Or perhaps should
Something strengthening, good for the heart,
Be offered here?
A holy saying?
A solemn word of courage?—

“Ha! Come up, dignity!

Virtue's dignity! European dignity!
Blow, blow again,
Bellows of virtue!
Ha!
Roar once more,
Roar about morals!
Like a moral lion,
Roar in front of the desert's daughters!
For howling virtue,
My dearest girls,
Is more than anything

"European passion and European hunger!
Here I stand already,
As a European:
I cannot do otherwise. God help me!
Amen!

"The desert is spreading: trouble for anyone hiding deserts inside!"

The Waking

- ¹ After the wanderer and shadow's song, everyone in the cave began laughing and making noise. All the guests talked at once. The donkey, encouraged, made noise too. Zarathustra felt a little annoyed and wanted to laugh at his visitors, though their happiness pleased him: he took it as recovery. He slipped outside to his animals.

"Where has their trouble gone?" he said, already relieved of his little irritation.

"They seem to have forgotten how to cry for help with me—

"Though not, unfortunately, how to shout." He covered his ears. The donkey's hee-haw was mixing oddly with the higher human beings' celebrations.

"They are merry," he went on. "Maybe at their host's expense, who knows? If they learned laughter from me, it is not *my* laugh they learned.

“But why care? They are old. They recover their own way and laugh their own way. My ears have suffered worse without getting upset.

“This day is a victory. My old enemy, *the spirit of gravity*, is already backing away and running! A day that started so badly and heavily will end so well!

“It *will* end. Evening is coming, riding over the sea, that good rider! How happily he sways in his purple saddles on his way home!

“The sky is clear and the world deep. Strange visitors, living with me is worthwhile!”

The sounds of laughter and shouting came from the cave again. Zarathustra spoke once more.

“They are biting. My bait works. Their enemy, the spirit of gravity, is leaving them too. Am I hearing them learn to laugh at themselves?

“My strong food and hearty sayings work. I did not feed them vegetables that fill them with gas! I gave warriors’ and conquerors’ food. I woke new desires.

“New hopes are in their arms and legs. Their hearts stretch out. They find new words. Their spirits will soon breathe playfulness.

“This food may not suit children or yearning women, old and young. Their insides need a different persuasion. I am not their doctor or teacher.

“*Disgust* is leaving these higher human beings. That is my victory! They feel safe here. Stupid shame runs away. They pour themselves out.

“They pour out their hearts. Happy hours return. They celebrate and chew the cud. They become *grateful*.

“The best sign is *that*: they are becoming grateful. Soon they will invent parties and put up stones to remember past joys.

“They are *recovering*!” he told himself happily, looking out. His animals pressed close, respecting his happiness and quiet.

- ² Suddenly Zarathustra’s ears were startled. The cave that had been so noisy became as quiet as death. He smelled sweet smoke and incense, like burning pinecones.

“What is happening? What are they up to?” he wondered, creeping toward the entrance to watch without being seen. What a surprise his own eyes had to meet!

“They are all *religious* again, *praying*! They are mad!” he said, amazed. Every higher human being was on his knees: both kings, the retired pope, the bad magician, the beggar by choice, the wanderer and shadow, the old prophet, the conscientious man, and the ugliest person. They worshiped the donkey like children and religious old women. The ugliest person gurgled and snorted as though something impossible to say wanted to come out. When he found words, a strange religious prayer praising the donkey, worshiped in incense, came out. This was the prayer:

“Amen! Let praise, honor, wisdom, thanks, glory, and strength belong to our God forever and ever!”

The donkey answered, “Hee-haw.”

“He carries our load. He took the shape of a servant. He is patient at heart and never says no. Anyone who loves his God punishes him.”

The donkey answered, “Hee-haw.”

“He does not talk, except always to say yes to the world he made. That is how he praises it. His cleverness keeps quiet, so he is rarely told he is wrong.”

The donkey answered, “Hee-haw.” “He moves through the world without attracting notice. Gray is the body’s color in which he wraps his virtue. If he has spirit, he hides it. Everyone believes in his long ears.”

The donkey answered, “Hee-haw.”

“What secret wisdom, to have long ears and say only yes, never no! Didn’t he make the world like himself, as stupid as possible?”

The donkey answered, “Hee-haw.”

“You take straight and crooked roads. You care little what we think straight or crooked. Your kingdom is beyond good and evil. You are innocent because you do not know what innocence means.”

The donkey answered, “Hee-haw.”

“You turn nobody away, not beggars or kings. You let little children come. If naughty boys tempt you, you just say hee-haw.”

The donkey answered, "Hee-haw."

"You like female donkeys and fresh figs. You do not look down on food. When hungry, a thistle tickles your heart. That is a God's wisdom."

The donkey answered, "Hee-haw."

The Donkey Festival

¹ At this point Zarathustra could not control himself. He shouted "Hee-haw" louder than the donkey, jumped among his crazed visitors, and pulled the praying people off the ground. "What are you human children doing? It would be bad if anyone but me saw you:

"They would judge your new belief the worst insult to God or the silliest old woman's folly!

"Old pope, how can you yourself worship a donkey as God like this?"—

"Forgive me," the pope answered, "but I understand God's affairs better than you do. That is only right.

"Better worship God in this form than in no form at all. Think about that, my high friend. You will quickly see wisdom in it.

"The person saying 'God is a spirit' took the biggest step and jump toward unbelief ever made on earth. Those words are not easily made right again!

"My old heart leaps with joy that there is still something on earth to worship. Forgive an old religious pope's heart!"—

"You," Zarathustra said to the wanderer and shadow, "you call yourself a free spirit and think you are one? Yet here you worship an idol and serve priests?

"You are behaving even worse than with your bad brown girls, you bad new believer!"

"You are right," the wanderer answered. "It is bad. But how can I help it? Say what you like, Zarathustra: the old God is alive again.

"The ugliest person caused everything. He brought him back. If he says he killed him once, *death* is only ever a prejudice where gods are concerned."

"You old magician," Zarathustra said, "what have you done? Who will believe in you in these free times if *you* believe in this godly donkey nonsense?

"That was stupid. How could someone clever do something so stupid?"

"You are right," the clever magician answered. "It was stupid. I found it hard enough to do too."

"You too," Zarathustra said to the conscientious person of the spirit, "think, put your finger on your nose! Doesn't this offend your conscience? Isn't your spirit too clean for praying and the stink of these praying brothers?"

"There is something here," he answered, putting a finger on his nose. "Something about the performance even feels good to my conscience."

"Perhaps I cannot believe in God. But God seems most believable to me in this form."

"According to the most religious people, God lasts forever. Someone with so much time can take his time. By being as slow and stupid as possible, *that way* someone can get a long way."

"A person with too much spirit might fall in love with stupidity and foolishness themselves. Think about yourself, Zarathustra!"

"You could become a donkey yourself, out of abundance and wisdom."

"Doesn't a completely wise man enjoy the crookedest roads? We can see it, Zarathustra. *You* show it!"

"And finally you," Zarathustra said to the ugliest person, still on the ground, arm lifted to the donkey as he gave it wine. "Tell me, you indescribable man, what have you done!"

"You look different. Your eyes shine. Something high and grand covers your ugliness like a coat. *What* did you do?"

"Did you really bring him back, as they say? Why? Wasn't there good reason to kill him and finish with him?"

"You look awake yourself. What did you do? What did *you* turn upside down? Why did *you* change your belief? Speak, indescribable man!"

"Zarathustra," the ugliest person answered, "you are a rascal!"

"Which of us knows best whether *he* is still alive, alive again, or entirely dead? I am asking you."

"I know one thing you taught me: to kill most completely, *laugh*."

"People kill by laughter, not anger,' you once said. You hidden man, destroyer without anger, dangerous holy man—you are a rascal!"

² Zarathustra was surprised by all these sly answers. He jumped back to the cave entrance and shouted at all the guests:

“You mischievous fools and clowns! Why put on acts and hide from me!

“Your hearts shook with pleasure and malice because you finally became like children again, religious—

“Because you again did what children do: prayed, folded hands, and said ‘dear God’!

“Now leave *this* nursery, my own cave, the home of all childishness today. Come outside and cool that hot childish excitement and noisy heart!

“Certainly, if you do not become children again, you cannot enter *that* heaven.” Zarathustra pointed up.

“But we do not want heaven at all. We have become men, *so we want earth’s kingdom.*”

³ Zarathustra spoke again. “My new friends, strange higher human beings, I like you so much better now—

“Since you became happy again! You have all bloomed. Flowers like you need *new celebrations*—

“A little brave nonsense, some worship, a donkey festival, a cheerful old fool of Zarathustra’s, a windstorm that blows your souls clear.

“Do not forget this night and donkey festival! You made *that* up here. I take it as a good sign. Only people recovering invent things like that!

“If you hold this festival again, do it for love of yourselves and love of me. To remember *me!*”

That is what Zarathustra said.

The Night Walker’s Song

¹ One by one they had gone outside into the cool night, which seemed thoughtful. Zarathustra held the ugliest person’s hand and showed him his nighttime world, the big round moon, and the silver waterfalls near the cave. At last they stood together, all old people but with brave, comforted hearts, surprised at

how good it felt to be on earth. The night drew closer to their hearts. Zarathustra thought again, "I like these higher human beings so much now!" He kept it to himself, respecting their happiness and silence.—

Then the most surprising thing in that long, surprising day happened. The ugliest person gurgled and snorted one more, last time. Finding words, he produced a clean, round question: a good, deep, clear question that moved everyone's heart.

"My friends," he said, "what do you think? Because of this day, *I* am happy for the first time to have lived my whole life.

"Saying even that is not enough. Life on earth is worthwhile. One day, one celebration with Zarathustra taught me to love earth.

"*'Was that life?'* I want to ask death. 'Then let's have it again!'

"My friends, what do you think? Won't you tell death the same thing: *was that* life? For Zarathustra's sake, let's have it again!"— —

It was nearly midnight when the ugliest person said that. What do you think followed? Hearing his question, the higher human beings suddenly realized they had changed and recovered, and who had done that for them. They ran to Zarathustra, thanking, respecting, embracing him, kissing his hands, each in their own way. Some laughed, others cried. The old prophet danced happily. Some storytellers say he was full of sweet wine. He was certainly fuller of sweet life and had given up all tiredness. Some people even say the donkey danced. The ugliest person had given it wine for a reason. That may be true or not. Even if it did not dance that night, greater and stranger wonders happened than a dancing donkey. As Zarathustra's saying puts it, "What does it matter!"

- ² During this, Zarathustra stood like a drunk. His eyes faded, his words were unclear, his feet unsteady. Who could guess his thoughts? His spirit seemed to pull back, run ahead, and reach far away, as if "on a high ridge, as written, between two seas—

"Moving like a heavy cloud between past and future." As the others held him, he slowly came back to himself. He used his hands to keep the anxious, admiring crowd back, but said nothing. Suddenly he turned his head as though hear-

ing something. He put a finger to his mouth and said, “*Come!*”

Everything grew quiet and private. A bell’s sound slowly rose from below. Zarathustra and the others listened. A second time he put a finger to his mouth. “*Come! Come! It is nearly midnight!*” His voice had changed. He still stayed where he was. Things grew quieter. Everything listened: the donkey, his eagle and snake, the cave, the big cool moon, night itself. The third time he raised his hand to his mouth and said:

“*Come! Come! Come! Let us walk now! This is the hour: let us walk into the night!*”

- 3 “Higher human beings, midnight is near. I want to tell you something quietly, the way that old bell speaks into my ear—

“So privately, frighteningly, warmly, like the midnight bell that has experienced more than any one person—

“It has already counted your fathers’ painful heartbeats. Oh! Oh! How it sighs! How it laughs in its dreams, that old, deep, deep midnight!

“Quiet! Quiet! Much can be heard that must not be said aloud by day. Now the air is cool, and even your hearts’ noise has stopped—

“Now it talks, can be heard, and creeps into souls too awake at night. Oh! Oh! How it sighs! How it laughs in dreams!

“Don’t you hear that old, deep, deep midnight speaking privately, frighteningly, warmly to *you*? *Human being, pay attention!*

- 4 “What misery for me! Where did time go? Didn’t I sink into deep wells? The world is asleep—

“Oh! Oh! The dog howls, the moon shines. I would rather die, die, than tell you what my midnight heart is thinking.

“I already died. It has gone. Spider, what are you spinning around me? Do you want blood? Oh! Oh! Dew falls, the hour comes—

“The hour when I shiver and freeze, which asks and asks and asks, ‘Who is brave enough—

“‘Who will rule earth? Who will tell the big and little rivers to run *this way*?’

"The hour is near. Higher human being, pay attention. These words are for sensitive ears, yours. *What is deep midnight saying?*

- 5 "It carries me away. My soul dances. The day's work! The day's work! Who will rule earth?

"The moon is cool, the wind quiet. Oh! Oh! Have you flown high enough? You danced, but a leg is not a wing.

"Good dancers, all pleasure is over now. Wine became sediment, every cup fragile. The graves stammer.

"You did not fly high enough. Now the graves stammer, 'Set the dead free! Why is night so long? Doesn't the moon make us drunk?'

"Higher human beings, free the graves and wake dead bodies! What is that worm still digging? It is coming, the hour is coming—

"The bell hums, the heart rattles, the woodworm, the worm in the heart, still digs. Oh! Oh! *The world is deep!*

- 6 "Sweet lyre, sweet lyre! I love your sound, the sound of a drunken toad. It comes from so long ago, so far away, from love's ponds!

"Old bell, sweet lyre, every hurt tore your heart: a father's pain, fathers' pain, ancestors' pain. Your speech grew ripe—

"Ripe like golden autumn and afternoon, like my hermit's heart. Now you say the world itself has ripened. The grape turns brown—

"It wants to die, die of happiness. Higher human beings, don't you smell it? A smell secretly rises—

"The smell and sweetness of eternity, a brown-and-gold wine smell of old happiness, happy with roses—

"Of drunken happiness dying at midnight, singing: the world is deep, *deeper than day has thought!*

- 7 "Leave me, leave me! I am too clean for you. Don't touch me! Didn't my world just become perfect?

"Your hands are too dirty for my skin. Leave me, stupid, clumsy, dull day! Isn't midnight brighter?

"The purest people should rule earth: the least known, the strongest, the midnight souls brighter and deeper than any day.

"Day, are you reaching for me? Feeling for my happiness? Am I rich and lonely to you, a treasure mine, a room full of gold?

"World, do you want *me*? Am I worldly, spiritual, divine to you? Day and world, you are too clumsy—

"Use cleverer hands. Reach for deeper happiness and unhappiness, some God. Don't reach for me—

"My unhappiness and happiness are deep, strange day. But I am not a God or a God's hell. *Its suffering is deep.*

8 "God's suffering is deeper, strange world! Reach for that, not me! What am I? A sweet, drunken lyre—

"A midnight lyre, a croaking bell nobody understands. But it *has* to speak before deaf people, higher human beings. You do not understand me!

"Gone, gone! Youth, noon, afternoon! Now came evening, night, midnight. The dog howls, the wind—

"Isn't the wind a dog? It whines, barks, howls. Oh! Oh! Midnight sighs, laughs, rattles, and pants!

"How soberly this drunken poet speaks now! Did she drink past being drunk? Become too awake? Is she chewing the cud?

"Old, deep midnight chews its pain in dreams, and even more its pleasure. Even if pain is deep, *pleasure is deeper than heartache.*

9 "Vine, why praise me? I cut you! I am cruel and you bleed. What does your praise want from my drunken cruelty?

"Everything perfect and ripe wants to die!' you say. 'May the grower's knife be blessed, blessed! But everything unripe wants life. How painful!'

"Pain says, 'Pass away! Away, pain!' But everything hurting wants to live, become ripe, happy, and full of desire—

"Desire for things farther away, higher, brighter. 'I want heirs,' says everything hurting. 'I want children, not *myself*.'—

"But pleasure wants neither heirs nor children. It wants itself, eternity, return, everything staying the same forever.

"Pain says, 'Break and bleed, heart! Walk, leg! Fly, wing! Higher! Up! Pain!' Come on! Get up! Old heart: *pain says, 'Pass away!'*

- 10 "What do you think, higher human beings? Am I a prophet, dreamer, drunk, dream interpreter, midnight bell?

"A dewdrop? Mist and perfume of eternity? Don't you hear or smell it? My world just became perfect. Midnight is midday too—

"Pain is pleasure too, a curse a blessing, night a sun. Leave, or learn that a wise person is also a fool.

"Have you ever said yes to one pleasure? Then, friends, you said yes to *every* pain too. All things are linked, threaded together, in love—

"If you ever wanted a moment a second time, if you ever said, 'I like you, happiness! Just a flash! A moment!' you wanted *everything* back!

"Everything again, forever, linked, threaded together, in love: that is how you *loved* the world—

"You eternal ones, love it forever and always. Tell pain too: pass away, but come back! *Because every pleasure wants eternity!*

- 11 "Every pleasure wants everything to last forever. It wants honey, sediment, drunken midnight, graves, comfort in tears at graves, sunset covered in gold—

"*What* doesn't pleasure want? It is thirstier, warmer, hungrier, scarier, more secret than pain. It wants *itself*, bites *itself*, and the will to be a ring struggles inside it—

"It wants love and hatred. It has too much, gives it away, throws it out, begs somebody to take it, thanks whoever does, would like to be hated—

"Pleasure is so rich it thirsts for pain, hell, hatred, shame, the cripple, the *world*. You know this world!

"Higher human beings, this wild, happy pleasure longs for you and your suffering, you failures! Every eternal pleasure wants what has failed.

“Every pleasure wants itself, so it wants heartache as well! Oh, happiness! Oh, pain! Oh, break, heart! Higher human beings, learn that pleasure wants eternity —

“It wants *all* things forever, *wants deep, deep eternity!*”

12 “Have you learned my song? Worked out what it wants? Come on, higher human beings, sing my round now!

“Sing the song called ‘One More Time,’ whose meaning is ‘For all eternity.’ Sing Zarathustra’s round!

“Human being, pay attention!

What is deep midnight saying?

‘I slept, I slept—

I woke from a deep dream:—

‘The world is deep,

‘Deeper than day has thought.

‘Its suffering is deep—

‘Pleasure, deeper than heartache:

‘Pain says: Pass away!

‘But every pleasure wants eternity—

‘Wants deep, deep eternity!’”

The Sign

The next morning Zarathustra jumped from bed, tightened his clothes around his waist, and came out of the cave, strong and glowing like a morning sun coming from dark mountains.

“Great star,” he said, as he once had before, “deep eye of happiness, what would your happiness be without *those* you shine for!

“If they stayed in their rooms while you were already awake, coming, giving, handing things out, how angry your proud shame would be!

“These higher human beings still sleep while *I* am awake. *They* are not my true companions. They are not the ones I wait for in my mountains.

"I want my work, my day. But they do not understand the signs of my morning. My footsteps do not wake them.

"They still sleep inside, dreaming and chewing over my midnights. Their bodies lack the ear that listens for *me*, the ear that *obeys*."

Zarathustra said this to himself as the sun rose. He looked up at the sharp cry of his eagle. "Good!" he called. "That pleases me and is right for me. My animals are awake because I am awake.

"My eagle wakes and respects the sun as I do. Its claws grab the new light. You are the right animals for me. I love you.

"But I still lack the right people!"—

Suddenly Zarathustra heard countless birds around him. So many wings fluttered and crowded his head that he shut his eyes. They came like a cloud, like arrows showering on a new enemy. But it was a cloud of love coming over a new friend.

"What is happening?" he wondered, slowly sitting on the big stone by the cave entrance. He reached around, above, and below himself to keep back the loving birds. Something stranger happened: his hand went into thick, warm, shaggy fur. At the same time a gentle, long lion's roar sounded before him.

"*The sign is coming,*" Zarathustra said, and his heart changed. When he could see clearly, a powerful yellow animal lay at his feet, pressing its head against his knees. It loved him too much to leave, like a dog finding its old owner. The doves were just as eager with love. Whenever one flew across the lion's nose, it shook its head, looked surprised, and laughed.

"*My children are close, my children,*" was all Zarathustra said. Then he was entirely quiet. His heart relaxed. Tears ran from his eyes onto his hands. He noticed nothing and sat still, no longer holding the animals off. Doves flew back and forth, landed on his shoulders, stroked his white hair, and never tired of affection and delight. The powerful lion kept licking the tears falling on his hands, roaring and growling shyly. That is what the animals did.—

It lasted a long time or a short one. Properly speaking, there is *no* time for such things on earth. Meanwhile the higher human beings woke in the cave. Finding Zarathustra gone, they lined up to go and greet him. As they reached the

entrance, their steps sounded ahead. The lion suddenly jumped, turned from Zarathustra, and sprang roaring toward the cave. All the higher human beings screamed together and ran back inside, disappearing immediately.

Zarathustra stood up, stunned and feeling strange. He looked around in surprise, questioned his heart, tried to remember, and was alone. “What did I hear?” he finally asked slowly. “What happened just now?”

He remembered at once and understood everything between yesterday and today in one look. Stroking his beard, he said, “Here is the stone *where* I sat yesterday morning. The prophet came here. Here I first heard the cry I just heard, the great cry for help.

“Higher human beings, the old prophet predicted *your* trouble yesterday morning—

“He wanted to tempt me toward your trouble. ‘Zarathustra,’ he told me, ‘I have come to tempt you to your last sin.’

“My last sin?” Zarathustra cried, laughing angrily at his own words. “*What* was kept for me as my last sin?”

He turned inward again, sat on the big stone, and thought. Suddenly he jumped up—

“*Pity! Pity for the higher human being!*” he shouted. His face turned like bronze. “All right! *That* had its time!

“My suffering and pity, what do they matter! Am I looking for *happiness*? I am looking for my *work*!

“The lion came. My children are close. Zarathustra is ripe. My time has come—

“This is *my* morning, *my* day starting. *Come up now, come up, great noon!*” — — Zarathustra said this and left his cave, strong and glowing like a morning sun coming from dark mountains.

End of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.