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Friedrich Nietzsche

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Ecce Homo

Friedrich Nietzsche

How One Becomes What One Is

Plain modern English

Translated from the German by Blue Energy People, Inc. (SUN), with AI assistance from Claude Opus 5.5.

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Friedrich Nietzsche

Behold the Man

How you become who you are

Foreword

1.

I can see that before long I will have to come to humanity with the hardest demand anyone has ever made of it. Because of that, I think it is absolutely necessary to say who I am. Really, people ought to know already, because I have not "left myself without witness": I have shown who I am. But the gap between how great my mission is and how small the people of my time are has shown itself in this: nobody has heard me, and nobody has even seen me. I live on my own credit, as if on a loan I give myself. Maybe the idea that I am alive at all is just a prejudice?... I only have to talk to one of those "educated" people who come up to the Upper Engadine valley in summer, and I am convinced that I am not alive... Under these conditions I have a duty, one that my habits, and even more the pride of my instincts, my gut sense, rebel against. The duty is to say: Listen to me! For I am such and such a person. Above all, do not mistake me for someone else!

2.

For example, I am certainly not a bogeyman, not some monster of morality. In fact, I am by nature the very opposite of the kind of person who has been honored as virtuous until now. Between you and me, I think that is exactly one of the things I am proud of. I am a follower of the philosopher Dionysus, god of wine and wild joy. I would rather be a satyr, one of those half-goat creatures of wild nature, than a saint. But just read this book. Maybe I managed it; maybe this book had no other purpose than to show this contrast in a cheerful and friendly way. The very last thing I would promise is to

"improve" humanity. I will not set up any new idols (false ideals). Let the old ones learn what it means to stand on legs of clay, which crumble and fall. Knocking over idols (my word for "ideals") is much more my line of work. People have robbed reality of its value, its meaning, and its truthfulness to exactly the degree that they made up an ideal world out of lies... The so-called "true world" and the "world of appearances": in plain words, the made-up world and reality... Until now, the lie of the ideal has been a curse lying over reality. Because of it, humanity itself has become dishonest and false, right down to its deepest instincts. It has gone so far that it worships values that are the exact opposite of the ones that would finally guarantee it growth, a future, and the high right to a future.

3.

Anyone who knows how to breathe the air of my writings knows that it is the air of high places, a strong air. You have to be made for it. Otherwise there is a real danger of catching a cold in it. The ice is close, and being alone up there is enormous. But how calmly everything lies in the light! How freely you breathe! How much you feel lying below you! Philosophy, as I have understood it and lived it so far, means choosing to live among ice and high mountains. It means seeking out everything strange and questionable in life, everything that morality has banned until now. From long experience of wandering through forbidden ground like this, I learned to see the reasons why people have moralized and idealized in a very different way than some might like. The hidden history of the philosophers, the psychology behind their great names, came to light for me. How much truth can a mind bear? How much truth does a mind dare to face? More and more, that became my real measure of value. Error, meaning belief in the ideal, is not blindness. Error is cowardice... Every achievement, every step forward in knowledge, comes from

courage, from being hard on yourself, from being clean and honest with yourself... I do not argue against ideals. I just put on gloves before I touch them, as you would with something dirty... "Nitimur in vetitum," which is Latin for "We strive for what is forbidden": under this sign my philosophy will one day win. Because until now, the one thing people have always forbidden, as a rule, is the truth.

4.

Among my writings, my Zarathustra stands on its own. With it I have given humanity the greatest gift it has ever been given. This book has a voice that carries across thousands of years. It is not only the highest book there is, the true book of mountain air, where the whole fact of being human lies enormously far below it. It is also the deepest book, born from the innermost riches of truth. It is a well that never runs dry: no bucket goes down into it without coming back up full of gold and goodness. The one speaking here is no "prophet," none of those horrible mixtures of sickness and will to power that people call founders of religions. Above all, you must hear the tone that comes from this mouth, this calm and serene tone, the right way. Otherwise you will do a pitiful injustice to the meaning of its wisdom. As Zarathustra says: "It is the quietest words that bring the storm. Thoughts that come on the feet of doves steer the world."

Zarathustra says: The figs are falling from the trees. They are good and sweet. And as they fall, their red skin splits open. I am a north wind to ripe figs.

So, like figs, these teachings fall to you, my friends. Now drink their juice and eat their sweet flesh! All around it is autumn, with a clear sky, and afternoon.

The one speaking here is no fanatic. Here nobody "preaches," and nobody demands faith. From an endless fullness of light and a deep

well of happiness, drop by drop, word by word, the speech falls. A tender slowness is the pace of these talks. Something like this reaches only the most chosen people. It is a privilege like no other to be a listener here. Not everyone is free to have ears for Zarathustra... With all this, isn't Zarathustra a seducer, someone who lures people in?... But what does he say himself when he goes back to his life alone for the first time? Exactly the opposite of what any "wise man," "saint," "savior of the world," or other person in decline would say in that situation... He does not just speak differently. He is different...

Zarathustra says: Now I go alone, my followers! You too, go away now, and alone! This is what I want.

Go away from me and defend yourselves against Zarathustra! Better still: be ashamed of him! Maybe he deceived you.

A person who seeks knowledge must not only love his enemies. He must also be able to hate his friends.

You repay a teacher badly if you always stay just a student. And why don't you want to pluck at my crown of leaves, the wreath that honors me?

You honor me. But what if your honor falls over one day? Watch out that a statue does not fall on you and kill you!

You say you believe in Zarathustra? But what does Zarathustra matter! You are my believers, but what do any believers matter!

You had not yet searched for yourselves when you found me. That is what all believers do. That is why all faith is worth so little.

Now I tell you to lose me and find yourselves. And only when all of you have denied me will I come back to you...

Friedrich Nietzsche.

On this perfect day, when everything is ripening, and not just the grapes are turning brown, a ray of sunlight just fell on my life. I looked back, I looked ahead, and I never saw so many good things all at once. It is not for nothing that today I buried my forty-fourth year. I had every right to bury it. Whatever was alive in that year has been saved, and it will never die. The Turning All Values Upside Down, the Dionysus Wild Songs of Praise, and, for relaxation, the Twilight of the Idols: all of these are gifts of this year, even of its last three months! How could I not be grateful to my whole life? And so I tell my life to myself.

Why I Am So Wise

1.

The happiness of my life, and maybe what makes it one of a kind, lies in its doom, its fateful thing. To put it as a riddle: as my father, I have already died; as my mother, I am still alive and growing old. This double origin, as if I came from both the highest and the lowest rung on the ladder of life, at once someone in decline and a new beginning, explains better than anything else my neutrality. By that I mean my freedom from taking sides on the whole problem of life, which is perhaps what sets me apart. I have a sharper nose for the signs of rising and falling than any person has ever had. I am the teacher of this, above all others. I know both, and I am both. My father died at thirty-six. He was delicate, kind and sickly, like a being meant only to pass through for a short while. He was more a kind memory of life than life itself. In the same year of life when his life went downhill, mine went downhill too. At thirty-six I reached the lowest point of my life energy. I was still alive, but I couldn't see three steps ahead of me. Back then, in 1879, I gave up my job as a professor in Basel. I spent the summer like a shadow in St. Moritz, and the next winter, the one with the least sunshine of my whole life, as a shadow in Naumburg. This was my lowest point, and "The Wanderer and His Shadow" was written during that time. No doubt about it: back then I knew all about shadows... The winter after that, my first winter in Genoa, produced "Daybreak." It came out of a kind of sweetening and turning toward the mind that almost always goes along with having extremely little blood and muscle. That book reflects perfect brightness and bright cheerfulness, even an overflowing liveliness of mind. In me, all this goes together not only with the deepest weakness of the body,

but even with far too much pain. In the middle of the torture of a nonstop three-day headache, along with painful vomiting of mucus, I had the clear mind of a master debater. I thought things through in very cold blood, things that, when I'm healthier, I'm not enough of a climber for, not sharp enough, not cold enough. My readers may know how far I see this debating kind of logic as a symptom of decline, decay. Take the most famous case of all: the case of Socrates. All sick disturbances of the mind, even the half-dazed state that comes with a fever, have stayed completely unknown to me to this day. I had to learn from books, like a scholar, what they are and how often they happen. My blood runs slowly. No one has ever been able to find a fever in me. A doctor who treated me for a long time as someone with sick nerves finally said: "No! It's not your nerves. I'm the one who's nervous." It is simply impossible to prove any damage in any one part of my body. There was no stomach disease caused by the organs themselves, even though, as a result of my overall exhaustion, my digestive system was as weak as it could be. The same goes for my eye trouble, which at times came dangerously close to blindness. It was only a result, not a cause, so that every time my life energy grew, my eyesight got better again too. For me, a long, far too long series of years means getting well. Sadly, it also means at the same time falling back, falling apart, a kind of decline, decay that comes and goes in cycles. After all this, do I need to say that I have experience in questions of decline, decay? I have spelled it out forwards and backwards. Even that fine, lace-like art of grasping and understanding, those fingers that feel the tiniest shades of difference, that psychology of "seeing around corners," and whatever else is special about me, I only learned back then. It is the real gift of that time, when everything in me became finer: my observing itself, and all the senses I observe with. To look from the sick person's point of view toward healthier ideas and values, and then the other way around, to look down from the fullness and self-confidence of a rich life into the secret work of

the instinct, gut sense for decline: that was my longest training, my real experience. If I became a master at anything, it was this. Now I have it in my hand, I have the knack, for switching points of view. That is the first reason why perhaps I alone can manage a "turning all values upside down" at all.

2.

Apart from the fact that I am someone in decline, I am also its opposite. My proof of this, among other things, is that against bad conditions I always chose the right remedies by instinct, by gut sense. Someone in decline, by contrast, always chooses the remedies that harm him. Taken all in all, I was healthy. In one corner, in one special area, I was someone in decline. I had the energy to cut myself off completely and pull myself out of my usual life. I forced myself to stop letting people look after me, wait on me, and fuss over me like doctors. All this shows that my instinct, my gut sense, was absolutely sure about what I needed most back then. I took myself in hand and made myself healthy again. The condition for that, and any expert on the body will agree, is that you are basically healthy underneath. A person who is sick through and through cannot get healthy, and even less can he make himself healthy. For someone who is healthy through and through, on the other hand, being sick can even be a strong push to live, to live more. That is truly how that long time of illness looks to me now. I discovered life anew, so to speak, myself included. I tasted all the good things, even the small ones, in a way others could not easily taste them. I turned my will to health, my will to live, into my philosophy... Because pay attention to this: it was in the years when my life energy was at its lowest that I stopped being a pessimist. My instinct, my gut sense, for healing myself would not allow me a philosophy of poverty and discouragement... And how, after all, do you recognize being well-made? A well-made person does

our senses good. He is carved out of a kind of wood that is hard, gentle and sweet-smelling all at once. He only enjoys the taste of what is good for him. His liking and his pleasure stop where the limit of what is good for him is crossed. He guesses the cures for whatever harms him. He turns bad accidents to his own advantage. Whatever doesn't kill him makes him stronger. By instinct, by gut sense, he gathers his own total from everything he sees, hears and lives through. He is a principle of choosing: he lets a lot fall through, like a sieve. He is always in his own company, whether he is dealing with books, people or landscapes. He honors things by choosing them, by letting them in, by trusting them. He reacts slowly to every kind of stimulus, with a slowness that long caution and a pride he wanted have bred into him. He tests whatever comes at him, and he is far from rushing out to meet it. He believes neither in "bad luck" nor in "guilt." He comes to terms with himself and with others. He knows how to forget. He is strong enough that everything has to turn out for the best for him. Well then: I am the opposite of someone in decline, because what I just described was myself.

3.

I see it as a great privilege to have had such a father. The farmers he preached to said that this must be what an angel looks like. He was a preacher in his last years, after living for some years at the royal court of Altenburg. And this brings me to the question of race. I am a Polish nobleman, pure-blooded, without a single drop of bad blood mixed in, least of all German blood. When I look for the deepest opposite of myself, for a meanness of instinct, gut sense, so low it can't even be measured, I always find my mother and my sister. To believe I am related to such low rabble would be an insult to my godlike nature. The way my mother and sister treat me, right up to this moment, fills me with a horror I can't put into words. A perfect machine from hell is at

work here. It knows, with never-failing certainty, the exact moment when it can wound me and make me bleed: in my highest moments... because then I have no strength at all to fight off poisonous vermin... Being so close to them physically, through birth, is what makes such a clash possible, a clash built in and set up in advance, the opposite of a harmony arranged beforehand... But I admit that the deepest objection to the "eternal return of everything", my truly bottomless thought, is always my mother and my sister. But as a Pole, too, I am a huge throwback to the distant past. You would have to go back centuries to find this most noble race that ever lived on earth with instincts as pure as I show them. Compared to everything that is called nobility today, I have a lordly sense of standing apart. I would not even grant the young German Emperor the honour of being my coachman. There is one single case where I recognize someone as my equal, and I admit it with deep gratitude. Mrs Cosima Wagner is by far the most noble, high-minded nature. And, so that I don't say one word too little, I will say that Richard Wagner was by far the man most related to me in spirit... The rest is silence... All the usual ideas about how closely people are related by family are biological nonsense, nonsense that can't be beaten. The Pope still does business with this nonsense today. You are least related to your parents. Being related to your parents would be the ultimate sign of being common and low. Higher natures have their roots endlessly further back. For them to come about, things had to be gathered, saved up and piled up for the longest time. The great individuals are the oldest. I don't understand it, but Julius Caesar could be my father, or Alexander the Great, that living, breathing Dionysus, god of wine and wild joy... At this very moment, as I am writing this, the mail is bringing me a sculpted head of Dionysus...

4.

I have never understood the art of turning people against me. I owe that, too, to my incomparable father. I couldn't do it even when it seemed very worthwhile to me. I am not even, however un-Christian this may seem, turned against myself. You can turn my life this way and that, and apart from that one case, you won't find any trace that anyone ever had ill will toward me. But you may find a few too many traces of good will... Even my experiences with people that everyone else has bad experiences with speak, without exception, in their favour. I tame every bear, and I even make clowns behave. For seven years I taught Greek to the top class of the Basel high school, and in all that time I never had a reason to give a single punishment. Even the laziest students worked hard with me. I can always handle whatever chance throws at me. In fact, I have to be unprepared in order to be fully in control of myself. Take any instrument at all, even one as badly out of tune as only the instrument called "human being" can get. I would have to be sick not to manage to get something worth listening to out of it. And how often have I heard the "instruments" themselves say that they had never sounded like that before... Maybe it was said most beautifully by Heinrich von Stein, who died unforgivably young. Once, after carefully asking permission, he showed up in Sils-Maria for three days, telling everyone that he had not come for the Engadine, the beautiful mountain valley. This excellent man had waded, with all the headlong simple-mindedness of a Prussian country squire, into the Wagner swamp, and into the Dühring swamp too! But for those three days he was transformed, as if by a storm wind of freedom, like someone suddenly lifted up to his own high places and given wings. I kept telling him that it was the good air up here that did it, that it happened to everyone, that you are not 6,000 feet above Bayreuth for nothing. But he wouldn't believe me... If, in spite of all this, many small and large wrongs have been

done to me, the cause was not "the will", and least of all ill will. As I just hinted, I would sooner have reason to complain about good will, which has caused no small amount of trouble in my life. My experiences give me the right to be suspicious in general of the so-called "selfless" urges, of all the "love for others" that is always ready with advice and help. To me it is in itself a weakness, one example of being unable to resist outside pressures and stimuli. Pity is only called a virtue among people in decline. What I hold against people full of pity is this: they easily lose their sense of shame, of respect, of delicate feeling for the distance between people. Pity, in the blink of an eye, starts to smell of the mob and looks just like bad manners. Hands full of pity can, in some cases, reach right into a great destiny and destroy it, reach into someone's lonely life among wounds, into someone's privilege to carry heavy guilt. I count overcoming pity among the noble, high-minded virtues. In a passage I called "The Temptation of Zarathustra", I wrote about a case where a great cry for help reaches him, where pity attacks him like a last sin and tries to lure him away from himself. To stay in charge here, to keep the high places of his mission clean of the much lower and more short-sighted urges that are at work in so-called selfless acts: that is the test, perhaps the final test, that a Zarathustra has to pass. It is the real proof of his strength...

5.

There is one more way in which I am simply my father all over again, as if he were living on in me after dying far too young. Like anyone who has never lived among equals, and who finds the idea of "getting even" as strange as, say, the idea of "equal rights," I forbid myself any counter-move when someone does something foolish to me, whether it is a small foolishness or a very big one. I allow myself no counter-attack and no protective measure. And, of course, I also allow myself

no defense and no "justifying" myself. My kind of getting even is to send something smart right after the stupid thing, as fast as I can. That way, maybe I can still catch up with it and cancel it out. To put it in a picture: I send a pot of jam to get rid of a sour story... Just let someone do me harm, and I will "pay them back," you can be sure of that. Soon enough I will find a chance to thank the "wrongdoer" (sometimes even for the wrong itself), or to ask them for a favor, which can be more gracious than giving them something... It also seems to me that even the rudest word or the rudest letter is still kinder and more honest than silence. People who stay silent almost always lack a fine, polite heart. Silence is a way of objecting. And swallowing things down always gives you a bad character; it even ruins your stomach. All silent people have indigestion. As you can see, I don't want rudeness to be looked down on. It is by far the most humane way of disagreeing, and in the middle of today's softness and coddling, it is one of our top virtues. If you are rich enough inside, it is even a happy thing to be in the wrong. A god who came down to earth would be allowed to do nothing but wrong. To take on yourself not the punishment, but the guilt: only that would be truly godlike.

6.

Being free of bitter resentment, and seeing clearly what bitter resentment is: who knows how much I owe this, in the end, to my long illness as well! The problem is not exactly simple. You have to have lived through it both from strength and from weakness. If there is anything at all to be said against being sick and being weak, it is this: in that state, a person's real healing instinct, gut sense, wears down. That healing instinct is the instinct to defend yourself and to fight back. You can't get free of anything, you can't get over anything, you can't push anything away. Everything hurts. People and things come too close and push in on you. Experiences hit too deep. Memory be-

comes an infected, oozing wound. Being sick is itself a kind of bitter resentment. Against this, the sick person has only one great cure. I call it Russian fatalism: that giving-in to fate without any rebellion, the kind a Russian soldier shows when the march becomes too hard and he finally lies down in the snow. Not taking anything in anymore, not taking anything on, not letting anything inside you, simply not reacting at all anymore... This fatalism is not always just the courage to die. Its great wisdom is that it keeps you alive in the most life-threatening situations, because it lowers your body's burning of energy and slows it down. It is a kind of will to hibernate, like an animal sleeping through winter. Follow this logic a few steps further, and you get the fakir, the holy man who sleeps for weeks in a grave... Because you would use yourself up too fast if you reacted at all, you no longer react at all: that is the logic. And nothing burns you up faster than the feelings of bitter resentment. Anger, being sickly easy to hurt, being too weak to take revenge, the craving and thirst for revenge, mixing poison in every sense: for exhausted people, this is surely the most harmful way to react. It brings a quick drain of nervous energy and a sick increase in harmful outflows, for example of bile into the stomach. For the sick person, bitter resentment is the forbidden thing itself, his evil. Sadly, it is also his most natural urge. Buddha, that deep student of the body, understood this. His "religion" would be better called a health practice, so as not to mix it up with such pitiful things as Christianity. It made its whole effect depend on winning over bitter resentment. Freeing the soul from it is the first step toward getting well. "Hatred is not ended by hatred; hatred is ended by friendship": that stands at the start of Buddha's teaching. That is not morality talking; that is the body's science talking. Bitter resentment is born of weakness, and it harms no one more than the weak person himself. In the other case, where someone has a rich, abundant nature, it is an unneeded feeling, and staying master over it is almost proof of that richness. Some people know how seriously my

philosophy has taken up the fight against feelings of revenge and of holding grudges, a fight that reaches all the way into the idea of "free will." The fight against Christianity is only one example of it. Those people will understand why I am bringing my own personal behavior into the light here, my sure instinct, gut sense, in everyday practice. In my times of decline, decay, I forbade myself these feelings because they were harmful. As soon as life was rich and proud enough again, I forbade them to myself because they were beneath me. The "Russian fatalism" I spoke of showed up in me like this: once I had ended up, by chance, in almost unbearable situations, places, homes, or company, I stubbornly held on to them for years. That was better than changing them, better than feeling that they could be changed, better than rebelling against them... Back then, if anyone disturbed me in this fatalism and woke me up by force, I took it as a deadly offense. And in truth, it really was deadly dangerous every time. To accept yourself like a fate, not to want yourself to be "different": in such conditions, that is great wisdom itself.

7.

War is a different matter. By nature, I am a fighter. Attacking is one of my instincts, part of my gut sense. Being able to be an enemy, actually being an enemy, may require a strong nature. In any case, it comes with every strong nature. A strong nature needs resistance, so it goes looking for resistance. The urge to attack belongs to strength just as surely as the urge for revenge and the urge to hold a grudge belong to weakness. Woman, for example, is vengeful: that comes from her weakness, just as much as her sensitivity to other people's suffering does. The strength of an attacker can be measured, in a way, by the kind of opponent he needs. Every time someone grows, it shows in the way he looks for a more powerful opponent, or a harder problem. Because a philosopher who is a fighter also challenges problems to a

duel. The mission is not to overcome just any resistance. It is to overcome the kind of resistance where you have to use all your strength, all your flexibility and all your skill with weapons. In other words, opponents who are your equals... Being equal to your enemy is the first condition of an honest duel. Where you look down on someone, you cannot wage war. Where you give orders, where you see something as beneath you, you have no business waging war. My way of fighting can be put into four rules. First: I only attack things that are winning. Sometimes I wait until they are winning. Second: I only attack things where I would find no allies, where I stand alone, where I am the only one who puts himself at risk... I have never taken a step in public that did not put me at risk. That is how I judge whether I am acting rightly. Third: I never attack people as persons. I only use a person like a strong magnifying glass, to make visible a problem that is general, but creeping and hard to pin down. That is how I attacked David Strauss. More exactly, I attacked the success that a worn-out, senile book had among German so-called education. I caught this so-called education red-handed... That is how I attacked Wagner. More exactly, I attacked the falseness, the half-and-half instincts of our "culture", which mixes up the refined with the rich, and the late-comers with the great. Fourth: I only attack things where any personal quarrel is ruled out, where there is no background of bad experiences. On the contrary, when I attack, it is a sign of goodwill, and sometimes even of gratitude. I honor something, I give it a mark of distinction, by linking my name with that of a cause or a person. Whether I am for it or against it makes no difference to me here. If I wage war on Christianity, I have the right to do so, because I have never suffered any disasters or setbacks from that side. The most serious Christians have always been kind to me. I myself, an opponent of Christianity as a matter of principle, am far from blaming any single person for what has been the doom, the fateful thing, of thousands of years.

8.

May I dare to hint at one last feature of my nature, one that causes me no small trouble when I deal with people? I have a completely uncanny sensitivity in my instinct for cleanliness. It is so strong that I can sense, with my body, how near a soul is, or, what am I saying, its very innermost part, the "guts" of every soul. I smell it... This sensitivity gives me something like psychological feelers, like an insect's antennae, with which I touch every secret and get hold of it. The lot of hidden dirt at the bottom of many people's natures, maybe caused by bad blood but painted over by upbringing, becomes clear to me almost at the first touch. If I have observed correctly, the kind of people who do not suit my cleanliness also feel, from their side, how carefully my disgust keeps away from them. That does not make them smell any better... As I have always been used to it, extreme purity toward myself is the basic condition of my existence. I die in unclean conditions. So I swim and bathe and splash, so to speak, all the time in water, in some completely clear and shining element. That makes dealing with people no small test of my patience. My humanity does not consist in feeling along with people as they are. It consists in putting up with the fact that I feel along with them... My humanity is a constant beating of my own limits. But I need being alone. That is to say, I need recovery, a return to myself, the breath of free, light, playful air... My whole Zarathustra is a wild song of praise to being alone, or, if you have understood me, to purity... Luckily not to pure foolishness. Anyone who has an eye for colors will call it diamond-like. Disgust with human beings, with the "riff-raff", has always been my greatest danger... Would you like to hear the words in which Zarathustra speaks about being set free from disgust?

What happened to me, then? How did I free myself from disgust? Who made my eyes young again? How did I fly up to the high places where no riff-raff sits by the well anymore?

Did my disgust itself give me wings, and powers that could sense where springs of water were hidden? Truly, I had to fly to the very highest place to find the fountain of joy again!

Oh, I found it, my brothers! Here, in the highest place, the fountain of joy bubbles up for me! And there is a life that no riff-raff drinks from along with me!

You flow almost too strongly for me, spring of joy! And often you empty the cup again just by trying to fill it.

And I still have to learn to come near you more modestly. My heart still rushes toward you far too strongly:

my heart, on which my summer burns, that short, hot, sad and over-joyed summer. How my summer-heart longs for your coolness!

Gone is the hesitating gloom of my spring! Gone are the snowflakes of my spite in June! I have become all summer, and summer noon,

a summer in the highest place, with cold springs and blissful silence. Oh come, my friends, so that the silence may become even more blissful!

For this is our high place and our home. We live here too high and too steep for all the unclean and their thirst to reach us.

Just cast your pure eyes into the fountain of my joy, my friends! How could that make it cloudy? It will laugh back at you with its purity.

We build our nest in the tree called Future. Eagles shall bring food in their beaks to us lonely ones!

Truly, it is not food that the unclean would be allowed to share! They would think they were eating fire, and they would burn their mouths.

Truly, we keep no homes ready here for the unclean! To their bodies and to their minds, our happiness would feel like an ice cave!

And we want to live above them like strong winds, neighbors of the eagles, neighbors of the snow, neighbors of the sun. That is how strong winds live.

And one day, like a wind, I want to blow in among them and, with my spirit, take their spirit's breath away. That is what my future wants.

Truly, Zarathustra is a strong wind to all the lowlands. And this is the advice he gives his enemies and everything that spits and spews: take care not to spit against the wind!...

Why I Am So Clever

1.

Why do I know a few things more than other people? Why am I so clever at all? I have never spent my thinking on questions that aren't real questions. I have not wasted myself. For example, I don't know real religious struggles from my own experience. I have completely missed in what way I am supposed to be "sinful." In the same way, I have no reliable way of telling what a guilty conscience, that sting of regret, actually is. From what people say about it, a guilty conscience does not seem to me like anything worth respecting... I would not want to abandon one of my actions after the fact and leave it in the lurch. I would rather leave the bad outcome, the consequences, out of the question of value altogether. When things turn out badly, it is far too easy to lose a clear view of what you actually did. A guilty conscience seems to me a kind of "evil eye," a hostile, distorting way of looking. To honor something that failed all the more, precisely because it failed: that is more a part of my morality. "God," "the immortality of the soul," "salvation," "the afterlife": these are all ideas I never gave any attention or any time to, not even as a child. Maybe I was never childlike enough for them? I don't know atheism as a conclusion I reached, and even less as something that suddenly happened to me. For me it is simply there, from instinct, gut sense. I am too curious, too questioning, too bold and cocky to put up with a crude, heavy-handed answer. God is a crude answer, a piece of rudeness toward us thinkers. Deep down, it is really just a crude ban on us: you shall not think!... A very different question interests me, one on which "the salvation of humanity" depends much more than on any odd little puzzle of the theologians: the question of food and nutri-

tion. For everyday use, you can put it like this: "How exactly should you, you in particular, feed yourself in order to reach your maximum of strength, of virtù in the Renaissance style, meaning bold excellence, of virtue free from moralizing?" My experiences here are as bad as they could possibly be. I am amazed that I heard this question so late, and that I learned "good sense" from these experiences so late. Only the complete worthlessness of our German so-called education, its "idealism, living by false ideals," explains to me to some degree why I was so backward in exactly this area, backward to the point of being a saint. This "so-called education" teaches you from the very start to lose sight of real things, so that you chase after very doubtful, so-called "ideal" goals, for instance "classical education." As if it weren't doomed from the start to try to join "classical" and "German" into one single idea! What's more, it's funny: just imagine a "classically educated" person from Leipzig! In fact, right up to my most mature years, I always ate badly. To put it in moral language, I ate "impersonally," "selflessly," "altruistically," for the good of the cooks and of my other fellow Christians. For example, through Leipzig cooking, at the same time as I was first studying Schopenhauer (1865), I very seriously said no to my "will to live." To ruin your stomach on top of being badly fed: the Leipzig kitchen seemed to me to solve this problem amazingly well. (People say that the year 1866 brought a change in this.) But German cooking in general: what doesn't it have on its conscience! The soup before the meal (in Venetian cookbooks of the 1500s this was still called alla tedesca, "the German way"); the meat boiled until nothing is left of it; the vegetables made greasy and floury; puddings and pastries sunk so low they turn into paperweights! And if you add the downright beastly need of the old Germans, and by no means only the old ones, to wash it all down with drink, then you also understand where the German mind comes from: from troubled guts... The German mind is indigestion; it can't finish with anything, it can't digest anything. But English food too, which compared with German and

even French food is a kind of "return to nature," namely a return to cannibalism, goes deeply against my own instinct, gut sense. It seems to me that it gives the mind heavy feet, the feet of Englishwomen... The best cooking is that of Piedmont. Alcohol is bad for me. One glass of wine or beer a day is quite enough to turn my life into a "vale of tears," a place of misery. The people of Munich are my exact opposites. Granted, I understood this a bit late, but I actually experienced it from childhood on. As a boy I believed that drinking wine, just like smoking tobacco, was at first only a young man's vanity, and later a bad habit. Maybe the wine of Naumburg is partly to blame for this harsh judgment. To believe that wine cheers you up, I would have to be a Christian, which means believing something that, for me in particular, is absurd. Strangely enough, while small, heavily watered-down amounts of alcohol put me in a bad mood so easily, I almost turn into a sailor when it comes to strong amounts. Even as a boy I was brave in this. Writing a long Latin essay in a single night and then copying it out neatly too, with the ambition in my pen to match my model, the Roman writer Sallust, in strictness and tightness, while pouring some grog of the heaviest kind over my Latin: even back when I was a pupil at the venerable boarding school Schulpforta, this did not clash at all with my body's nature, and maybe not with Sallust's either, however much it may have clashed with the venerable Schulpforta... Later, toward the middle of my life, I did decide more and more strictly against every kind of "spirited" drink. I am an opponent of vegetarianism from experience, just like Richard Wagner, who converted me, and I cannot urge seriously enough that all more spiritual natures give up alcohol completely. Water does the job... I prefer places where you have the chance everywhere to drink from flowing fountains (Nice, Turin, Sils). A small glass follows me around like a dog. In vino veritas, "in wine there is truth": it seems that here too I disagree with the whole world about the idea of "truth." With me, the spirit hovers over the water... A few more hints from my mor-

ality. A big meal is easier to digest than one that is too small. The first condition for good digestion is that the whole stomach gets to work. You have to know the size of your stomach. For the same reason, I advise against those long, drawn-out meals that I call interrupted sacrificial feasts: the ones at the shared hotel table, the table d'hôte. No snacks between meals, no coffee: coffee makes you gloomy. Tea is good for you only in the morning. A little, but strong. Tea is very harmful and makes you feel sickly all day long if it is even one degree too weak. Everyone has their own measure here, often within the narrowest and most delicate limits. In a very irritating climate, it is unwise to start the day with tea: an hour before, you should begin with a cup of thick cocoa with the fat taken out. Sit as little as possible. Don't trust any thought that was not born out in the open air while moving freely, a thought in which your muscles are not celebrating too. All prejudices come from the guts. Sitting around on your backside, as I have said once before, is the true sin against the Holy Spirit.

2.

Closely related to the question of food is the question of place and climate. Nobody is free to live just anywhere. And someone who has great missions to carry out, missions that demand all their strength, has a very narrow choice here. Climate affects how the body burns its fuel. It can slow that process down or speed it up. This effect goes so far that picking the wrong place and climate can not only pull a person away from their mission, but keep it from them completely: they never even get to see it. Their animal energy never grows strong enough to reach that freedom which overflows into the highest things of the mind, the moment when a person realizes: this is something only I can do... Even a tiny sluggishness of the gut, once it has become a bad habit, is quite enough to turn a genius into something

average, something "German". The German climate alone is enough to discourage strong guts, even guts built for heroism. The speed at which the body burns its fuel matches exactly how quick or how lame the feet of the mind are. After all, the "mind" itself is only one kind of this burning of fuel. Just make a list of the places where clever, witty people live now or have lived, where wit, refinement and a sharp, mischievous tongue were part of happiness, where genius almost had to feel at home. They all have wonderfully dry air. Paris, Provence, Florence, Jerusalem, Athens: these names prove something. Genius depends on dry air and clear skies. That means it depends on a fast-working body, on being able to take in great, even enormous amounts of strength again and again. I have one case in mind of a gifted and free-thinking mind that became narrow, withdrawn, a mere specialist and a sourpuss, simply because it lacked a fine instinct, gut sense, for climate. And I myself could have ended up as that case in the end, if illness had not forced me to be sensible, to think about how good sense works in real life. Through long practice I now read the effects of climate and weather on myself as if I were a very fine and reliable instrument. Even on a short trip, say from Turin to Milan, I can feel and calculate in my body the change in how damp the air is. And now I think with horror about the eerie fact that my whole life, except for the last ten years, the years that put my life in danger, was spent in wrong places, places that were simply forbidden for me. Naumburg, Schulpforta, Thuringia in general, Leipzig, Basel: each of them a place of misfortune for my body. I have no happy memories at all of my whole childhood and youth. But it would be foolish to blame so-called "moral" causes for this, for example the undeniable lack of good company. That lack exists today just as it always did, and it has not stopped me from being cheerful and brave. No: my ignorance about the body, that cursed "idealism, living by false ideals", is the real doom, fateful thing in my life. It is the useless and stupid part of it, something from which nothing good has grown, something for which

there is no making up and no balancing out. The results of this "idealism" explain to me all my wrong choices, all the big ways my instinct went astray, and all my "modest" detours away from the mission of my life. For example, the fact that I became a scholar of old languages. Why not at least a doctor, or anything else that opens your eyes? During my time in Basel, my whole mental diet, including how I divided up my day, was a completely senseless waste of extraordinary strength. I took in no new strength that came anywhere near what I used up, and I never even thought about using up and replacing it. There was no finer sense of self, no protection from a commanding instinct. I treated myself as equal to just anybody. It was "selflessness", a forgetting of my distance from others, and that is something I will never forgive myself for. When I was almost at the end, and because I was almost at the end, I began to think about this basic foolishness of my life: "idealism". It was illness that first brought me to my senses.

3.

First, choosing your food. Second, choosing your climate and place. The third thing, where you must never make a mistake at any price, is choosing your kind of rest and recovery. Here too, the more a mind is truly one of a kind, the narrower and narrower the limits of what it is allowed, which means what is actually good for it. In my case, all reading counts as rest. So it belongs to the things that free me from myself, that let me go for a stroll through other people's sciences and other people's souls. These are things I no longer take seriously. Reading is exactly what gives me a break from my own seriousness. In times of deep, hard work, you won't see a single book near me. I would be careful not to let anyone talk near me, or worse, think near me. And that is what reading would amount to... Has anyone actually noticed this? A pregnancy puts the mind, and really the whole body, under a deep strain. In that state, chance events and every kind of

outside stimulus hit too hard and strike too deep. So you must avoid chance and outside stimuli as much as you can. A kind of walling yourself in is one of the first clever moves your instinct, gut sense, makes when your mind is pregnant with a work. Am I going to let a stranger's thought secretly climb over that wall? And that is what reading would amount to... After the times of work and fruitfulness comes the time of rest. Come here, then, you pleasant, witty, clever books! Will they be German books?... I have to count back half a year to catch myself with a book in my hand. What was it again? It was an excellent study by Victor Brochard, called "The Greek Skeptics", which also makes good use of my own early studies on the ancient writer Diogenes Laertius. The Skeptics are the only respectable type among the whole tribe of philosophers, a tribe whose words can mean two things, or even five!... Otherwise I almost always run back to the same books. There are only a few of them, really, books that have proven themselves for me in particular. Maybe it is not in my nature to read a lot, or many different kinds of things. A reading room makes me ill. It is also not in my nature to love a lot, or many different things. Caution, and even hostility, toward new books is closer to my instinct, gut sense, than "tolerance", "a big heart", and other kinds of "love for others"... Basically, there is a small number of older French writers I keep coming back to. I believe only in French so-called education, that is, French culture. Everything else in Europe that calls itself so-called education I consider a misunderstanding, not to mention German so-called education... The few cases of truly high culture I found in Germany were all of French origin. Above all there was Mrs. Cosima Wagner, by far the finest voice on questions of taste I have ever heard... Here is how things stand with me. I don't just read Pascal, I love him, as the most instructive victim of Christianity: slowly murdered, first in his body, then in his mind, showing the whole logic of this most horrible form of inhuman cruelty. I have something of Montaigne's playful mischief in my mind, and, who

knows, maybe in my body too. My artist's taste defends the names Molière, Corneille and Racine, and not without anger, against a wild, untamed genius like Shakespeare. But none of this stops me from finding even the very latest French writers charming company. I honestly can't think of any century in history where you could gather together such curious and at the same time such delicate observers of the human soul as in today's Paris. Let me try naming some, because there are quite a few: Paul Bourget, Pierre Loti, Gyp, Meilhac, Anatole France, Jules Lemaître, or, to single out one from the strong breed, a true Latin whom I'm especially fond of, Guy de Maupassant. Between you and me, I even prefer this generation to their great teachers, who were all spoiled by German philosophy. Mr. Taine, for example, was spoiled by Hegel, and because of him he misunderstands great people and great ages. As far as Germany's reach extends, it ruins culture. It took the war to "set free" the mind in France... Then there is Stendhal, one of the most beautiful accidents of my life. I say accident because everything that marked a turning point in my life came to me by chance, never because someone recommended it. Stendhal is simply priceless. He has a psychologist's eye that sees things before others do. He has a firm grip on facts that reminds you he was close to the greatest man of facts of all, Napoleon. As the Latin saying goes, "from the claw you know Napoleon": you can recognize the lion from a single claw. And last but not least, he is valuable as an honest atheist, a kind of creature that is rare in France and almost impossible to find, with all due respect to Prosper Mérimée... Maybe I'm actually jealous of Stendhal? He stole the best atheist joke from me, one that I of all people could have made: "God's only excuse is that he doesn't exist"... I myself said somewhere: what has been the biggest objection to existence so far? God...

4.

It was Heinrich Heine who gave me my highest idea of what a lyric poet can be. I search in vain through all the realms of thousands of years for music that is just as sweet and just as passionate. He had that divine wickedness without which I cannot imagine anything perfect. In fact, I judge the worth of people, and of whole peoples, by how far they understand that the god cannot be separated from the satyr, that wild, goat-like spirit of the woods. And how he handles the German language! One day people will say that Heine and I were by far the greatest artists of the German language, at an unmeasurable distance from everything that mere Germans have done with it. I must be deeply related to Byron's "Manfred". I found all its dark depths inside myself. At thirteen I was already ready for that work. For people who dare to say the word "Faust" in the same breath as "Manfred", I have no words, only a look. The Germans are incapable of any idea of greatness. The proof: Schumann. Out of pure anger at this sugary Saxon, I deliberately composed a counter-overture to "Manfred". Hans von Bülow said of it that he had never seen anything like it on music paper, and that it was a violent assault on Euterpe, the muse of music. When I look for my highest way of praising Shakespeare, I always find only this: he imagined the type of man that Caesar was. You can't just guess something like that. Either you are it, or you are not. The great poet draws only on his own reality, so much so that afterwards he can no longer bear his own work... When I have glanced into my Zarathustra, I walk up and down the room for half an hour, unable to get control of an unbearable fit of sobbing. I know of no more heartbreaking reading than Shakespeare. How much must a man have suffered to need so badly to play the clown! Does anyone understand Hamlet? It is not doubt but certainty that drives you mad... But to feel that, you have to be deep, an abyss, a philosopher... We are all afraid of the truth... And let me confess this: by instinct I

am sure and certain that Lord Bacon is the real author of this most uncanny kind of literature, the one who tortured himself to create it. What do I care about the pitiful chatter of muddled, shallow American heads? But the power to see a vision with the strongest possible reality is not just compatible with the strongest power to act, to do monstrous deeds, even crimes. It actually requires that power... We still know far too little about Lord Bacon, the first realist in every great sense of the word, to know everything he did, everything he wanted, and everything he went through inside himself... And to the devil with you, my dear critics! Suppose I had published my Zarathustra under someone else's name, say, Richard Wagner's. Two thousand years of sharp minds would not have been enough to guess that the author of "Human, All Too Human" was the visionary who saw Zarathustra...

5.

Here, where I am talking about the things that gave me rest and relief in my life, I need to say a word of thanks for the thing that refreshed me most deeply and most warmly by far. Without any doubt, that was my close friendship with Richard Wagner. I don't think much of the rest of my human relationships. But I would not give away, at any price, the days at Tribschen, Wagner's house by the lake. They were days of trust, of bright cheerfulness, of wonderful lucky moments, of deep moments... I don't know what other people went through with Wagner. Over our sky, not a single cloud ever passed. And with this I come back to France once more. I have no arguments here. All I have left is a scornful curl of the lip for the Wagner fans and everyone of that kind, who think they are honoring Wagner by finding him similar to themselves... I am, in my deepest instincts, my gut sense, a stranger to everything German, so much so that just having a German near me slows down my digestion. Being like that, my first contact

with Wagner was also the first time in my life I could breathe freely. I felt him, I worshipped him, as something foreign, as an opposite, as a living, breathing protest against all the so-called "German virtues." We who were children in the swampy, stale air of the 1850s are bound to be pessimists about the idea of "German." We can be nothing but revolutionaries. We will never accept a state of things where the narrow-minded, sanctimonious hypocrite is on top. I don't care at all if today he wears different colors, if he dresses himself in scarlet and puts on cavalry uniforms... Well then! Wagner was a revolutionary. He ran away from the Germans... As an artist, you have no home in Europe except Paris. Wagner's art takes for granted a delicate refinement in all five senses, fingers that can feel the finest shades, and a sickly, overly sensitive mind. All this is only found in Paris. Nowhere else do people have this passion about questions of form, this seriousness about staging. It is Parisian seriousness at its purest. In Germany people have no idea of the huge ambition that lives in the soul of a Parisian artist. The German is good-natured. Wagner was not good-natured at all... But I have already said clearly enough, in "Beyond Good and Evil," section 256 and following, where Wagner belongs and who his closest relatives are. It is the French late Romantics: that high-flying kind of artist who carries you up high with them, like the painter Delacroix and the composer Berlioz. At bottom they have something sick, something incurable in their nature. They are all fanatics about expression, show-off masters of technique through and through... Who was the very first intelligent follower of Wagner? Charles Baudelaire, the same man who was the first to understand Delacroix. He was that typical person in decline, in whom a whole generation of artists recognized themselves. Maybe he was also the last follower... What have I never forgiven Wagner for? That he lowered himself to the Germans, that he became a citizen of the new German Empire... Wherever Germany reaches, it ruins culture.

6.

All things considered, I could not have survived my youth without Wagner's music. Because I was sentenced to live among Germans. If you want to escape from unbearable pressure, you need hashish. Well then, I needed Wagner. Wagner is the antidote to everything German, the best one there is. He is poison too, I don't deny it... From the moment there was a piano version of his opera Tristan, and here's my compliment to you, Mr. von Bülow, who made it, I was a Wagner fan. I looked down on Wagner's older works. They were still too common, too "German"... But even today I am still looking for a work with an equally dangerous fascination, with an equally terrifying and sweet endlessness, as Tristan has. I search in all the arts, and I search in vain. All the strange mysteries in Leonardo da Vinci's paintings lose their magic at the first note of Tristan. This work is absolutely the very peak of Wagner, beyond which nothing goes. He recovered from it with The Mastersingers and The Ring. Getting healthier is a step backward for a nature like Wagner's... I count it as luck of the highest order that I lived at the right time, and that I lived among Germans of all people, so that I was ready for this work. That's how far my curiosity as a student of the human mind goes. The world is poor for anyone who has never been sick enough for this "pleasure of hell." Here it is allowed, almost required, to use a phrase from the mystics. I think I know better than anyone the enormous things Wagner can do: the fifty worlds of strange delights that nobody but him had the wings to reach. And since I am strong enough to turn even the most questionable and dangerous things to my advantage and grow stronger from them, I call Wagner the great benefactor of my life. What makes us related is that we suffered more deeply, also because of each other, than people of this century are able to suffer. That will bring our names together again and again, forever. And just as surely as Wagner is nothing but a misunderstanding among Germans, so am I, and so

will I always be. First, two centuries of training in understanding the mind and in art, my dear Germanic gentlemen!... But that is something you can never catch up on.

7.

I'll say one more thing, for the most refined ears only: what I really want from music. I want it to be cheerful and deep, like an October afternoon. I want it to be one of a kind, playful, tender, like a small sweet woman full of wickedness and grace... I will never allow that a German could know what music is. The people called German musicians, the greatest ones first, are foreigners: Slavs, Croats, Italians, Dutchmen, or Jews. Otherwise they are Germans of the strong old stock, Germans who have died out, like Heinrich Schütz, Bach and Handel. I myself am still Polish enough to give away all the rest of music in exchange for Chopin. I make an exception, for three reasons, for Wagner's Siegfried Idyll. Maybe also for Liszt, who has the noble, high-minded sound of the orchestra better than any other musician. And finally everything that has grown up beyond the Alps, or rather on this side of them, since that's where I am... I couldn't do without Rossini, and even less without my own South in music, the music of my Venetian master, Pietro Gasti. And when I say beyond the Alps, I really only mean Venice. When I look for another word for music, I only ever find the word Venice. I can't tell the difference between tears and music. I can't think of happiness, of the South, without a shiver of fear.

Not long ago I stood at the bridge in the brown night. From far away came singing. It welled up like golden drops and spilled away over the trembling surface of the water. Gondolas, lights, music, all of it floated out, drunk, into the twilight...

My soul, like a stringed instrument, was touched by something unseen, and it secretly sang a gondola song along with it, trembling with colorful bliss. Was anyone listening to it?...

8.

In all of this, in choosing your food, your place and climate, and your way of resting, one instinct, gut sense, gives the orders: the instinct to keep yourself alive. It shows itself most clearly as an instinct to defend yourself. Not seeing many things, not hearing them, not letting them get close to you: that is the first kind of cleverness. It is the first proof that you are not an accident, but something that had to be. The everyday word for this self-defending instinct is taste. Its command is not only to say no where saying yes would be "selflessness." It also commands you to say no as little as possible. That means separating yourself, cutting yourself off from anything that would force you to say no again and again. The sense in this is simple. Spending energy on defense, even in tiny amounts, becomes a rule and a habit, and then it drains you in a huge and completely pointless way. Our biggest expenses are the small ones we make most often. Pushing things away, not letting them come near, is a cost. Make no mistake about this. It is strength wasted on negative goals. Just by always having to fight things off, you can become so weak that you can no longer defend yourself at all. Suppose I stepped out of my house and found, instead of quiet and noble Turin, a small German town. My instinct would have to lock itself up tight to hold back everything pushing in on it from that flattened, cowardly world. Or suppose I found a big German city, that vice built out of stone, where nothing grows, where every single thing, good or bad, has been dragged in from somewhere else. Wouldn't I have to turn into a hedgehog because of it? But having spikes is a waste. It is even a double luxury, when you are free to have no spikes at all, but open hands instead...

Another kind of cleverness and self-defense is to react as rarely as you can. It means staying away from situations and conditions where you would be forced to hang up your "freedom" and your own drive, as if on a hook, and become nothing but something that reacts. I'll use dealing with books as an example. Take the scholar who, at bottom, does nothing but "churn through" books. A language scholar might go through about 200 a day, and that's a modest count. In the end, he completely loses the ability to think for himself. If he isn't churning through books, he isn't thinking. When he thinks, he is answering a trigger, some thought he has read. In the end, all he does is react. The scholar spends all his strength on saying yes and saying no, on criticizing what others have already thought. He himself no longer thinks... His instinct, gut sense, for defending himself has gone soft. Otherwise he would fight back against books. The scholar is someone in decline. I have seen this with my own eyes: gifted people, with rich and free natures, already "read to ruin" by their thirties. They are nothing more than matches that have to be struck to give off sparks, or "thoughts." Reading a book early in the morning, at the break of day, when you are completely fresh, at the dawn of your strength: that is what I call wicked!

9.

At this point I can no longer avoid giving the real answer to the question: How you become who you are. And with that I touch on the masterpiece in the art of keeping yourself alive, which is selfishness... Here is why. Suppose your mission, your calling, the destiny of that mission, goes far beyond the ordinary. Then no danger would be greater than catching sight of yourself together with that mission. Becoming who you are requires that you don't have the faintest idea who you are. Seen this way, even life's mistakes have their own meaning and value: the side roads and wrong turns for a while, the delays,

the "modesty," the serious effort wasted on tasks that lie outside the real mission. A great cleverness, even the highest cleverness, can show itself in this. The old saying "know yourself" would be a recipe for ruin here. So forgetting yourself, misunderstanding yourself, making yourself smaller, narrower, more average, becomes plain good sense. To put it in moral terms: love for others, living for other people and other things, can be a protective measure to keep the toughest kind of selfhood safe. This is the exception, the one case where I go against my own rule and belief and take the side of the "selfless" urges. Here they work in the service of selfishness and self-discipline. You have to keep the whole surface of your awareness clean of any of the great commands. And awareness is only a surface. Be careful even of every big word, every grand pose! They are all dangers that might make the instinct, gut sense, "understand itself" too early. Meanwhile, down in the depths, the organizing "idea," the one that is meant to rule, grows and grows. It starts to give orders. Slowly it leads you back from the side roads and wrong turns. It prepares single qualities and skills that will one day turn out to be essential tools for the whole. One by one, it trains all the abilities that will serve it, before it lets out anything at all about the main mission, about the "goal," the "purpose," the "meaning." Looked at from this side, my life is simply wonderful. The mission of turning all values upside down perhaps needed more abilities than have ever lived together in a single person. Above all it needed opposite abilities, without these being allowed to get in each other's way or destroy each other. A ranking, hierarchy, of abilities; distance between them; the art of keeping things apart without making them enemies; mixing nothing, "making peace" between nothing; an enormous variety that is still the very opposite of chaos. That was the precondition. That was the long, secret work and artistry of my instinct, gut sense. Its higher care for me was so strong that I never once even suspected what was growing inside me. One day all my abilities suddenly sprang out, ripe, in their final perfection.

I can't remember ever having made an effort. There is no trace of struggle to be found in my life. I am the opposite of a heroic type. "Wanting" something, "striving" for something, having a "purpose" or a "wish" in view: I don't know any of that from experience. Even at this moment I look out on my future, and it is a wide future, as if on a smooth sea. Not a single desire ripples its surface. I don't want anything at all to be different from how it is. I don't want to become different myself. But that is how I have always lived. I have never had a wish. Here is someone who, past his forty-fourth year, can say that he never chased after honors, women, or money! Not that I lacked them... For example, one day I simply was a university professor. I had never even dreamed of such a thing, since I was barely 24 years old. In the same way, two years earlier, one day I simply was a language scholar. By that I mean my first scholarly work, my beginning in every sense, was requested by my teacher Ritschl to be printed in his journal, the "Rheinisches Museum." (Ritschl, and I say this with deep respect, was the only scholar of genius I have ever laid eyes on to this day. He had that pleasant crookedness that marks us people from Thuringia, which makes even a German likeable. Even to reach the truth, we still prefer the sneaky back roads. With these words I certainly don't want to have underrated my closer fellow countryman, the clever Leopold von Ranke...)

10.

At this point, we really need to stop and think hard. People will ask me why I have actually told all these little things, which by the usual way of judging don't matter at all. They will say I am hurting myself by doing it, all the more so if I am meant to stand for great missions. My answer: these little things — food, place, climate, rest, the whole careful case-by-case art of selfishness — are more important than anything people have taken as important so far, more important than

words can say. This is exactly where we have to start learning all over again. The things humanity has seriously thought about until now are not even real. They are mere fantasies. Or, to put it more strictly, they are lies that grew out of the bad instincts, the bad gut sense, of sick people who were harmful in the deepest sense. I mean all those ideas: "God", "soul", "virtue", "sin", "the afterlife", "truth", "eternal life"... And yet people looked for the greatness of human nature, its "godliness", in exactly these ideas... Every question of politics, of how society is ordered, of how we raise and teach people, has been faked right down to the ground. That happened because the most harmful people were taken for great people, and because people were taught to look down on the "little" things, by which I mean the basic matters of life itself... Our culture today is two-faced to the highest degree... Just look at the German Emperor making deals with the Pope, as if the Pope were not the very symbol of deadly hatred against life!... Whatever is being built today will no longer be standing in three years. Now, when I measure myself by what I am able to do — not to mention what will come after me, an overthrow and a rebuilding like nothing before — then I have more right than any mortal to the word "greatness". And when I compare myself with the people who have been honored until now as the first and finest of humanity, the difference is plain to see, you could almost touch it. I don't even count these so-called "first" people as human beings at all. To me they are the garbage of humanity, the monstrous offspring of sickness and of instincts hungry for revenge. They are all disastrous creatures, inhuman and basically beyond cure, who take revenge on life... I want to be the opposite of them. My special gift is having the finest possible sense for every sign of healthy instincts. There is nothing sickly about me. Even in times of serious illness I never became sickly in my mind. It is no use looking for a streak of fanaticism in my nature. No one will be able to point to a single moment in my life when I acted arrogant or put on a dramatic, grand pose. Striking a grand pose has nothing to do with

greatness. Anyone who needs poses at all is a fake... Watch out for all people who try to look picturesque! Life has become easy for me, easiest of all when it demanded the hardest things from me. This autumn, for seventy days without a break, I made nothing but first-class things that no one can copy from me, or do before me, and I carried a responsibility for all the thousands of years after me. Anyone who saw me during those days will not have noticed any sign of strain in me. Instead they would have seen an overflowing freshness and bright cheerfulness. I never ate with more pleasant feelings, and I never slept better. I know no other way to deal with great missions than as play. As a sign of greatness, this is an essential condition. The slightest strain, a gloomy face, any harsh tone in the throat — all of these are objections against a person, and how much more against that person's work!... You must not have nerves... Suffering from being alone is also an objection. I have only ever suffered from being "alone with too many", from being surrounded by crowds... At an absurdly early age, when I was seven, I already knew that no human word would ever reach me. Has anyone ever seen me sad about that? Even today I am just as friendly and easygoing with everyone. I even show great respect to the lowest people. In all of this there is not one grain of pride or of secret contempt. Whoever I look down on can guess that I look down on him. Simply by existing, I outrage everything that has bad blood in its body... My formula for greatness in a human being is love of fate: that you don't want anything to be different — not in the future, not in the past, not for all eternity. Not just putting up with what is necessary, and even less hiding it — for all idealism, all living by false ideals, is lying in the face of what is necessary — but loving it...

Why I Write Such Good Books

1.

I am one thing, and my writings are another. Before I talk about the books themselves, I want to touch on the question of whether they are understood or not understood. I will do this as casually as is at all fitting, because this question has not yet had its moment. I myself have not yet had my moment. Some people are born only after they die. At some point people will need institutions where they live and teach the way I understand living and teaching. Maybe there will even be special university chairs set up just to explain Thus Spoke Zarathustra. But it would go completely against who I am if I already expected people today to have ears to hear my truths and hands to take them. That people today do not hear me, that people today do not know how to take anything from me, is not just understandable. To me it even seems right. I do not want to be mistaken for someone else, and for that, I must not mistake myself for someone else either. Let me say it again: there is very little in my life that can be shown to be "ill will" against me. I could hardly tell you of a single case of "ill will" in literary matters either. On the other hand, there has been far too much plain foolishness... It seems to me one of the rarest honors a person can give himself when he picks up one of my books. I even assume he takes off his shoes to do it, not to mention his boots... Once Doctor Heinrich von Stein honestly complained that he did not understand a single word of my Zarathustra. I told him that was fine. To have understood six sentences of it, which means to have actually lived them, lifts a person to a higher level among mortals than "modern" people could ever reach. With this feeling of distance, how could I even wish to be read by the "moderns" I know! My triumph is the

exact opposite of Schopenhauer's. He said he would be read in the future; I say, in Latin, "non legor, non legar": "I am not read, and I will not be read." That does not mean I want to play down the fun I have had several times from the innocent way people said no to my writings. Just this summer, at a time when my weighty, far too weighty literature might be able to throw all the rest of literature off balance, a professor at the University of Berlin kindly hinted to me that I really ought to use a different form, because nobody reads stuff like that. In the end it was not Germany but Switzerland that gave me the two most extreme cases. One was an essay by Dr. V. Widmann in the newspaper "Der Bund" about "Beyond Good and Evil," with the title "Nietzsche's Dangerous Book." The other was an overall review of all my books by Mr. Karl Spitteler, also in "Der Bund." These two are a high point in my life, though I am careful not to say a high point of what... Spitteler, for example, treated my Zarathustra as an "advanced exercise in style" and wished that later on I would also take care to give it some content. Dr. Widmann told me he respected the courage with which I was working to get rid of all decent feelings. Through a little trick of chance, every sentence here, with a consistency I truly admired, was a truth stood on its head. Basically, all you had to do was "turn all values upside down" in what they wrote, and you would hit the nail on the head about me, in quite a remarkable way, instead of hitting my head with a nail... All the more reason for me to try to give an explanation. In the end, nobody can hear more in things, books included, than he already knows. If you have no way in through your own experience, you have no ear for it. Now let us imagine an extreme case: a book that talks only about experiences lying completely outside of anything people commonly go through, or even rarely go through. A book that is the first language for a whole new series of experiences. In that case, simply nothing is heard. And there is the trick of the ear that makes people think that where nothing is heard, nothing is there. That, in the end, is my usual experience, and,

if you like, what is original about my experience. Whoever believed he had understood something of me had made something out of me in his own image, quite often my very opposite, for example an "idealist," someone living by false ideals. Whoever had understood nothing of me denied that I was worth considering at all. Take the word "superhuman (the 'overman')." I used it to name a type of person who is as well-made as a human can be, the opposite of "modern" people, of "good" people, of Christians and other nihilists. In the mouth of Zarathustra, the destroyer of morality, it becomes a word to think hard about. Yet almost everywhere it has been understood, in complete innocence, in terms of the very values whose opposite the figure of Zarathustra was meant to show. That is, people took it as an "idealistic" type of higher human being, half "saint," half "genius"... Other learned dumb oxen suspected me of Darwinism because of it. People even recognized in it the "hero worship" of Carlyle, that great forger of truth who did it without knowing or meaning to, and whose ideas I rejected so mockingly. When I whispered in someone's ear that he should look for someone like Cesare Borgia rather than someone like Parsifal, he could not believe his ears. People will have to forgive me for having no curiosity at all about reviews of my books, especially in newspapers. My friends and my publishers know this, and they do not talk to me about such things. In one special case, I once got to see everything that had been sinned against a single book. It was "Beyond Good and Evil." I could give quite a nice report about it. Would you believe that the Nationalzeitung, which, for my readers abroad, is a Prussian newspaper (I myself, if you will allow me, read only the French Journal des Débats), in all seriousness managed to understand the book as a "sign of the times"? They saw it as the true, genuine philosophy of the land-owning aristocrats, the Junkers, the kind of philosophy that the conservative Kreuzzeitung only lacked the courage to put forward.

2.

That was said for Germans. Everywhere else I have readers, and they are all hand-picked minds: tested people of strong character, raised in high positions and used to serious duties. I even have real geniuses among my readers. In Vienna, in St. Petersburg, in Stockholm, in Copenhagen, in Paris and in New York, I have been discovered everywhere. The one place I have not been discovered is Germany, the flat lowland of Europe... And I must admit that I am even happier about my non-readers. These are people who have never heard my name, or even the word "philosophy." But wherever I go, here in Turin for example, every face brightens and turns kind when it sees me. What has flattered me most so far is this: old women selling fruit at the market won't rest until they have picked out the sweetest of their grapes for me. That is how far you have to go as a philosopher. It is not for nothing that people call the Poles the French of the Slavic peoples. A charming Russian woman will not be mistaken for a moment about where I belong. I just can't manage to be solemn; the furthest I get is embarrassment... Thinking like a German, feeling like a German: I can do anything, but that is beyond my strength... My old teacher Ritschl even claimed that I planned out my scholarly papers on ancient languages like a Paris novelist, absurdly gripping. In Paris itself people are amazed at "all my daring and my subtlety". Those are the words of Monsieur Taine. I'm afraid that even in the highest forms of my wild song of praise, you will find a pinch of that salt that never turns stupid, never turns "German": I mean wit, esprit... I can't help it. God help me! Amen. We all know, and some of us even know from experience, what a long-ear is, that is, a donkey. Well then, I dare to claim that I have the smallest ears. This interests the ladies quite a lot. It seems to me they feel I understand them better?... I am the anti-donkey above all others, and that makes me a monster in world history. In Greek, and not only in Greek, I am the Antichrist...

3.

I know fairly well the special privileges I have as a writer. In some cases people have also told me how much getting used to my writings "spoils" their taste. You simply can't stand other books anymore, least of all books of philosophy. It is an honor like no other to step into this noble, high-minded and delicate world. To do that, you must absolutely not be a German. In the end, it is an honor you have to have earned. But whoever is related to me because their will reaches up to the same high places goes through real ecstasies of learning. For I come from high places that no bird has ever flown to, and I know deep pits where no foot has ever strayed. People have told me that it is impossible to put one of my books down, and that I even disturb their sleep at night... There is no prouder and at the same time more refined kind of book. Here and there they reach the highest thing that can be reached on earth: cynicism, a fearless, mocking honesty. You have to win them over with the gentlest fingers and also with the bravest fists. Any weakness of the soul shuts you out from them, once and for all, even any upset stomach. You must have no nerves; you must have a cheerful belly. It is not only a poor soul, with the stale air of a back corner, that is shut out. Even more shut out is whatever is cowardly, unclean, or secretly hungry for revenge deep in the gut. A single word of mine drives all bad instincts, all bad gut senses, right up into a person's face, where they show. Among my acquaintances I have several test animals, so to speak, and I study on them the different reactions to my writings, which are very instructive in how different they are. Those who want nothing to do with what my books say, my so-called friends for example, become "impersonal" about it. They congratulate me on having gotten "so far" again, and they say there is also progress in a greater bright cheerfulness of tone... The completely corrupt "minds," the "beautiful souls," who are false through and through, have no idea at all what to do with these books. So they look

down on them, which is the neat logic of all "beautiful souls." The dumb cattle among my acquaintances, just Germans, if you'll pardon me, let me know that they don't always agree with me, but sometimes they do, for example... I have heard this said even about Zarathustra... In the same way, any "feminism," any softness, in a person, even in a man, shuts the gate on me. Such a person will never step into this maze of daring insights. You must never have spared yourself. You must have hardness in your habits, so that you can stay in good spirits and cheerful surrounded by nothing but hard truths. When I picture the perfect reader, it always turns into a monster of courage and curiosity, and also something flexible, cunning and careful, a born adventurer and explorer. Finally, I couldn't say better who it is I am really speaking to than Zarathustra already said it. To whom alone does he want to tell his riddle?

"To you, the bold searchers and testers, and to anyone who ever set out with clever sails onto terrifying seas,

to you, who are drunk on riddles and happy in the twilight, whose souls are lured by the sound of flutes into every winding abyss,

because you do not want to feel your way along a thread with a cowardly hand; and where you can guess, you hate to work things out step by step..."

4.

At the same time I want to say something general about my art of style. The point of every style is to pass on a state of mind, an inner tension of strong feeling, through signs, and that includes the speed, the tempo, of those signs. And since I have an extraordinary number of different inner states, I have many possible styles. I have the most varied art of style that any human being has ever had. Any style is good if it truly passes on an inner state and doesn't get the signs

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wrong, or the tempo of the signs, or the gestures. All the rules of building sentences are really an art of gesture. My instinct, my gut sense, never fails here. "Good style in itself" is pure foolishness. It is just "idealism, living by false ideals," like "the beautiful in itself," like "the good in itself," like "the thing in itself"... All this still assumes that there are ears to hear it. It assumes there are people who are capable of the same strong feeling and worthy of it, people you are allowed to share yourself with. My Zarathustra, for example, is still looking for such people. Oh! He will have to look for a long time yet! You have to be worthy of hearing him... And until then there will be no one who understands the art that has been poured out here. No one has ever had more new, unheard-of tools of art to pour out, tools truly created for this purpose. That such a thing was possible in the German language, of all languages, still had to be proven. I myself would have denied it most strongly beforehand. Before me, nobody knew what you can do with the German language, or what you can do with language at all. The art of great rhythm, the grand style of long flowing sentences that express a huge rising and falling of lofty, superhuman passion, was first discovered by me. With a wild song of praise like the last one in the third part of Zarathustra, the one titled "The Seven Seals," I flew a thousand miles beyond everything that had been called poetry until then.

5.

– That a psychologist without equal speaks through my writings may be the first thing a good reader realizes. I mean a reader of the kind I deserve, one who reads me the way good old-fashioned language scholars used to read their Horace, the Roman poet. There are statements that basically the whole world agrees on, not to mention the everyday philosophers, the moralists and the other empty pots and cabbage-heads. In my work, these statements show up as naive mis-

takes. Take, for example, the belief that "unselfish" and "selfish" are opposites, when the ego itself is just a "higher swindle", an "ideal"... There are no selfish actions and no unselfish actions: both ideas are psychological nonsense. Or the statement "people strive for happiness"... Or the statement "happiness is the reward for virtue"... Or the statement "pleasure and pain are opposites"... Morality, that Circe, the enchantress of humankind, has faked all of psychology from top to bottom. It has turned everything into moralizing, all the way to that horrible nonsense that love is supposed to be something "unselfish"... You have to sit firmly on yourself, you have to stand bravely on your own two feet, or else you can't love at all. In the end, the little women know this only too well: they don't give a damn about selfless men, men who are merely objective... While I'm at it, may I dare to guess that I know the little women? That is part of the gift I was born with as a Dionysian (wildly life-loving) person. Who knows? Maybe I am the first psychologist of the Eternal Feminine. They all love me. That's an old story, leaving aside the failed little women, the "emancipated" ones, who lack what it takes to have children. – Luckily I have no intention of letting myself be torn to pieces: the perfect woman tears you apart when she loves... I know these charming maenads, the wild women who followed the wine god... Ah, what a dangerous, creeping, hidden little beast of prey! And so pleasant along with it!... A little woman chasing after her revenge would run right over destiny itself. – Woman is far, far more wicked than man, and also cleverer. Goodness in a woman is already a form of degeneration... In all so-called "beautiful souls" there is a physical defect at the bottom of it. I won't say everything, or I would get too medical. The fight for equal rights is even a symptom of sickness: every doctor knows that. – The more womanly a woman is, the harder she fights tooth and nail against rights of any kind. After all, the natural state, the eternal war between the sexes, already gives her by far the top rank. – Did anyone have ears for my definition of love? It is the only one worthy of a philosopher. Love:

in its methods, war; at its root, the deadly hatred between the sexes. – Did anyone hear my answer to the question of how you cure a woman, how you "save" her? You give her a child. Woman needs children; man is only ever a means to that end: thus spoke Zarathustra. – "Emancipation of women": that is the instinctive hatred, the gut sense, of the woman who turned out badly, meaning the woman unable to bear children, against the woman who turned out well. The fight against "man" is only ever a means, an excuse, a tactic. By raising themselves up as "woman in herself", as "higher woman", as the "idealist" kind of woman, they want to drag down the general rank of women. There is no surer way to do that than high-school education, trousers, and the right to vote like cattle herded to the polls. Basically, the emancipated women are the anarchists in the world of the "Eternal Feminine", the ones who got a raw deal, whose deepest instinct, their lowest gut sense, is revenge... There is a whole breed of the most vicious "idealism", living by false ideals, which by the way also shows up in men, for example in Henrik Ibsen, that typical old maid. Its goal is to poison, with a clear conscience, what is natural in sexual love... And so that I leave no doubt about my views on this, which are as decent as they are strict, I want to share one more sentence from my moral code against vice. With the word vice I am fighting every kind of going against nature, or, if you like fancy words, idealism. The sentence goes: "Preaching chastity is a public incitement to go against nature. Every contempt for sexual life, every dirtying of it with the idea of 'impure', is the real crime against life itself. It is the true sin against the holy spirit of life." –

6.

To give you an idea of me as a psychologist, I'll take a strange piece of psychology that appears in "Beyond Good and Evil". By the way, I forbid any guessing about whom I am describing in this passage. It

goes like this: "The genius of the heart, the kind that great hidden one has, the tempter-god and born Pied Piper of consciences, the one who leads them along like the piper led the rats. His voice knows how to climb down into the underworld of every soul. He doesn't say a single word or cast a single glance that doesn't hold some hidden consideration and fold of temptation. Part of his mastery is that he knows how to seem. And he seems not as what he really is, but as something that pushes his followers even harder to press ever closer to him, to follow him ever more deeply and completely... The genius of the heart, which makes everything loud and smug go silent and teaches it to listen. It smooths out rough souls and gives them a taste of a new longing: to lie still, like a mirror, so that the deep sky can be reflected in them... The genius of the heart, which teaches the clumsy, hasty hand to hold back and to take hold more gently. It senses the hidden and forgotten treasure, the drop of goodness and sweet spirit beneath thick, cloudy ice. It is like a divining rod that finds every grain of gold that has lain buried for a long time in a prison of mud and sand... The genius of the heart, from whose touch everyone goes away richer. Not blessed and surprised, not made happy and weighed down as if by someone else's gift, but richer in themselves, newer to themselves than before, broken open, blown on and listened through by a thawing wind, like spring melting the ice. Maybe less sure of themselves, more tender, more fragile, more broken, but full of hopes that don't yet have a name, full of new will and new flowing, full of new unwillingness and flowing back..."

The Birth of Tragedy

1.

To be fair to "The Birth of Tragedy" (1872), you have to forget a few things. It made its mark, and even fascinated people, because of what was wrong with it: the way it applied its ideas to the whole Wagner business, as if Wagnerism were a sign of something new rising. That is exactly why this book was an event in Wagner's life. Only from then on did people attach great hopes to the name Wagner. Even today people remind me of it, sometimes right in the middle of a performance of Parsifal: they say it is really my fault that such a high opinion of the cultural value of this movement came out on top. — I have found the book quoted several times as "The Rebirth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music". People only had ears for a new formula for Wagner's art, his aims, his mission. Because of that, they failed to hear the truly valuable things the book held underneath. "Greek Culture and Pessimism": that would have been a clearer title. It would have been a first lesson in how the Greeks dealt with pessimism, how they got the better of it... Tragedy itself is the proof that the Greeks were not pessimists. Schopenhauer got this wrong, just as he got everything wrong. — If you pick up "The Birth of Tragedy" with a fairly neutral mind, it looks very out of step with its time. You would never dream that it was begun while the cannons were thundering at the Battle of Wörth. I thought these problems through outside the walls of Metz, on cold September nights, while I was working as a medical orderly, caring for the sick and wounded. You could sooner believe the book was fifty years older than it is. It does not care about politics — "un-German", people will call it today. It smells offensively of Hegel. Only in a few of its phrases does it carry the gloomy funeral-parlour per-

fume of Schopenhauer. Here is what it does: it takes one "idea" — the opposition between Dionysian (wildly life-loving) and Apollonian (calm, orderly) — and turns it into a theory about the deepest nature of reality. It sees history itself as the unfolding of this "idea". In tragedy, it says, this opposition is dissolved into a unity. And from this point of view, things that had never looked each other in the face are suddenly set side by side, so that each lights up and explains the other... Opera, for example, and the Revolution. — The book has two decisive new ideas. The first is its understanding of the Dionysian (wildly life-loving) phenomenon among the Greeks. It gives the first psychology of it, and it sees in it the one single root of all Greek art. The second is its understanding of what Socrates stood for: for the first time, Socrates is recognized as a tool of the Greek collapse, as a typical case of someone in decline. "Rationality" set against instinct, gut sense. "Rationality" at any price, seen as a dangerous force, a force that eats away at life! — All through the book there is a deep, hostile silence about Christianity. Christianity is neither Apollonian (calm, orderly) nor Dionysian (wildly life-loving). It denies all aesthetic values, all values of beauty and art — and those are the only values "The Birth of Tragedy" recognizes. Christianity is nihilistic in the deepest sense: it says no to everything, while the Dionysian (wildly life-loving) symbol reaches the farthest limit of saying yes, affirmation. At one point the book hints at Christian priests as a "spiteful kind of dwarfs", as "creatures from underground"...

2.

This beginning is remarkable beyond all measure. I had found, for my own innermost experience, the only parallel, the only matching example, that history has to offer. And by doing so, I became the first person to understand the wonderful phenomenon of the Dionysian (wildly life-loving). In the same way, when I recognized Socrates as

someone in decline, I gave completely clear proof of how little the sureness of my psychological grip could ever be thrown off by any moral quirk or prejudice. Seeing morality itself as a symptom of decline, decay is a new idea, something unique and of the first rank in the history of human knowledge. With both of these ideas, how high I had leaped over the miserable, shallow-headed chatter about optimism versus pessimism! — I was the first to see the real opposition. On one side stands the degenerating instinct, gut sense, which turns against life with an underground thirst for revenge. Christianity, Schopenhauer's philosophy, in a certain sense even Plato's philosophy, and the whole of idealism, living by false ideals — these are its typical forms. On the other side stands a formula of the highest affirmation, born out of fullness, out of overflowing fullness: a saying yes to life with no reservations, yes even to suffering itself, to guilt itself, to everything questionable and strange in existence itself... This final, most joyful, overflowing, high-spirited Yes to life is not only the highest insight. It is also the deepest one, the one most strictly confirmed and supported by truth and science. Nothing that exists should be taken away; nothing can be done without. The sides of existence that Christians and other nihilists reject actually stand infinitely higher in the ranking, hierarchy of values than anything the instinct of decline, decay could approve of — or was allowed to approve of. To understand this takes courage, and, as the condition for courage, a surplus of strength. For you get closer to the truth exactly as far as your courage dares to go forward — exactly in proportion to how much strength you have. For the strong, knowledge, saying yes to reality, is just as much a necessity as, for the weak, driven by their weakness, cowardice and running away from reality are — that is, the "ideal"... The weak are not free to know the truth: those in decline need the lie; it is one of the things they need in order to survive. — Whoever not only understands the word "Dionysian" but understands himself in the word "Dionysian" (wildly life-loving) does not need any

argument against Plato or Christianity or Schopenhauer — he can smell the rot...

3.

How, in the very same step, I had found the meaning of the word "tragic" — the final understanding of what the psychology of tragedy really is — I explained most recently in Twilight of the Idols, on page 139. There I wrote: "Saying yes to life even in its strangest and hardest problems; the will to live, rejoicing in its own endless richness even while it sacrifices its highest types — that is what I called Dionysian (wildly life-loving), and that is what I saw as the bridge to the psychology of the tragic poet. The point is not to get rid of terror and pity, not to cleanse yourself of a dangerous emotion by letting it burst out violently — that is how Aristotle misunderstood it. The point is to go beyond terror and pity and to be, yourself, the eternal joy of becoming, of constant change — that joy which also includes the joy in destroying..." In this sense I have the right to see myself as the first tragic philosopher — that is, the most extreme opposite, the exact reverse, of a pessimistic philosopher. Before me, nobody had turned the Dionysian (wildly life-loving) into a philosophical passion. Tragic wisdom is missing. I looked in vain for signs of it even among the great Greek philosophers, the ones from the two centuries before Socrates. I was left with one doubt in the case of Heraclitus, near whom I feel warmer and more at ease than anywhere else. Saying yes to passing away and destruction, which is the decisive thing in a Dionysian (wildly life-loving) philosophy; saying yes to opposition and war; the idea of becoming, of constant change, along with a radical rejection of the very idea of "being", of anything fixed and unchanging — in all this I must, whatever happens, recognize the thinking most closely related to mine of anything thought so far. The teaching of the "eternal return of everything", meaning the unconditional and end-

lessly repeated cycle of all things — this teaching of Zarathustra's might, in the end, already have been taught by Heraclitus. At the very least, the Stoics, who inherited almost all their basic ideas from Heraclitus, show traces of it.

4.

A huge hope speaks out of this book. In the end, I have no reason at all to take back my hope for a Dionysian (wildly life-loving) future for music. Let us look a hundred years ahead. Let us suppose that my attack on two thousand years of going against nature and of degrading human beings succeeds. Then a new party of life will take into its hands the greatest of all missions: breeding humanity to a higher level, which includes destroying, without mercy, everything that is degenerate and parasitic. This party will make possible again that overflowing abundance of life on earth from which the Dionysian state must also grow again. I promise a tragic age. Tragedy, the highest art of saying yes to life, will be born again once humanity has gone through the awareness of the hardest but most necessary wars, without suffering from it... A psychologist might add something more. He might say that what I heard in Wagner's music when I was young had nothing at all to do with Wagner. He might say that when I described Dionysian music, I was describing what I myself had heard. And he might say that, by instinct, by gut sense, I had to translate everything and transform it into the new spirit that I carried inside me. The proof of this, as strong as any proof can be, is my essay "Wagner in Bayreuth." In all the places that matter psychologically, I am the only one being talked about. You can freely put my name, or the word "Zarathustra," wherever the text says "Wagner." The whole picture of the artist of wild songs of praise is a picture of the poet of Zarathustra before he existed. It is drawn with bottomless depth, and not for a single moment does it even touch the real Wagner. Wagner

himself had some idea of this: he did not recognize himself in the essay. In the same way, "the idea of Bayreuth" had turned into something that will be no riddle to people who know my Zarathustra well. It had turned into that great noon, turning point, when the most chosen people dedicate themselves to the greatest of all missions. Who knows? It may be the vision of a festival that I will still live to see... The deep feeling of the first pages belongs to world history. The look that is talked about on the seventh page is the true look of Zarathustra. Wagner, Bayreuth, the whole petty German misery, is just a cloud in which an endless mirage of the future is reflected. Even psychologically, all the deciding features of my own nature have been written into Wagner's. There is the side-by-side presence of the brightest powers and the most fateful ones. There is the will to power such as no human being has ever had. There is reckless courage in matters of the mind. And there is an unlimited power to learn, without the will to act being crushed by it. Everything in this essay announces what is to come: that the return of the Greek spirit is near, and that we need "counter-Alexanders." Alexander the Great cut through the famous Gordian knot; these counter-Alexanders would tie the knot of Greek culture back together after it had been undone... Just listen to the tone of world history in which the idea of a "tragic attitude" is introduced on page 30. This essay is full of nothing but tones of world history. This is the strangest kind of "objectivity" there could ever be. My absolute certainty about what I am was projected onto some random reality that happened to be there. The truth about me spoke out of a terrifying depth. On page 71, the style of Zarathustra is described and predicted with cutting certainty. And no one will ever find a grander way of expressing the event called Zarathustra, the act of a tremendous cleansing and making-holy of humanity, than the one found on pages 43 to 46.

The Untimely Essays

1.

The four Untimely Essays are fighting books through and through. They prove that I was no daydreamer, no "Johnny the Dreamer." They show that I enjoy drawing my sword, and maybe also that my wrist moves dangerously freely. The first attack, in 1873, was aimed at German so-called education, which even back then I looked down on with merciless contempt. It had no meaning, no substance, no goal: it was nothing more than "public opinion." There is no nastier misunderstanding than to believe that the Germans' great success in war proves anything in favor of this so-called education, or even that it was this education that beat France... The second of the Untimely Essays, from 1874, drags into the light what is dangerous in the way we run science and scholarship: the way it gnaws at life and poisons it. Life becomes sick from this inhuman system of gears and machinery, from the "impersonal" worker, from the false economy of the "division of labor." The real goal, which is culture, gets lost, while the means, the modern business of science, turns people into barbarians... In this essay, the "historical sense" that this century is so proud of was recognized for the first time as a disease, as a typical sign of decay. In the third and fourth Untimely Essays, I set up two pictures as pointers toward a higher idea of culture, and toward restoring the true meaning of the word "culture." These were pictures of the hardest selfishness and self-discipline, in opposition to everything around them. They were untimely types in the fullest sense, full of a ruler's contempt for everything that went by the names "Empire," "so-called education," "Christianity," "Bismarck," and "success." They were Schopenhauer and Wagner, or, to put it in one word, Nietzsche...

2.

Of these four attacks, the first was an extraordinary success. The noise it caused was splendid in every way. I had touched a victorious nation on its sore spot: I had said that its victory was not a cultural event, but perhaps, just perhaps, something quite different... Answers came from every side, and not at all only from the old friends of David Strauss. I had made fun of Strauss as the model of a German educated philistine, a man smugly pleased with himself; in short, as the author of his beer-hall gospel called "The Old Faith and the New." (The phrase "educated philistine" has stayed in the German language ever since my essay.) These old friends were people from Württemberg and Swabia, and I had wounded them deeply by finding their marvel, their Strauss, ridiculous. They answered me in as honest and rough a way as I could ever have wished. The Prussian replies were cleverer; they had more "Berlin blue" in them, more of that sharp Berlin attitude. The most indecent reply came from a Leipzig paper, the notorious "Grenzboten"; I had trouble stopping the outraged people of Basel from taking action. Only a few old gentlemen came out fully on my side, for mixed reasons, some of which I could never figure out. Among them was Ewald in Göttingen, who hinted that my attack had been fatal for Strauss. Likewise the old follower of Hegel, Bruno Bauer, who from then on was one of my most attentive readers. In his last years he liked to point people to me. For example, he hinted to Mr. von Treitschke, the official historian of Prussia, where he could go to find out about the idea of "culture," which Treitschke had lost. The most thoughtful remarks about the essay and its author, and also the longest, came from an old student of the philosopher von Baader, a Professor Hoffmann in Würzburg. From the essay he foresaw a great destiny for me: to bring about a kind of crisis and final decision in the problem of atheism. He guessed that I was the most instinctive and most ruthless type of atheist. Atheism was what had led me to

Schopenhauer. By far the most widely heard defense, and the one that people resented most bitterly, was an extremely strong and brave plea for me from Karl Hillebrand, who was usually so mild. He was the last humane German who really knew how to write. People read his article in the "Augsburg Newspaper"; today you can read it, in a somewhat more cautious form, in his collected writings. There he presented my essay as an event, a turning point, a first moment of self-awareness, the very best sign: a real return of German seriousness and German passion in matters of the mind. Hillebrand praised the form of the essay highly, its mature taste, and its perfect tact in keeping the person separate from the issue. He singled it out as the best polemical essay, the best piece of argument against someone, ever written in German, and that in the art of polemics, which is so dangerous for Germans and which they would be better advised to avoid. He was completely life-affirming about it. He even went further than I did in what I had dared to say about how badly the German language was going to rags (today they play at being language purists and can no longer build a single sentence). He shared my contempt for the so-called "leading writers" of the nation. He ended by expressing his admiration for my courage, that "highest courage, which puts a people's very favorites in the dock"... The after-effects of this essay on my life are truly beyond measure. Since then, nobody has tried to pick a fight with me. People keep quiet. In Germany they treat me with a gloomy caution. For years I have used a total freedom of speech that no one today has a free enough hand for, least of all in the "Empire." My paradise is "in the shadow of my sword"... Basically, I had been putting into practice a rule of Stendhal's: he advises making your entrance into society with a duel. And what an opponent I had chosen! The leading German free spirit!... In fact, a completely new kind of free thinking found its voice there for the first time. To this day, nothing is more foreign or less related to me than the whole European and American breed of so-called "free thinkers." I see them

as hopeless shallow minds and clowns of "modern ideas," and I am actually more deeply at odds with them than with any of their opponents. They too want, in their own way, to "improve" humanity, to make it in their own image. They would wage an unforgiving war against what I am and what I want, if they ever understood it. All of them still believe in the "ideal"... I am the first immoralist, enemy of morality.

3.

I would not claim that the Untimely Essays that carry the names of Schopenhauer and Wagner are especially useful for understanding these two cases, or even for asking the right psychological questions about them. There are, of course, some exceptions, as you would expect. For example, even here, with a deep and sure instinct, gut sense, the basic core of Wagner's nature is already described as an actor's talent, a talent that simply follows through to its natural results in the methods he uses and the goals he has. Really, with these writings I wanted to do something quite different from psychology. A problem of upbringing and education like no other, a new idea of self-discipline, of defending yourself even to the point of hardness, a path to greatness and to missions that matter for the whole history of the world: all of this was asking to be put into words for the first time. Broadly speaking, I grabbed hold of two famous types of people who had not yet been pinned down at all. I grabbed them the way you grab an opportunity when it comes along, in order to say something, in order to have a few more formulas, signs and ways of speaking at my disposal. In the end, this is even hinted at, with a truly uncanny sharpness, on page 93 of the third Untimely Essay. In just this way, Plato made use of Socrates: as a set of signs for expressing Plato. Now, looking back from some distance at the states of mind that these writings bear witness to, I don't want to deny that, at bottom,

they talk only about me. The essay "Wagner in Bayreuth" is a vision of my future. In "Schopenhauer as Educator," on the other hand, my innermost story, my growing into who I am, is written down. Above all, my solemn vow!... What I am today, where I stand today, up in high places where I no longer speak with words but with lightning bolts, oh, how far from that I still was back then! But I saw the land ahead. I did not fool myself for a single moment about the road, the sea, the danger, and the success! The great calm in that promise, that happy gaze out into a future that is not meant to stay just a promise! Every word here was lived through, deeply, from the inside. The most painful things are not missing; there are words in it that are downright bloodthirsty. But a wind of great freedom blows over everything; the wound itself does not count as an argument against it. How I understand the philosopher: as a terrible explosive, which puts everything in danger. How I set my idea of a "philosopher" miles apart from an idea that still includes even someone like Kant, not to mention the academic "cud-chewers" who just chew over the same old thoughts, and the other professors of philosophy. On all this, the essay gives priceless teaching, even if we admit that what really speaks here is not "Schopenhauer as Educator" but its opposite, "Nietzsche as Educator." Considering that back then my trade was that of a scholar, and perhaps also that I was good at my trade, a harsh bit of the psychology of scholars that suddenly shows up in this essay is not without meaning. It expresses the feeling of distance, the deep certainty about what in my life can be a mission, and what can only be a means, an interlude, a side job. It was my cleverness to have been many things and in many places, so that I could become one thing, so that I could arrive at one thing. For a while, I had to be a scholar too.

Human, All Too Human

With two follow-up books.

1.

"Human, All Too Human" is a monument to a crisis. It calls itself a book for free spirits. Almost every sentence in it stands for a victory: with this book I set myself free from everything in my nature that did not truly belong to me. Idealism, living by false ideals, does not belong to me. The title says it: "Where you see ideal things, I see human things, oh, only all too human things!" I know human beings better than that. The phrase "free spirit" should be understood here in no other sense: a mind that has become free, a mind that has taken hold of itself again. The tone, the sound of the voice, has changed completely. People will find the book clever, cool, and sometimes hard and mocking. A certain refined, noble, high-minded taste seems to keep steadily on top, holding down a more passionate current flowing underneath. In this light it makes sense that the book was published in 1878, and that it more or less excuses itself by pointing to the hundredth anniversary of Voltaire's death. Because Voltaire, unlike everyone who wrote after him, is above all a great lord of the mind, a true aristocrat of thinking: exactly what I am too. The name Voltaire on a piece of my writing: that really was a step forward, a step toward myself. If you look more closely, you discover a merciless mind that knows every hiding place where the ideal makes its home, where it keeps its castle dungeons and, so to speak, its last safe shelter. With a torch in hand, a torch whose light does not flicker or hesitate in the least, this underworld of the ideal is lit up with a sharp, cutting brightness. It is war, but war without gunpowder and smoke, without

fighting poses, without big dramatic feelings and twisted limbs. All of that would itself still be "idealism." One mistake after another is calmly put on ice. The ideal is not argued down; it freezes to death. Here, for example, "the genius" freezes. Around the next corner, "the saint" freezes. Under a thick icicle, "the hero" freezes. At the end, "faith" freezes, so-called "conviction" freezes, and even "pity" cools down a great deal. Almost everywhere, "the thing in itself", the philosophers' idea of things as they supposedly really are behind appearances, freezes to death.

2.

This book began right in the middle of the weeks of the first Bayreuth Festival, Wagner's great opera festival. One of the things that made the book possible was a deep feeling of being a stranger to everything around me there. Anyone who has some idea of the visions that had already crossed my path back then can guess how I felt when I woke up one day in Bayreuth. It was just as if I were dreaming. Where on earth was I? I recognized nothing. I hardly even recognized Wagner. I searched through my memories in vain. Tribschen, Wagner's old home where I had visited him, was like a faraway island of the blessed: there was not the faintest likeness. The unforgettable days when the foundation stone was laid, the small group of people who belonged there and celebrated it, people you never needed to wish had a delicate touch for delicate things: not the faintest likeness. What had happened? They had translated Wagner into German! The Wagner fan had become the master over Wagner! German art! The German master! German beer! The rest of us, who know only too well that Wagner's art speaks only to highly refined artists and to people with a world-wide, cosmopolitan taste, were beside ourselves to find Wagner hung all over with German "virtues." I think I know the Wagner fan. I have "lived through" three generations of them, from the late Brendel,

who mixed up Wagner with the philosopher Hegel, to the "idealists" of the Bayreuth newsletter, who mix up Wagner with themselves. I have heard every kind of gushing confession about Wagner from "beautiful souls." My kingdom for one intelligent word! Truly, a hair-raising crowd! Nohl, Pohl, Kohl, and so on gracefully forever! Not a single freak was missing among them, not even the antisemite. Poor Wagner! Where had he ended up! If only he had at least gone into the pigs, like the demons in the Bible! But into Germans! In the end, to teach future generations, someone ought to stuff a real Bayreuth fan, or better yet preserve him in spirits, in a jar of alcohol, since spirit is exactly what they lack. And under it should be written: this is what the "spirit" looked like on which the German "Empire" was founded. Enough. In the middle of it all I left for a few weeks, very suddenly, even though a charming Parisian woman tried to comfort me. I excused myself to Wagner only with a telegram that sounded resigned to fate. In Klingenbrunn, a place hidden deep in the woods of the Bohemian Forest, I carried my gloom and my contempt for Germans around with me like an illness. From time to time I wrote a sentence in my notebook under the overall title "The Ploughshare": nothing but hard observations about the human mind, which can perhaps still be found in "Human, All Too Human."

3.

What was decided in me back then was not simply a break with Wagner. I sensed that my whole instinct, my gut sense, had gone off course, and every single wrong step, whether it was called Wagner or my professorship at Basel, was only a sign of that. I was seized by impatience with myself. I saw that it was high time to come back to myself and remember who I was. All at once it became terribly clear to me how much time I had already wasted, and how useless and random my whole life as a scholar of ancient languages looked when

measured against my mission. I was ashamed of this false modesty. Ten years lay behind me in which the feeding of my mind had basically come to a standstill. In those years I had learned nothing useful, and I had forgotten a ridiculous amount while busy with a jumble of dusty scholarly odds and ends. Crawling carefully, with weak eyes, through ancient experts on poetic rhythm: that is what I had come to! I looked at myself with pity and saw how thin I was, how starved. Real things were simply missing from what I knew, and the "ideal" things were worth absolutely nothing! A truly burning thirst took hold of me. From then on I really did nothing but study physiology, the science of how the body works, along with medicine and the natural sciences. I only went back to real historical studies when my mission strictly forced me to. It was also then that I first guessed the connection between two things. On one side is a job chosen against your instinct, a so-called "calling" that you are the least called to of anyone. On the other side is the need to numb the feeling of emptiness and hunger with a drug-like art, for example, Wagner's art. Looking around more carefully, I discovered that a great many young men are in the same desperate situation: one thing that goes against nature practically forces a second one. In Germany, in the "Empire", to put it plainly, far too many people are condemned to make decisions too early and then to waste away under a burden they can no longer throw off. These people crave Wagner the way you crave opium. They forget themselves; for a moment they get away from themselves. What am I saying! For five or six hours!

4.

Back then, my instinct, my gut sense, decided firmly and without mercy against giving in any longer, going along with things, and mistaking myself for someone I was not. Any kind of life, even the worst conditions, sickness, poverty, all of it seemed better to me than that

shameful "selflessness." I had first slipped into it because I didn't know better and because I was young. Later I had stayed stuck in it out of laziness and out of a so-called "sense of duty." Then, in a way I can never admire enough, and at exactly the right moment, something came to help me: the bad inheritance I got from my father's side. At bottom it meant I was set up to die early. My illness slowly pulled me free. It spared me any clean break, any violent or shocking step. I lost no one's goodwill back then, and I even gained a lot more. The illness also gave me the right to turn all my habits completely around. It allowed me, even ordered me, to forget. It gave me the gift of being forced to lie still, to do nothing, to wait and be patient... But that is exactly what thinking is!... My eyes alone put an end to all my bookworm habits, or in plain German: philology, the study of old texts. I was set free from "the book." For years I read nothing at all, and that was the greatest kindness I have ever done myself! My deepest self had been buried, as it were, and had gone quiet, because it always had to listen to other selves (and that is exactly what reading is!). Now it woke up slowly, shyly, unsure of itself, but in the end it started speaking again. I have never been so happy with myself as in the sickest and most painful times of my life. You only have to look at "Daybreak" or at "The Wanderer and His Shadow" to understand what this "return to myself" was: the highest kind of healing itself!... The other kind of healing, of the body, simply followed from it.

5.

Human, All Too Human is a monument to strict self-discipline. With it, I put a sudden end to everything that had crept into me from outside: the "higher swindle," the "idealism, living by false ideals," the "beautiful feelings," and other soft, womanish things. Most of the main parts of the book were written down in Sorrento. It got its ending and its final shape during a winter in Basel, under far worse

conditions than in Sorrento. Really, Mr. Peter Gast is to blame for the book. Back then he was studying at the University of Basel and was very devoted to me. I dictated, with my head bandaged and in pain, and he copied it out and also corrected it. At bottom he was the real writer, while I was only the author. When the finished book finally came into my hands, to the deep surprise of a very sick man, I sent two copies to Bayreuth, among other places. By a miracle of meaning hidden in chance, at that very same time a beautiful copy of the Parsifal text arrived at my place. It had Wagner's dedication to me: "To his dear friend Friedrich Nietzsche, Richard Wagner, Church Councillor." These two books crossing each other on the way: it felt to me as if I heard an ominous sound in it, a sign of trouble. Didn't it sound as if swords were crossing?... In any case, we both felt it that way, because we both fell silent. Around this time, the first Bayreuth Papers came out, and I understood why it had been high time for me to leave. Unbelievable! Wagner had turned pious...

6.

The whole book shows how I thought about myself back then, in 1876, and with what huge certainty I held my mission, and its importance for world history, in my hands. One very clear passage shows it most of all. Only, with my instinctive cunning, I once again avoided the little word "I." This time I didn't cover Schopenhauer or Wagner in world-historical glory, but one of my friends, the excellent Dr. Paul Rée. Luckily he was far too fine a creature to... Others were less fine. I always recognized the hopeless cases among my readers, for example the typical German professor, by this: because of that passage, they believed they had to read the whole book as a higher kind of "Réealism," a pun on Rée's name and realism... In truth, the book contradicted five or six of my friend's statements. You can read about this in the preface to On the Genealogy of Morality. The passage goes like

this: What is the main idea that one of the boldest and coldest thinkers, the author of the book "On the Origin of Moral Feelings" (read: Nietzsche, the first immoralist, enemy of morality), reached through his deep, cutting analysis of human actions? "The moral person is no closer to the world beyond the senses than the physical person is, because there is no world beyond the senses..." This statement became hard and sharp under the hammer blows of historical knowledge (read: turning all values upside down). Maybe someday, in some future (1890!), it can serve as the axe laid at the root of humanity's "need for metaphysics," its craving for a world beyond this one. Whether that will be more of a blessing or a curse for humanity, who could say? But in any case it is a statement with the most serious consequences, fruitful and frightening at the same time. It looks at the world with that double gaze that all great insights have...

Daybreak

Thoughts about morality as a prejudice.

1.

With this book my campaign against morality begins. Not that it smells even slightly of gunpowder. You will notice quite different and much lovelier smells in it, as long as you have a fairly sensitive nose. There are no big guns here, and no small ones either. If the effect of the book is negative, its methods are not negative at all. From these methods the effect follows the way a conclusion follows from reasoning, not the way a shot follows from a cannon. When you put this book down, you are left with a shy caution toward everything that has so far been honored, and even worshipped, under the name of morality. That does not contradict the fact that the whole book contains no negative word, no attack, no spite. Instead, it lies in the sun, round and happy, like a sea creature sunning itself between rocks. In the end, I myself was that sea creature. Almost every sentence in the book was thought up, or rather slipped out, in that jumble of rocks near Genoa, where I was alone and still shared secrets with the sea. Even now, if I happen to touch this book, almost every sentence becomes a corner of cloth I can pull on, drawing something matchless back up out of the depths. Its whole skin trembles with gentle shivers of memory. The skill this book has is no small one. It manages to pin down a little the things that slip past lightly and without a sound, moments I call divine lizards. It does this not with the cruelty of that young Greek god who simply speared the poor little lizard, but still with something sharp: with the pen. "There are so many dawns that have not yet shone." This saying from India is written over the door of

this book. Where does its author look for that new morning, that soft red glow no one has found yet, with which another day begins? Ah, not just one day, but a whole series of days, a whole world of new days! He looks for it in turning all values upside down, in breaking free of all moral values, in saying yes to life and in trusting everything that has so far been forbidden, looked down on, and cursed. This life-affirming book pours its light, its love, and its tenderness onto nothing but "bad" things. It gives them back their "soul", their clear conscience, their high right and privilege to exist. Morality is not attacked here. It simply no longer counts. This book ends with the words "Or is it?" It is the only book that ends with an "Or is it?"

2.

My mission is to prepare a moment when humanity looks at itself more deeply than ever before. I call it a great noon, turning point, when humanity looks back and looks ahead, when it steps out from under the rule of chance and of priests, and for the first time asks, as a whole, the questions "why?" and "what for?". This mission follows necessarily from one insight. Humanity is not on the right path by itself. It is in no way guided by God. On the contrary, right inside its holiest ideas of value, the instinct, gut sense, for saying no, for rotting, the instinct of decline, decay, has been in control in a tempting, seductive way. That is why, for me, the question of where moral values come from is a question of the very first importance: the future of humanity depends on it. People demand that we believe everything is, deep down, in the best hands, and that one book, the Bible, gives us final comfort that God is wisely steering humanity's fate. Translated back into reality, this demand is the wish to keep a pitiful truth from coming out: the truth that humanity has so far been in the worst possible hands. It has been ruled by those who came off badly in life, by the sly and vengeful, by the so-called "saints", these slanderers of

the world and abusers of humanity. Here is the clear sign that the priest has become the master, not just inside one particular religious group but everywhere. And by the priest I also mean the hidden priests, the philosophers. The sign that the morality of decline, the will to come to an end, is taken to be morality itself, is this: everywhere, unselfishness is given absolute value, and selfishness meets hostility. Anyone who disagrees with me on this point, I consider infected... But the whole world disagrees with me... For a physiologist, someone who studies how the body works, such an opposition of values leaves no doubt at all. In a living body, if even the smallest organ slips even a little in reliably looking after itself, in renewing its strength, in its "egoism", then the whole body degenerates. The physiologist demands that the degenerating part be cut out. He refuses any solidarity with what is degenerating. Pity for it is the farthest thing from his mind. But the priest wants exactly that: for the whole, for humanity, to degenerate. That is why he preserves whatever is degenerating. That is the price of his power over humanity... What purpose do those lying ideas have, those helper ideas of morality, "soul", "spirit", "free will", "God", if not to ruin humanity in body and health?... If you turn people's seriousness away from keeping the body alive and making it stronger, which means away from life, if you turn sickly paleness into an ideal and build "the salvation of the soul" out of contempt for the body, what is that but a recipe for decline, decay? Losing your sense of weight and balance, resisting your natural instincts, "selflessness", in a word: that is what has been called morality until now... With Daybreak I first took up the fight against the morality of giving up the self.

The Joyful Science

("la gaya scienza", the cheerful art of knowing)

"Daybreak" is a life-affirming book. It is deep, but also bright and kind. The same is true once more, and to the highest degree, of The Joyful Science. In almost every sentence of it, deep thinking and playful mischief hold each other's hand tenderly. There is a verse in it that gives thanks for the most wonderful month of January I have ever lived through. The whole book is that month's gift. This verse shows clearly enough from what depths the "science" here has become joyful:

You who, with your spear of flame, split the ice that held my soul, so that now it rushes, roaring, toward the sea of its highest hope: ever brighter, ever healthier, free inside the most loving "must", this is how my soul praises your wonders, most beautiful January!

What is meant here by "highest hope"? Who could have any doubt about that, if they see the first words of Zarathustra shining out, with the beauty of a diamond, at the end of the fourth book? Or if they read the sentences, hard as granite, at the end of the third book, in which a destiny is put into words for the first time, for all time? The songs of Prince Free-as-a-Bird, mostly written in Sicily, very clearly call to mind the old idea from Provence in southern France of the "gaya scienza", the joyful science. They recall that union of singer, knight and free spirit which made the wonderful early culture of Provence stand out against all two-faced, uncertain cultures. Above all the very last poem, "To the Mistral", the wild wind of southern France, is a perfect piece of the Provence spirit. It is an exuberant dancing song in which, if you'll pardon me, people dance right over the top of morality.

Thus Spoke Zarathustra

A Book for Everyone and No One.

1.

Now I will tell the story of Zarathustra. The basic idea of the work is the thought of the eternal return of everything. It is the highest form of saying yes, affirmation, that anyone can reach at all. That idea belongs to August of 1881. I scribbled it down on a sheet of paper and signed it: "6,000 feet beyond humans and time." That day I was walking through the woods by the lake of Silvaplana. Not far from Surlei, I stopped beside a huge block of rock piled up like a pyramid. That was when the thought came to me. If I count back a few months from that day, I find a warning sign: a sudden change in my taste, deep and decisive, above all in music. Maybe the whole of Zarathustra could be counted as music. In any case, one thing it needed first was a rebirth in the art of listening. I spent the spring of 1881 in Recoaro, a small mountain spa town near Vicenza. There, together with my maestro and friend Peter Gast, who had also been "reborn," I discovered that music, like the phoenix, the magical bird that rises again from its ashes, flew past us with lighter and brighter feathers than it had ever shown before. If, on the other hand, I count forward from that day until the birth, which came suddenly and under the most unlikely conditions in February 1883, I get eighteen months of pregnancy. The final part, the same part I quoted a few sentences from in my foreword, was finished in exactly the sacred hour when Richard Wagner died in Venice. This number, exactly eighteen months, might make people think, at least Buddhists, that deep down I am a female elephant. In the time in between came "The Gay Science," which shows a

hundred signs that something beyond compare is near. In the end it even gives the beginning of Zarathustra itself, and in the second-to-last section of its fourth book it gives the basic thought of Zarathustra. Also from this time in between comes my Hymn to Life, for mixed choir and orchestra. Its score was published two years ago by E. W. Fritzsch in Leipzig. It may be a meaningful sign of the state I was in that year, when the life-affirming passion above all others, which I call the tragic passion, filled me to the highest degree. Someday people will sing it in my memory. I want to say clearly, because a misunderstanding about it is going around, that the words are not by me. They are the amazing inspiration of a young Russian woman I was friends with at the time, Miss Lou von Salomé. Anyone who can get any meaning out of the last words of the poem will guess why I chose it and admired it: those words have greatness. Pain is not treated as an argument against life: "If you have no more happiness to give me, so be it! You still have your pain..." Maybe my music has greatness at that point too. (The last note of the oboe is C-sharp, not C. That is a printing mistake.) The following winter I lived in the lovely, quiet bay of Rapallo near Genoa, which cuts into the coast between Chiavari and the headland of Portofino. My health was not the best. The winter was cold and far too rainy. I stayed in a small inn right by the sea, so that the rough sea at night made sleep impossible. In almost every way it was the opposite of what you would want. And yet, almost as proof of my belief that everything decisive happens "in spite of" things, it was this winter and these bad conditions in which my Zarathustra was born. In the mornings I would climb south up into the high places along the wonderful road toward Zoagli, past pine trees, looking far out over the sea. In the afternoons, whenever my health allowed it, I walked around the whole bay from Santa Margherita all the way to beyond Portofino. This place and this landscape have become even dearer to my heart because of the great love that the unforgettable German Emperor Frederick the Third felt for them.

By chance, I was on this coast again in the autumn of 1886, when he visited this small, forgotten world of happiness for the last time. On these two walks the whole first part of Zarathustra came to me, and above all Zarathustra himself, as a type of person. Or more correctly: he ambushed me...

2.

To understand this type of person, you first have to be clear about what his body and health need as a starting point. It is what I call great health. I cannot explain this idea any better or more personally than I already did in one of the final sections of the fifth book of "The Gay Science." There it says: "We new ones, nameless, hard to understand, we who were born too early into a future that has not yet been proven, we need a new means for a new goal. That means a new health, one that is stronger, sharper, tougher, bolder, and more cheerful than any health has been before. Some people's souls are thirsty to have lived through the whole range of values and desires there have ever been, and to have sailed around every coast of this ideal 'Mediterranean Sea.' They want to know, from the adventures of their very own experience, how it feels to be a conqueror and discoverer of the ideal, and also how it feels to be an artist, a saint, a lawmaker, a wise man, a scholar, a religious believer, or an old-fashioned holy person who stands apart from the world. Such a person needs one thing before anything else: great health. This is a health that you do not just have, but that you keep gaining and have to keep gaining, because again and again you give it up, and you must give it up... And now, after we have been on the road like this for a long time, we Argonauts of the ideal, like the ancient Greek sailors who went searching for the Golden Fleece, braver perhaps than is wise, often shipwrecked and hurt, but, as I said, healthier than people would like to allow us, dangerously healthy, healthy again and again, it seems to us that, as a

reward, we have an undiscovered land ahead of us. No one has yet seen where its borders lie. It lies beyond all the lands and corners of the ideal so far. It is a world so overflowing with beauty, strangeness, questionable things, terrible things, and divine things, that both our curiosity and our hunger to own it have gone wild. Oh, nothing can ever satisfy us now!... After such views, and with such a ravenous hunger in our minds and our consciences, how could we still be content with the human being of today? It is bad enough, but it cannot be helped: we now look at his most worthy goals and hopes with a seriousness we can barely keep up, and maybe we no longer even look at them at all... Another ideal runs ahead of us. It is a strange, tempting ideal, full of danger. We would not want to talk anyone into it, because we do not easily grant anyone the right to it. It is the ideal of a mind that plays with everything that was called holy, good, untouchable, or divine until now. It plays naively, that is, without meaning to, out of overflowing fullness and power. For such a mind, the highest things, which ordinary people rightly use as their measure of value, would already mean something like danger, decay, and humiliation, or at least like rest, blindness, and forgetting oneself for a while. It is the ideal of a human and superhuman well-being and goodwill, which will often enough look inhuman. For example, it will look that way when it stands next to all the earthly seriousness there has been so far, next to all the solemnity so far in gesture, word, sound, look, morality, and mission, like a living, unintended parody of them. And yet, in spite of all that, perhaps it is only with this ideal that the great seriousness really begins, that the real question mark is finally set down, that the destiny of the soul turns, that the hand of the clock moves forward, and that the tragedy begins."

3.

Does anyone at the end of the nineteenth century have a clear idea of what poets in strong ages called "inspiration"? If not, I will describe it. If you had even the smallest bit of superstition left in you, you would find it hard to push away the feeling that you are only the body, only the mouthpiece, only the channel of powers far stronger than yourself. The word "revelation" describes exactly what happens. It means that suddenly, with a certainty and sharpness you can't put into words, something becomes visible and audible, something that shakes you to your deepest core and knocks you over. You hear; you don't search. You take; you don't ask who is giving. A thought flashes up like lightning. It comes because it has to, and it comes already in its finished shape, without any hesitation. I never had a choice. It is a rapture, a state of being carried away, and its huge tension sometimes breaks out in a flood of tears. While it lasts, your steps speed up without your meaning them to, and then slow down again. You are completely outside yourself, and yet you are sharply aware of countless fine shivers and tingles running all the way down to your toes. It is a depth of happiness in which even the most painful and darkest things don't feel like the opposite of joy. Instead they feel like part of it, called up by it, a necessary color inside such an overflow of light. It is an instinct, gut sense, for rhythm and proportion that stretches across wide spaces of form. In fact, the length of the rhythm, the need for a wide, sweeping rhythm, is almost the measure of how strong the inspiration is. It is a kind of balance against its pressure and tension... Everything happens completely without your will, and yet it feels like a storm of freedom, of being bound by nothing, of power, of godlikeness... The strangest thing is that the images and comparisons come all by themselves. You no longer have any idea what is an image and what is a comparison. Everything offers itself as the closest, the most fitting, the simplest way to say it. To recall something Zarathustra

says, it really seems as if things themselves came up to you and offered themselves to be used as images. Here is what he says: "Here all things come lovingly to your speech and flatter you, because they want to ride on your back. Here you ride on every image to every truth. Here the words of all being, and the boxes where words are kept, spring open for you. Here all being wants to become words, and all becoming wants to learn from you how to speak." This is my experience of inspiration. I have no doubt that you would have to go back thousands of years to find anyone who has the right to tell me: "It is mine too."

4.

A couple of weeks after that, I lay sick in Genoa. Then came a gloomy spring in Rome, where I put up with life. It was not easy. Deep down, I was annoyed beyond measure by this place, which is the most unfitting spot on earth for the poet of Zarathustra, and which I had not chosen of my own free will. I tried to get away. I wanted to go to Aquila, which is the opposite of Rome. It was founded out of hostility toward Rome, the way I myself will one day found a place. It was meant to keep alive the memory of a proper atheist and enemy of the Church, one of my closest relatives in spirit, the great Hohenstaufen emperor Frederick the Second. But there was something like a doom, a fateful thing, in all of it: I had to go back. In the end I settled for the Piazza Barberini, after my efforts to find an anti-Christian neighborhood had worn me out. I'm afraid that once, to get as far away as possible from bad smells, I even went and asked at the Quirinal Palace itself whether they might have a quiet room for a philosopher. On a loggia, an open balcony, high above that square, from which you can look out over Rome and hear the fountain splashing far below, I wrote the loneliest song ever written: the "Night Song." Around that time a tune of unspeakable sadness kept drifting around me, and I found its

refrain in the words "dead from immortality..." In the summer I went back home to the holy spot where the first lightning flash of the Zarathustra idea had lit up for me, and there I found the second part of Zarathustra. Ten days were enough. I never needed more than that for any of the parts, not for the first, and not for the third and last one either. The following winter, under the calm and serene sky of Nice, which was shining into my life for the first time then, I found the third part of Zarathustra, and I was done. Counting the whole thing, it took barely a year. Many hidden spots and high places in the countryside around Nice have become sacred to me because of unforgettable moments there. The key section called "On Old and New Tablets" was written during the hardest climb, from the railway station up to the wonderful Moorish village of Eza, which sits on the rocks like a nest. My muscles were always quickest and most nimble when my creative power was flowing most richly. It is the body that is inspired. Let's leave the "soul" out of it... People could often have seen me dancing. Back then I could walk around in the mountains for seven or eight hours without any sense of getting tired. I slept well, I laughed a lot, and I was perfectly fit and full of patience.

5.

Apart from these ten-day works, the years during Zarathustra, and above all after it, were a time of hardship like no other. You pay dearly for being immortal: in exchange, you die several times while you are still alive. There is something I call "the grudge of greatness." Everything great, whether a work or a deed, turns against the person who did it as soon as it is finished. Precisely because he did it, he is now weak. He can no longer bear his own deed; he can no longer look it in the face. To have something behind you that you should never have been allowed to want, something into which the knot of humanity's destiny is tied, and now to carry it on your shoulders!... It almost

crushes you... The grudge of greatness! A second thing is the terrible silence you hear all around you. Being alone has seven skins, and nothing gets through anymore. You go to people, you greet friends: it is just new emptiness, and no look greets you back anymore. At best, you get a kind of rebellion. I met that kind of rebellion, to very different degrees, from almost everyone who was close to me. It seems nothing offends people more deeply than suddenly letting them feel a distance between you and them. Noble, high-minded natures, who can't live without looking up to someone with respect, are rare. A third thing is that your skin becomes absurdly sensitive to small stings, a kind of helplessness in the face of everything small. I think this comes from the enormous use of all your defensive strength that every creative act requires, every act that comes from what is most your own, most inward, deepest down. Because of this, your small powers of self-defense are, so to speak, switched off; no more strength flows into them. I will dare to hint at a few more things: you digest worse, you don't like moving around, and you are far too open to feelings of cold and also to suspicion. And that suspicion is, in many cases, just a mistake about the cause of how you feel. Once, when I was in such a state, I sensed that a herd of cows was nearby even before I saw it, because gentler, friendlier thoughts about people came back to me. There is warmth in that...

6.

This book stands completely on its own. Let's leave the poets out of it: perhaps nothing has ever been made from such an overflow of strength. Here my idea of "Dionysian (wildly life-loving)" became the highest deed. Measured against it, everything else people have ever done looks poor and limited. A Goethe or a Shakespeare would not know how to breathe for even a moment in this enormous passion and in these high places. Next to Zarathustra, Dante is just a believer,

not someone who first creates the truth, not a spirit that rules the world, not a destiny. The poets of the Vedas are priests, and not even worthy to untie Zarathustra's shoes. All of this is the very least that can be said, and it gives no idea of the distance, of the sky-blue being alone, in which this book lives. Zarathustra has an eternal right to say: "I draw circles around myself and holy borders. Fewer and fewer climb with me up higher and higher mountains. I am building a mountain range out of ever holier mountains." Add up the minds and the goodness of all the great souls together: all of them at once could not produce a single speech of Zarathustra. The ladder he climbs up and down is enormous. He has seen further, wanted further, and been able to do more than any human being. This most life-affirming of all spirits contradicts with every word. In him all opposites are tied together into a new unity. The highest and the lowest forces of human nature, the sweetest, the most light-hearted and the most terrifying, all pour out of one single spring with a certainty that never dies. Until you read it, you do not know what height is, or what depth is. You know even less what truth is. There is not one moment in this unveiling of the truth that had already been guessed in advance by any of the greatest minds. Before Zarathustra there was no wisdom, no exploring of the soul, no art of speaking. Here the nearest, most everyday things speak of things never heard before. The sayings tremble with passion. The speech has turned into music. Lightning bolts are thrown ahead toward futures no one had guessed before. The greatest power to speak in images that ever existed is poor, just a game, compared with this return of language to the very nature of pictures. And see how Zarathustra comes down and says the kindest thing to everyone! See how he touches even his enemies, the priests, with gentle hands, and suffers with them over what they are! Here, at every moment, the human being is overcome. The idea of the "superhuman (the 'overman')" became the highest reality here. Everything that was called great in humans until now lies far, far below him, at an endless

distance. Being calm and serene, the light feet, the constant presence of mischief and high spirits, and everything else that is typical of the Zarathustra type, had never been dreamed of as essential to greatness. It is exactly in this wide range of space, in this openness to its opposites, that Zarathustra feels himself to be the highest kind of everything that exists. And when you hear how he describes this kind, you will give up looking for anything like him.

"The soul that has the longest ladder and can go down the deepest,

the widest soul, which can run and wander and roam furthest inside itself,

the most necessary soul, which throws itself with delight into chance,

the soul that already is, yet wants to go on becoming; the soul that already has, yet wants to go on wanting and longing,

the soul that runs away from itself and catches up with itself in the widest circles,

the wisest soul, to which foolishness speaks most sweetly,

the soul that loves itself most, in which all things have their flowing out and flowing back, their low tide and high tide..."

But that is the very idea of Dionysus, god of wine and wild joy, himself. Another line of thought leads to the same place. The psychological puzzle in the Zarathustra type is this. He says no, and does no, to an unheard-of degree, to everything people said yes to until now. How can he still be the opposite of a spirit of saying no? He carries the heaviest destiny, a mission that is a doom, a fateful thing. How can he still be the lightest spirit, the one most beyond this world? Zarathustra is a dancer. He has the hardest, most terrifying insight into reality. He has thought "the most bottomless thought." How can he still find in it no objection to existence, not even to its eternal return of

everything? Instead he finds in it one more reason to be himself the eternal yes to all things, "the enormous, boundless saying of yes and amen." "Into every abyss I still carry my blessing, my saying yes to life." But that, once again, is the idea of Dionysus, god of wine and wild joy.

7.

What language will such a spirit speak when he talks to himself? The language of the wild song of praise. I am the inventor of the wild song of praise. Listen to how Zarathustra talks to himself in "Before Sunrise" (Part Three, section 18). No tongue before me ever had such emerald-green happiness, such godlike tenderness. Even the deepest sadness of such a Dionysus, god of wine and wild joy, still turns into a wild song of praise. As an example, I take "The Night Song": the undying complaint of one who, because he overflows with light and power, because of his sun-like nature, is condemned not to love.

"It is night: now all the leaping fountains speak more loudly. And my soul, too, is a leaping fountain.

It is night: only now do all the songs of lovers wake up. And my soul, too, is a lover's song.

Something unsatisfied, something that can never be satisfied, is inside me, and it wants to be heard. A craving for love is inside me, and it speaks the language of love itself.

I am light: oh, if only I were night! But this is my being alone: that I am wrapped all around with light.

Oh, if only I were dark and like the night! How I would drink at the breasts of light, like a baby!

And I would even bless you, you little twinkling stars and glow-worms up above! And I would be blissful over the gifts of light you give.

But I live in my own light. I drink back into myself the flames that burst out of me.

I do not know the happiness of someone who receives. And I often dreamed that stealing must be even more blissful than receiving.

This is my poverty: that my hand never rests from giving. This is my envy: that I see waiting eyes, and nights lit up by longing.

Oh, the misery of all who give! Oh, the darkening of my sun! Oh, the craving to crave! Oh, the ravenous hunger even when full!

They take from me: but do I still touch their soul? There is a gap between taking and giving. And the smallest gap is the hardest to bridge.

A hunger grows out of my beauty. I would like to hurt those I shine on. I would like to rob those I have given gifts to. That is how I hunger for wickedness.

Pulling my hand back just when another hand is already reaching out for it; like a waterfall that hesitates even as it falls: that is how I hunger for wickedness.

Such revenge is what my fullness dreams up. Such spite wells up out of my being alone.

My happiness in giving died in the act of giving. My virtue grew tired of itself because there was too much of it!

Whoever always gives is in danger of losing his sense of shame. Whoever always hands things out gets calluses on his hand and heart from all that handing out.

My eyes no longer overflow with tears at the shame of those who beg. My hand has grown too hard to feel the trembling of hands that have been filled.

Where did the tears in my eyes go, and the soft down of my heart? Oh, the being alone of all who give! Oh, the silence of all who shine!

Many suns circle in empty space. To everything that is dark they speak with their light. To me they say nothing.

Oh, this is the hostility of light toward whatever shines: it goes its way without mercy.

Unfair, deep in its heart, toward whatever shines; cold toward other suns: that is how every sun goes on its way.

Like a storm the suns travel their paths. They follow their own merciless will. That is their coldness.

Oh, it is only you, you dark ones, you creatures of the night, who make warmth out of what shines! Oh, only you drink milk and comfort from the light's udders, as if light were a mother feeding you!

Oh, there is ice all around me, and my hand gets burned on things that are icy cold! Oh, there is a thirst in me, and it longs for your thirst.

It is night: oh, that I have to be light! And that I thirst for what belongs to the night! And for being alone!

It is night: now my longing bursts out of me like a spring of water. I long to speak.

It is night: now all the bubbling fountains speak more loudly. And my soul, too, is a bubbling fountain.

It is night: now all the songs of lovers wake up. And my soul, too, is the song of someone in love.

8.

Nothing like this has ever been written as poetry, ever been felt, ever been suffered. This is how a god suffers, a Dionysus, god of wine and wild joy. The answer to such a wild song of praise about the sun's loneliness in its own light would be Ariadne... Who besides me knows what Ariadne is!... Until now nobody has had the answer to any riddles like these. I doubt that anyone has even seen that there are riddles here at all. At one point Zarathustra lays out his mission strictly, so that no one can get its meaning wrong. It is my mission too. That mission is saying yes to everything, so fully that it justifies, and even sets free and redeems, everything that has already happened in the past.

Zarathustra says: "I walk among people as if they were broken pieces of the future: the future that I can see."

"And all my writing and all my striving is this: to put together into one whole what is now broken pieces, and riddles, and horrible chance."

"And how could I stand being human, if humans were not also poets, and solvers of riddles, and rescuers of chance?"

"To set free the people of the past, and to turn every 'It was' into 'That is how I wanted it!': only that would I call being set free."

In another place he defines, as strictly as he can, what "the human being" can be for him alone. It is not something to love, and certainly not something to pity. Zarathustra has also become master over the great disgust he feels toward humans. For him, the human being is something without shape, raw material, an ugly stone that needs a sculptor.

Zarathustra says: "No longer wanting, no longer valuing, no longer creating: oh, may this great tiredness always stay far away from me!"

"Even when I am coming to know things, I feel only my will's joy in creating new life and in growing. And if there is innocence in what I know, it is because there is a will to create new life in it."

"This will drew me away from God and from gods. After all, what would there be left to create if gods existed?"

"But my passionate will to create drives me back to human beings again and again. That is how the hammer is driven toward the stone."

"Oh, you humans, inside the stone there sleeps an image for me, the image of all images! Oh, why does it have to sleep inside the hardest, ugliest stone!"

"Now my hammer rages cruelly against the stone that is its prison. Pieces of stone fly off as dust: what do I care about that!"

"I want to finish it, because a shadow came to me. The stillest and lightest of all things once came to me!"

"The beauty of the superhuman (the 'overman') came to me as a shadow. What do the gods matter to me anymore!..."

I want to point out one last angle. The underlined line gives me the reason for it. For a Dionysian (wildly life-loving) mission, the hardness of the hammer, and even the joy of destroying, are among the deciding conditions you must have first. The command "Become hard!", the deepest certainty that everyone who creates is hard, is the true badge of a Dionysian (wildly life-loving) nature.

Beyond Good and Evil

A Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future.

1.

The mission for the years that followed was laid out as strictly as it could be. Once the life-affirming part of my mission was done, it was time for the other half, the half that says no and acts no. That meant turning all values upside down, starting with the values we have had until now. It meant the great war. It meant calling up a day when everything would be decided. This also included slowly looking around for people like me, people who, out of their own strength, would offer me their hand to help tear things down. From then on, all my writings are fishing hooks. Maybe I know as much about fishing as anyone does?... If nothing got caught, it is not my fault. There were no fish...

2.

This book, from 1886, is at its core a criticism of modern times. That includes modern science, modern art, and even modern politics. Along with that, it gives hints about an opposite type of person, one who is as un-modern as possible: a noble, high-minded, life-affirming type. In that sense, the book is a school for the gentleman, the true gentilhomme, but with the idea taken more spiritually and more radically than anyone has ever taken it before. You need real courage in your body just to put up with this idea. You must never have learned what fear is... All the things our age is proud of are felt as contradicting this type of person, almost as bad manners. Take, for example, the famous "objectivity". Or "sympathy with everything that suffers". Or

the "historical sense", which bows down to other people's tastes and lies flat on its belly before tiny little facts. Or being "scientific". If you think about the fact that this book came right after Zarathustra, you might also guess the kind of diet, the kind of healing routine, that it came out of. In Zarathustra, the eye had gotten used to a huge pressure to look far into the distance. Zarathustra sees even further than the Czar. Here, though, the eye is forced to focus sharply on what is closest: our own time, the things all around us. In every part of the book, and above all in its form, you will find the same deliberate turning away from the instincts, the gut sense, that made something like Zarathustra possible. What comes first here is refinement: in the form, in the purpose, in the art of keeping quiet. The psychology is handled with open hardness and cruelty. The book does without a single kind-hearted word... All of this is a way of resting and recovering. In the end, who can guess what kind of recovery is needed after pouring out so much goodness, the way Zarathustra does?... Speaking as a theologian, someone who talks about God, and listen closely, because I rarely speak as one: it was God himself who, at the end of his week of work, lay down as a snake under the Tree of Knowledge. That was how he rested from being God... He had made everything too beautiful... The Devil is simply God taking it easy every seventh day...

The Genealogy of Morals

A Book Meant to Pick a Fight.

The three essays that make up this Genealogy may be the most unsettling things ever written, when it comes to how they are worded, what they aim at, and the skill they use to catch you off guard. Dionysus, god of wine and wild joy, is also, as everyone knows, the god of darkness. Each essay starts in a way that is meant to mislead you. It is cool, scientific, even mocking, deliberately on the surface, deliberately holding you back. Little by little, more unrest builds up. Here and there you see flashes of lightning far off, like a storm on the horizon. Very unpleasant truths start to be heard from a distance, with a low, muffled rumble. Finally the pace becomes fierce, a "tempo feroce", where everything rushes forward under enormous tension. And at the end of each essay, among truly terrifying explosions, a new truth becomes visible between thick clouds. The truth of the first essay is the psychology of Christianity. It shows that Christianity was born out of the spirit of bitter resentment, and not, as people tend to believe, out of the "spirit". By its very nature it is a backlash, the great uprising against the rule of noble, high-minded values. The second essay gives the psychology of conscience. Conscience is not, as people tend to believe, "the voice of God inside a person". It is the instinct, gut sense, of cruelty turning back on itself, once it can no longer let itself out on the outside world. Here, for the first time, cruelty is brought into the light as one of the oldest foundations of human culture, one that you simply cannot imagine culture without. The third essay answers this question: where does the huge power of the ascetic ideal come from, the ideal of self-denial, the priest's ideal? After all, it is the harmful ideal above all others, a will to come to an end, an ideal

of decline, decay. The answer is: not because God is at work behind the priests, as people tend to believe, but for lack of anything better. It was the only ideal there had been so far. It had no rival. "For a human being would rather want nothingness than want nothing at all"... Above all, there was no opposing ideal, until Zarathustra came. I have been understood. These are three decisive groundworks by a psychologist, preparing for turning all values upside down. This book contains the first psychology of the priest.

Twilight of the Idols

How to Do Philosophy with a Hammer.

1.

This book is less than 150 pages long. Its tone is cheerful and at the same time fateful, like a demon who laughs. I wrote it in so few days that I would rather not say how many. Among all books, it is an exception. Nothing is more packed with substance, more independent, more able to knock you over — or more wicked. If you want a quick idea of how, before me, everything stood on its head, start with this book. What the title calls "idols" is quite simply what has been called "truth" until now. Twilight of the Idols — in plain words: the old truth is coming to an end...

2.

There is no reality, no "ideal", that this book does not touch. ("Touch" — what a careful, polite way of putting it!...) It goes after not just the eternal idols but also the very newest ones, which are therefore the weakest and most worn out. The "modern ideas", for example. A great wind blows through the trees, and everywhere fruits fall to the ground — and these fruits are truths. The book has the wastefulness of an autumn that is far too rich: you trip over truths, you even step on some and crush them dead — there are just too many of them...

But what you get into your hands is no longer anything doubtful; these are decisions. I am the first to hold the measuring stick for "truths". I am the first who can decide. It is as if a second awareness had grown inside me. It is as if "the will" inside me had lit a lamp to see the slippery downhill slope it had been running down until now...

That downhill slope — people called it the road to "truth"... All that "dark urge" is over. In fact, the good man was the one who least knew the right road... And quite seriously: before me, nobody knew the right road, the road upward. Only starting with me are there hopes again, missions, paths that culture can be shown to follow — and I am the bringer of good news about them... And for exactly that reason I am also a destiny. — —

3.

Right after I finished that book, without losing even a single day, I took on the enormous mission of turning all values upside down. I did it with a sovereign feeling of pride that nothing can match. Every moment I was sure I would be immortal, and I carved sign after sign into tablets of bronze with the certainty of destiny itself. The preface was written on September 3, 1888. That morning, after writing it down, I stepped outside and found the most beautiful day the Upper Engadine valley had ever shown me. It was clear and see-through, glowing with colors, and it held every contrast inside it, everything in between ice and the warm south. I only left Sils-Maria on September 20, because floods held me back. By the end I was by far the only guest left in that wonderful place, and out of gratitude I want to give it the gift of an immortal name. After a journey full of mishaps — my life was even in danger in flooded Como, which I only reached late at night — I arrived in Turin on the afternoon of the 21st. Turin is my proven place, my home from now on. I took the same apartment I had lived in during the spring: via Carlo Alberto 6, third floor, across from the mighty Palazzo Carignano, where King Victor Emmanuel was born. It looks out onto the Piazza Carlo Alberto and, beyond it, onto the hills. Without hesitating, and without letting myself be distracted for a single moment, I went back to work. Only the last quarter of the work was left to finish. On September 30: a great victory. The turning

of all values upside down was finished. Then I strolled along the river Po with the idleness of a god. On that same day I also wrote the preface to Twilight of the Idols; correcting its printed pages had been my way of resting in September. — I have never lived through such an autumn. I never even thought anything like it was possible on earth. It was like a painting by Claude Lorrain stretched out into infinity, every day equally perfect, wildly and without limit.

The Case of Wagner

A Problem for Musicians.

1.

To be fair to this book, you have to suffer from what has happened to music the way you would suffer from an open wound. What is it that hurts me when I suffer over the destiny of music? It hurts that music has been robbed of its life-affirming character, the quality that makes the whole world look bright and beautiful. It hurts that it has become music of decline, decay, and is no longer the flute of Dionysus, god of wine and wild joy... But suppose you feel the cause of music like this, as your own cause, as the story of your own suffering. Then you will find this book full of consideration and far too gentle. In cases like this, staying cheerful and good-naturedly joining in the joke against yourself is humanity itself. The Latin phrase for it is "ridendo dicere severum", which means saying something serious while laughing, even in a case where "verum dicere", simply telling the truth, would excuse any harshness. Does anyone really doubt that I, the old artillery soldier that I am, could roll out my heavy guns against Wagner if I wanted to? I kept back everything decisive in this matter. I loved Wagner. In the end, my mission calls for an attack on a subtler "unknown" enemy, one that others will not easily guess. Oh, I have far other "unknowns" to expose than a Cagliostro of music, a con man of music like that famous fraud. Even more, though, it is an attack on the German nation. In matters of the mind, this nation keeps getting lazier, keeps losing its instinct, its gut sense, and keeps getting more "honest". With an enviable appetite, it goes on feeding itself on opposites. It swallows "faith" along with science, "Christian love" along with

antisemitism, the will to power (the drive for an "Empire") along with the "gospel of the humble", and it never gets indigestion... This refusal to take sides between opposites! This stomach-like neutrality and "selflessness"! This fair-minded German taste buds, which give everything equal rights and find everything tasty... Without any doubt, the Germans are idealists, living by false ideals... The last time I visited Germany, I found German taste working hard to give equal rights to Wagner and to "The Trumpeter of Säckingen", a sweet, popular piece of kitsch. I saw it with my own eyes in Leipzig: in honor of one of the most genuine and most German of musicians, German in the old sense of the word, not just a citizen of the new German Empire, I mean Master Heinrich Schütz, people founded a Liszt Society. Its purpose was to care for and spread cunning, Liszt-flavored church music... Without any doubt, the Germans are idealists, living by false ideals...

2.

But here nothing will stop me from getting rude and telling the Germans a few hard truths. Who else will do it? I am talking about their shameless misconduct when it comes to history. It is not only that German historians have completely lost the big picture of how culture moves forward and what its values are. It is not only that all of them are clowns of politics (or of the Church). No, they have actually banned this big picture altogether. First you have to be "German", you have to be of the right "race", and then you get to decide on all values and non-values in history. You simply lay them down... "German" counts as an argument. "Germany, Germany above all" counts as a principle. The Germanic peoples are supposed to be the "moral order of the world" in history. Compared with the Roman Empire, they are supposed to be the bearers of freedom. Compared with the eighteenth century, they are supposed to be the restorers of morality, of the "cat-

egorical imperative", Kant's absolute moral command... There is now a way of writing history that serves the German Empire. I fear there is even an antisemitic way of writing history. There is a way of writing history that serves the royal court, and Herr von Treitschke is not ashamed of it... Recently an idiotic judgment about history went around the German newspapers. It was a sentence by Vischer, a writer on beauty and art from Swabia, who luckily is now dead. It was passed around as a "truth" that every German must say yes to: "The Renaissance and the Reformation only make a whole when taken together: the rebirth of beauty and the rebirth of morals." When I hear sentences like that, my patience runs out. I feel like doing it, and I even feel it as my duty, to tell the Germans for once everything they already have on their conscience. They have all the great crimes against culture of the last four hundred years on their conscience!... And always for the same reason: their deepest cowardice in the face of reality, which is also cowardice in the face of truth. Their dishonesty has become an instinct for them. It comes from "idealism", from living by false ideals... The Germans robbed Europe of the harvest, of the meaning, of the last great age, the age of the Renaissance. They did it at the very moment when a higher order of values had won. The noble, high-minded values, the ones that say yes to life and guarantee a future, had won right at the seat of the opposite values, the values of decline. They had won even inside the instincts of the men sitting there! Luther, that doom of a monk, brought back the Church, and, what is a thousand times worse, brought back Christianity, at the very moment it was going under... Christianity, that denial of the will to live turned into a religion!... Luther was an impossible monk. Because he himself was "impossible" as a monk, he attacked the Church, and so, as a result, he restored it... Catholics would have good reasons to hold Luther festivals and write Luther plays... Luther, and a "moral rebirth"! To hell with all psychology! Without a doubt, the Germans are idealists. Twice now, just when people had reached an upright,

clear, fully scientific way of thinking, through enormous courage and by beating their own limits, the Germans managed to find sneaky back roads to the old "ideal". They found ways to make peace between truth and the "ideal". Really, these were formulas for a right to reject science, for a right to lie. Leibniz and Kant: these two biggest brakes on Europe's intellectual honesty! And finally there was Napoleon. On the bridge between two centuries of decline, a force majeure, an overwhelming power of genius and will, appeared. It was strong enough to turn Europe into one unit, a political and economic unit, with the goal of ruling the earth. With their so-called "Wars of Liberation", the Germans robbed Europe of the meaning, of the miracle of meaning, in Napoleon's existence. Because of that, they have on their conscience everything that came after and everything that exists today. That includes nationalism, the sickest and most unreasonable thing there is, the most hostile to culture. It is a névrose nationale, a national nervous disorder, that is making Europe ill. It keeps Europe split forever into little states and stuck in small-minded politics. They have robbed Europe itself of its meaning and its reason. They have led it into a dead end. Does anyone besides me know a way out of this dead end?... A mission big enough to bind the peoples together again?...

3.

And finally, why shouldn't I put my suspicion into words? In my case too, the Germans will try everything once again to turn a huge destiny into something tiny, like a mountain giving birth to a mouse. So far they have only embarrassed themselves over me, and I doubt they will do any better in the future. Oh, how I wish I could be wrong about this, a bad prophet for once! My natural readers and listeners are already Russians, Scandinavians and French people. Will that be more and more true? The Germans have written themselves into the history of knowledge with nothing but questionable names. They have

only ever produced "unconscious" forgers, people who passed off fake coins of thought without even knowing it. That word fits Fichte, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Hegel and Schleiermacher just as well as Kant and Leibniz. They are all just "Schleiermachers", which in German literally means "veil-makers": people who cover things up. The Germans shall never have the honor of seeing the first honest mind in the history of thought counted as part of the German mind. I mean the mind in which truth finally sits in judgment over four thousand years of forgery. The "German mind" is bad air to me. I find it hard to breathe near this sloppiness about the soul, which has become their instinct, their gut sense, and which shows in every word and every expression of a German. They never went through a seventeenth century of hard self-examination the way the French did. A La Rochefoucauld or a Descartes is a hundred times more honest than the best German. To this day the Germans have not had a single real psychologist. But psychology is almost the measure of how clean or unclean a people is. And if you are not even clean, how could you have depth? With a German, almost as with a woman, you never reach the bottom. He has none, and that's all there is to it. But that doesn't even make him shallow. What is called "deep" in Germany is exactly this instinctive dishonesty toward oneself that I am talking about: people simply don't want to be clear about themselves. Might I suggest that the word "German" be used around the world, like a common coin, to mean this kind of psychological rottenness? Right now, for example, the German Emperor calls it his "Christian duty" to free the slaves in Africa. Among the rest of us Europeans, that would simply be called "German". Have the Germans produced even one book that has depth? They don't even have the idea of what makes a book deep. I have met scholars who thought Kant was deep. At the Prussian court, I'm afraid, they think Mr. von Treitschke is deep. And when I happen to praise Stendhal as a deep psychologist, German university professors have actually asked me to spell his name for them.

4.

And why shouldn't I go all the way to the end? I love to wipe the slate clean. It is even part of my ambition to be known as the despiser of the Germans above all others. I already expressed my distrust of the German character when I was twenty-six, in the third of my Untimely Essays, on page 71. For me, the Germans are impossible. Whenever I imagine a type of person who goes against all my instincts, my gut sense, it always turns out to be a German. The first thing I test a person on, deep down to the core, is whether he has a feeling for distance in his bones. Does he see rank, level and order everywhere between one person and another? Does he make distinctions? That is what makes someone a true gentleman. In every other case, a person belongs hopelessly to that broad, oh so good-natured idea of the rabble. But the Germans are rabble. Oh, they are so good-natured! You lower yourself by spending time with Germans, because the German treats everyone as equal. Apart from my time with a few artists, above all with Richard Wagner, I have not spent one good hour with Germans. Suppose the deepest mind of all the ages appeared among the Germans. Some silly goose, like the geese who once saved Rome's Capitol, would imagine that her own very ugly soul deserved at least as much attention. I can't stand this people. With them you are always in bad company. They have no fingers for nuances, no feel for fine shades. Poor me! I myself am a nuance. They have no wit or lightness in their feet, and they can't even walk properly. In the end the Germans have no feet at all, only legs. The Germans have no idea how common and vulgar they are. But that is the very peak of vulgarity: they aren't even ashamed of being merely German. They join in talking about everything. They think their own opinion settles things. I'm afraid they have even made up their minds about me. My whole life is the strict proof of these statements. I search it in vain for a single sign of tact or delicacy toward me. From Jews, yes, but never yet from

Germans. It is my nature to be gentle and kind toward everyone. I have a right not to make distinctions. But that doesn't stop me from keeping my eyes open. I make no exceptions, least of all for my friends. I do hope, in the end, that this has not taken anything away from my humanity toward them! There are five or six things I have always made a point of honor. Even so, it remains true that for years I have felt almost every letter that reaches me as a kind of cynical mockery. There is more cynicism in people's kindness toward me than in any hatred. I tell every one of my friends to his face that he never thought it worth the effort to study any of my writings. From the smallest signs I can guess that they don't even know what is in them. And as for my Zarathustra, which of my friends saw anything more in it than an outrageous piece of arrogance, which luckily didn't matter to anyone? Ten years have passed, and no one in Germany has felt it a duty of conscience to defend my name against the absurd silence it lay buried under. It was a foreigner, a Dane, who first had enough fine instinct and courage to do it, and who was outraged at my so-called friends. At which German university would lectures on my philosophy be possible today, like the ones Dr. Georg Brandes gave in Copenhagen last spring, proving once again that he is a true psychologist? I myself have never suffered from any of this. What is necessary does not hurt me. Love of fate is my innermost nature. But that doesn't mean I don't love irony, even irony on the scale of world history. And so, about two years before the shattering lightning strike of turning all values upside down, which will throw the earth into convulsions, I sent "The Case of Wagner" out into the world. I wanted the Germans to lay hands on me once more in a way that would make them immortal, to make their mark forever by wronging me! There is still just enough time for it! Has this been achieved? Delightfully so, my dear Germanic gentlemen! I pay you my compliments. And just now, so that my friends don't miss out either, an old woman friend writes to tell me that she is laughing at me now. And this at a moment when an

unspeakable responsibility rests on me, a moment when no word can be too gentle and no look respectful enough toward me. For I carry the destiny of humankind on my shoulders.

Why I Am a Destiny

1.

I know what lies ahead for me. One day my name will be linked to the memory of something huge and terrifying. It will be linked to a crisis like no other the earth has ever seen, to the deepest clash of consciences, to a decision that was called up against everything that had been believed, demanded and held sacred until then. I am not a human being, I am dynamite. And yet, with all this, there is nothing in me of a man who founds a religion. Religions are business for the mob. After I touch religious people, I need to wash my hands... I do not want "believers." I think I am too wicked to believe even in myself. I never speak to the masses... I have a terrible fear that one day people will declare me a saint. You will guess why I am publishing this book ahead of time: it is meant to stop people from doing foolish things with me... I do not want to be a saint. I would rather be a clown... Maybe I am a clown... And still, or rather not "still," because until now nothing has been more full of lies than saints, the truth speaks out of me. But my truth is terrible, because up to now people have called the lie "truth." Turning all values upside down: that is my formula for an act in which humanity looks most deeply at itself. In me, that act has become flesh and genius. My fate demands that I must be the first decent human being, that I know I stand against the lying of thousands of years... I was the first to discover the truth, because I was the first to feel the lie as a lie. I smelled it... My genius is in my nose... I contradict as no one has ever contradicted before, and yet I am the opposite of a spirit that only says no. I am a bringer of good news like no one before me. I know missions that reach such high places that until now there was not even a word for them. Only from me onward

is there hope again. With all this, I am also, by necessity, the man of doom, the fateful thing. Because when truth goes to war with the lies of thousands of years, we will have shocks, a spasm of earthquakes, mountains and valleys shifted from their places, things like no one has ever dreamed. Then the idea of politics will be swallowed up completely in a war of the spirit. All the power structures of the old society will be blown sky-high, because every one of them rests on the lie. There will be wars like there have never been on earth. Only from me onward will there be great politics on earth.

2.

Do you want a formula for a destiny like this, a destiny that becomes a human being? You will find it in my Zarathustra.

"And whoever wants to be a creator in good and evil must first be a destroyer and break values to pieces."

"So the highest evil belongs with the highest goodness. But that goodness is the creative kind."

I am by far the most frightening human being who has ever lived. That does not rule out that I will be the one who does the most good. I know the pleasure of destroying to a degree that matches my power to destroy. In both, I am obeying my Dionysian (wildly life-loving) nature, which does not know how to separate doing no from saying yes to life. I am the first immoralist, enemy of morality. That makes me the destroyer above all others.

3.

No one asked me, though they should have asked me, what the name Zarathustra means coming from my mouth, the mouth of the first immoralist, enemy of morality. Because what makes that Persian so hugely unique in history is exactly the opposite. Zarathustra was the

first to see the fight between good and evil as the real wheel that drives the machinery of things. Turning morality into something beyond the physical world, into a force, a cause, a goal in itself, that was his work. But this question is really already the answer. Zarathustra created this most fateful mistake, morality. So he must also be the first to recognize it. It is not only that he has more and longer experience here than any other thinker. After all, the whole of history is an experiment that disproves the claim of a so-called "moral world order." What matters more is that Zarathustra is more truthful than any other thinker. His teaching, and his alone, holds truthfulness as the highest virtue. That means the opposite of the cowardice of the "idealist," the one living by false ideals, who runs away from reality. Zarathustra has more courage in his body than all thinkers put together. To speak the truth and to shoot arrows well: that is the Persian virtue. Do you understand me?... Morality beating its own limits out of truthfulness, the moralist beating his own limits and turning into his opposite, into me: that is what the name Zarathustra means when I say it.

4.

At bottom, my word "immoralist," enemy of morality, contains two denials. First, I deny a type of human being who has so far been seen as the highest: the 'good' people, the kind-hearted, the charitable. Second, I deny a kind of morality that has come to be accepted and to rule as morality itself: the morality of decline, decay. To put it more plainly, Christian morality. You could fairly see the second objection as the more important one. That is because, taken as a whole, I already see overvaluing goodness and kindness as a result of decline, decay, as a sign of weakness, as something that cannot fit with a life that is rising and life-affirming. In saying yes to life, denying and destroying are a necessary condition. For now, I will stay with the

psychology of the good person. To judge what a type of human being is worth, you have to add up the price it costs to keep that type alive. You have to know what it needs in order to exist. What the 'good' people need in order to exist is the lie. In other words, they need to refuse, at any cost, to see what reality is really like. Reality is not made in a way that calls up kind instincts all the time. Even less is it made to put up, all the time, with short-sighted, good-natured hands meddling in it. To treat every kind of hardship as an objection, as something that must be gotten rid of, is foolishness above all others. Taken as a whole, its results are a real disaster, a destiny of stupidity. It is almost as stupid as wanting to abolish bad weather, out of pity for poor people, say... In the great economy of the whole, the terrible sides of reality (in the passions, in the desires, in the will to power) are needed far more than anyone could ever calculate, much more than that form of small happiness called "goodness." You even have to be lenient to give goodness any place at all, since it depends on instincts that lie. I will have a great opportunity to prove what extremely sinister effects optimism has had on all of history. Optimism is the offspring of the "best people," the self-declared good ones. Zarathustra, the first to understand that the optimist is just as much someone in decline as the pessimist, and perhaps more harmful, says: "Good people never speak the truth. The good taught you false shores and false safety. You were born in the lies of the good and sheltered in them. Everything has been lied about and bent out of shape, down to its very roots, by the good." Luckily, the world is not built on instincts made only so that good-natured herd animals can find their narrow happiness in it. To demand that everything should become a "good person," a herd animal, blue-eyed and naive, kind-hearted, a "beautiful soul," or, as Mr. Herbert Spencer wishes, selfless and living for others, would mean taking away the greatness of existence. It would mean castrating humanity and bringing it down to a miserable, stiff, petty sameness, which I call a pitiful "Chinese-ness." And people have tried

this!... This is exactly what was called morality... In this sense, Zarathustra calls the 'good' people sometimes "the last human beings" and sometimes "the beginning of the end." Above all, he feels they are the most harmful kind of human being, because they force their way into existence at the expense of truth and at the expense of the future.

"The 'good' people 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 humankind!"

"The 'good' people: they were always the beginning of the end..."

"And whatever harm the people who slander the world may do, the harm done by the 'good' people is the most harmful harm of all."

5.

Zarathustra, the first one to see through the minds of the 'good' people, is therefore a friend of the 'evil' ones. When a type of human in decline, decay, has climbed up to the rank of the highest type, this could only happen at the expense of its opposite type: the strong kind of human who is sure of life. When the herd animal shines in the glow of the purest virtue, then the exceptional human must have been pushed down and labeled as evil. When lying, at any cost, claims the word "truth" for its own way of seeing things, then the truly honest person must be found under the worst names. Zarathustra leaves no doubt about this. He says that it was exactly his understanding of the 'good' people, of the "best" ones, that filled him with horror at human beings in general. Out of this disgust, he says, he grew wings "to float away into distant futures." He does not hide that his type of human, a type that is, relatively speaking, superhuman (the 'overman'), is su-

perhuman precisely when compared to the 'good' people. He does not hide that the good and the just would call his superhuman (the 'overman') a devil...

"You highest humans my eyes have ever met, this is my doubt about you and my secret laughter: I guess that you would call my superhuman (the 'overman') a devil!"

"Your souls are such strangers to what is great that the superhuman (the 'overman') would frighten you, even in his goodness..."

This is the place, and no other, where you have to start if you want to understand what Zarathustra wants. The kind of human he imagines sees reality as it really is. It is strong enough to do that. It is not cut off from reality or carried away from it. It is reality itself. It still carries inside itself everything frightening and questionable about reality. Only in this way can a human being have greatness...

6.

But I have also chosen the word immoralist, enemy of morality, as a badge for myself, as a badge of honor, in another sense too. I am proud to have this word, because it sets me apart from all of humankind. Nobody before me has ever felt that Christian morality was beneath them. To feel that, you needed high places, a far-reaching view, and a depth of understanding of the human mind, a bottomless depth, that nobody had ever heard of before. Up to now, Christian morality has been Circe, the enchantress, for all thinkers: they were under her spell and served her. Who before me went down into the caves from which the poisonous breath of this kind of ideal comes bubbling up, the ideal of slandering the world? Who even dared to suspect that these are caves at all? Who among the philosophers before me was a real student of the human mind at all, and not rather its opposite, a "higher swindler," an "idealist" living by false ideals? Before me, there

was no psychology at all. Being the first in this can be a curse. In any case, it is a destiny: because as the first one, you also look down on others... Disgust with human beings is my danger...

7.

Have I been understood? What sets me apart, what puts me off to one side against the whole rest of humankind, is that I have uncovered Christian morality for what it is. That is why I needed a word that carries the meaning of a challenge to everyone. Not to have opened one's eyes to this sooner is, in my view, the greatest filthiness that humankind has on its conscience. It is self-deception that has become an instinct, a gut sense. It is a basic will not to see any event, any cause, any reality. It is faking and counterfeiting in matters of the mind, to the point of crime. Being blind to Christianity is the crime above all others: the crime against life... The thousands of years, the nations, the first and the last, the philosophers and the old women: apart from five or six moments in history, with me as the seventh, on this point they are all as bad as each other. Up to now, the Christian has been the "moral being," a curiosity without equal. And as a "moral being" he has been more absurd, more full of lies, more vain, more careless, and more harmful to himself than even the greatest despiser of humankind could ever dream. Christian morality is the most vicious form of the will to lie. It is the real Circe, the enchantress, of humankind: the thing that ruined it. What horrifies me when I look at this is not the mistake as a mistake. It is not the thousands of years of lacking "good will," discipline, decency, and courage in matters of the mind, which shows itself in Christian morality's victory. No, it is the lack of nature. It is the utterly horrible fact that going against nature itself received the highest honors as morality, and stayed hanging over humankind as a law, as an absolute command! To go this badly wrong, not as one person, not as one people, but as all of human-

kind!... That people were taught to despise the very first instincts of life. That a "soul," a "spirit," was invented by lying, in order to shame and ruin the body. That people are taught to feel something unclean in sex, which is the very condition for life. That people look for the evil principle in the deepest need for thriving, in strict selfishness (and even that word is a slander!). That, the other way round, people see the higher value, what am I saying, value itself, in the typical badge of decline and of instincts that fight against each other: in being "selfless," in losing your center of gravity, in "giving up your personality," and in "love for others" (really a craving for others!)... What! Could humankind itself be in decline, decay? Has it always been? What is certain is that it has been taught only the values of decline as its highest values. The morality of giving up the self is the morality of decline above all others. It takes the fact "I am going under" and turns it into a command: "You shall all go under." And not only into a command!... This one and only morality that has been taught so far, the morality of giving up the self, gives away a will to reach the end. At its very bottom, it says no to life. Here one possibility would remain open: that it is not humankind that is degenerating, but only that parasitic kind of human, the priest, who has lied his way up with morality to become the one who decides what things are worth, and who guessed that Christian morality was his tool for gaining power... And in fact, this is my insight: the teachers, the leaders of humankind, all of them theologians, were all also people in decline. That is where the turning all values upside down into something hostile to life comes from. That is where morality comes from... Definition of morality: morality is the peculiar sickness of people in decline, with the hidden aim of taking revenge on life, and with success. I put great value on this definition.

8.

Have I been understood? I have just said nothing that I did not already say five years ago, through the mouth of Zarathustra. Uncovering what Christian morality really is, is an event with nothing to match it. It is a true catastrophe. Whoever shines a light on it is a force of nature that no one can stop, a destiny. He breaks the history of humanity into two pieces. People live before him, and people live after him... The lightning of truth struck exactly the thing that had stood highest until now. Whoever understands what was destroyed there should check whether he still has anything left in his hands at all. Everything that used to be called "truth" has now been seen for what it is: the most harmful, most sneaky, most hidden form of lying. The holy excuse of wanting to "improve" humanity has been seen as a trick to suck life itself dry and drain it of blood. Morality as vampirism... Whoever uncovers morality has also uncovered how worthless all the values are that people believe in or used to believe in. He no longer sees anything worthy of respect in the most admired kinds of people, even the ones declared saints. Instead he sees in them the most fateful kind of freaks, fateful because they cast a spell on people... The idea of "God" was invented as the opposite of life. In it, everything harmful, poisonous and slanderous, the whole deadly hatred of life, was pulled together into one horrible whole! The idea of the "beyond," the so-called "true world," was invented to take the value away from the only world there is, so that no goal, no reason, no mission would be left for our real life here on earth! The idea of the "soul," the "spirit," and finally even the "immortal soul," was invented to make people despise the body, to make it sick, which they called "holy." It was invented so that people would treat with shocking carelessness all the things in life that deserve to be taken seriously: questions of food, housing, what to feed the mind, treating illness, cleanliness, and weather! Instead of health, they offered the "salvation

of the soul." That means a crazy cycle, going round and round between fits of guilt and penance and hysterical joy at being saved! The idea of "sin" was invented, together with the torture tool that goes with it, the idea of "free will," in order to confuse people's instincts, their gut sense, and to make distrust of those instincts become second nature! In the idea of being "selfless," of "denying yourself," you find the true badge of decline, decay. It means being drawn toward what harms you, no longer being able to tell what is good for you. Self-destruction was made into the very mark of worth, into "duty," into "holiness," into the "divine" part of a human being! And finally, the most terrible thing of all: in the idea of the "good person," they took the side of everything weak, sick, badly made, and suffering from itself, everything that ought to die out. They worked against the law of natural selection. They made an ideal out of opposing the proud and well-made person, the life-affirming person, the person who is sure of the future and who guarantees the future. That person is now called "evil"... And all of this was believed in as morality! Crush the vile thing!

9.

Have I been understood? Dionysus, god of wine and wild joy, against the Crucified One...

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