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# Thus Spoke Zarathustra

Friedrich Nietzsche

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# Thus Spoke Zarathustra



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Friedrich Nietzsche

A Book for All and None

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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# Part One

## Zarathustra's Introduction

### 1.

When Zarathustra was thirty years old, he left his home and the lake by his home, and he went up into the mountains. There he enjoyed his own mind and his time alone, and for ten years he never got tired of it. But in the end something in his heart changed. One morning he got up at dawn, stood facing the sun, and spoke to it like this:

"You great star! What would your happiness be if you did not have anyone to shine on?

For ten years you have come up here to my cave. Without me, my eagle and my snake, you would have grown sick of your own light and of this same old path.

But every morning we waited for you. We took from you the extra light you had more than enough of, and we thanked and blessed you for it.

Look! I have had too much of my own wisdom, like a bee that has gathered too much honey. I need hands that reach out to take it.

I want to give it away and hand it out, until the wise people among humans are glad once again of their own foolishness, and the poor are glad for once of their own riches.

To do that, I have to climb down into the depths. I have to do what you do every evening, when you sink behind the sea and still bring light to the world below, you star that has more than enough of everything!

Like you, I must go down. That is what the people I want to go down to call it when the sun sets.

So bless me, then, you calm eye, you who can look even at a huge happiness without being jealous!

Bless this cup that wants to overflow, so that the water pours out of it like gold and carries the shine of your joy everywhere!

Look! This cup wants to be empty again, and Zarathustra wants to be a human again."

And that is how Zarathustra's going down began.

**2.**

Zarathustra climbed down the mountains alone, and he met no one. But when he came into the forests, suddenly an old man was standing in front of him. The old man had left his holy hut to look for roots in the forest. And this is what the old man said to Zarathustra:

"I know this traveler. Many years ago he passed by here. His name was Zarathustra, but he has changed. Back then you carried your ashes up the mountain. Today, do you want to carry your fire down into the valleys? Aren't you afraid of the punishment people give to someone who sets fires?"

"Yes, I recognize Zarathustra. His eyes are clear, and there is no disgust hiding around his mouth. Doesn't he walk along like a dancer?"

"Zarathustra has changed. Zarathustra has become a child. Zarathustra is someone who has woken up. So what do you want now among people who are asleep?"

"When you were alone, you lived as if you were in the sea, and the sea held you up. Oh no, do you want to climb out onto land? Oh no, do you want to drag your own body around by yourself again?"

Zarathustra answered: "I love people."

"Why," said the holy man, "did I go into the forest and the wilderness in the first place? Wasn't it because I loved people far too much?"

"Now I love God. People I do not love. To me, a human being is too imperfect a thing. Loving people would kill me."

Zarathustra answered: "Who said anything about love? I am bringing people a gift."

"Don't give them anything," said the holy man. "Instead, take some of their load off them and carry it together with them. That will do them the most good, as long as it does you good too!"

"And if you do want to give them something, give them no more than a bit of charity, and make them beg for it as well!"

"No," Zarathustra answered, "I don't hand out charity. I am not poor enough for that."

The holy man laughed at Zarathustra and said: "Then make sure they accept your treasures! They don't trust people who live alone like hermits, and they don't believe that we come to give them gifts."

"To them, our footsteps sound too lonely as they echo through the streets. It's like when they lie in bed at night and hear a man walking outside, long before sunrise. They probably ask themselves: where is that thief going?"

"Don't go to people. Stay in the forest! If anything, go to the animals instead! Why don't you want to be like me, a bear among bears, a bird among birds?"

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

The holy man answered: "I make up songs and sing them. And when I make up songs, I laugh, I cry, and I hum and grumble. That is how I praise God."

"With singing, crying, laughing and grumbling, I praise the God who is my God. But what gift are you bringing us?"

When Zarathustra heard these words, he bowed to the holy man and said: "What could I possibly have to give you? But let me leave quickly, so that I don't take anything away from you!" And so they parted from each other, the old man and the younger man, laughing the way two boys laugh.

But when Zarathustra was alone, he said to his heart: "Can it really be true? This old holy man, out in his forest, still hasn't heard that God is dead!"

## 3.

When Zarathustra came to the nearest town, which lies at the edge of the forests, he found a big crowd gathered in the market square. People had been promised that they would get to see a tightrope walker. And Zarathustra spoke to the crowd like this:

"I am teaching you about the Superhuman. Humans are something to be outgrown. What have you done to get past what humans are now?"

"Every kind of living thing up to now has created something that goes beyond itself. And you want to be the low tide of this great flood? You

would rather slide back down to being animals than get past being human?"

"What is an ape to a human? Something to laugh at, or something painfully embarrassing. And that is exactly what a human should be to the Superhuman: something to laugh at, or something painfully embarrassing."

"You have traveled the road from worm to human, and a lot of you is still worm. Once you were apes, and even now a human is more of an ape than any ape is."

"Even the wisest one among you is just a mixed-up cross between a plant and a ghost, split in two. But am I telling you to turn into ghosts or plants?"

"Look, I am teaching you about the Superhuman!"

"The Superhuman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say it: the Superhuman shall be the meaning of the earth!"

"I beg you, my brothers, stay true to the earth, and don't believe the people who talk to you about hopes beyond this world! They are poisoners, whether they know it or not."

"They are people who hate life. They are slowly dying, and they have poisoned themselves, and the earth is tired of them. So let them go!"

"Once, sinning against God was the worst crime of all. But God died, and the people who sinned against him died along with him. Now the most terrible thing is to sin against the earth, and to value the insides of some unknowable world beyond more highly than the meaning of the earth!"

"Once, the soul looked down on the body with contempt, and back then this contempt was thought to be the highest thing of all. The

soul wanted the body thin, ugly and starving. That way it hoped to slip away from the body and from the earth."

"Oh, but that soul was itself thin, ugly and starving. And cruelty was what this soul enjoyed most!"

"But you too, my brothers, tell me: what does your body say about your soul? Isn't your soul poverty and dirt and a pitiful kind of comfort?"

"Truly, a human is a dirty river. You have to be a sea to take in a dirty river without becoming dirty yourself."

"Look, I am teaching you about the Superhuman. He is that sea. In him, your great disgust with yourself can go down and disappear."

"What is the greatest thing you can experience? It is the hour of great disgust with yourself. The hour when even your happiness fills you with disgust, and so do your reason and your goodness."

It is the hour when you say: "What does my happiness matter? It is poor and dirty, a pitiful kind of comfort. But my happiness ought to be the thing that makes existence itself worth it!"

It is the hour when you say: "What does my reason matter? Does it hunger for knowledge the way a lion hungers for its food? It is poor and dirty, a pitiful kind of comfort!"

It is the hour when you say: "What does my virtue matter? It has never yet driven me wild with passion. How tired I am of my good and my evil! All of it is poor and dirty, a pitiful kind of comfort!"

It is the hour when you say: "What does my sense of justice matter? I don't see myself as fire and burning coals. But a truly just person is fire and burning coals!"

It is the hour when you say: "What does my pity matter? Isn't pity the cross that the one who loves people gets nailed to? But my pity is no crucifixion. It costs me nothing."

Have you ever spoken like that? Have you ever screamed like that? Oh, if only I had already heard you scream like that!

It is not your sin that cries out to heaven. It is how easily you are satisfied! Even in your sins, your stinginess, the way you hold back, cries out to heaven!

Where is the lightning that would lick you with its tongue of fire? Where is the madness you ought to be vaccinated with?

Look, I am teaching you about the Superhuman: he is that lightning, he is that madness!

When Zarathustra had said this, someone in the crowd shouted: "We've heard enough about the tightrope walker. Now let's see him too!" And the whole crowd laughed at Zarathustra. But the tightrope walker thought these words were meant for him, so he got to work.

**4.**

But Zarathustra looked at the crowd and was puzzled. Then he spoke like this:

A human being is a rope, tied between the animal and the Superhuman. It is a rope stretched over a deep, dark drop.

It is dangerous to cross over, dangerous to be halfway along, dangerous to look back, dangerous to shiver and stand still.

What is great about humans is that they are a bridge and not a final goal. What can be loved about humans is that they are a passing over and a going down.

I love those who don't know how to live except by going down, because they are the ones who cross over to the other side.

I love those who look down on things with deep contempt, because they are also the ones who look up with the deepest respect. They are like arrows of longing, flying toward the far shore.

I love those who don't first go searching beyond the stars for a reason to go down and to sacrifice themselves. Instead they sacrifice themselves to the earth, so that one day the earth may belong to the Superhuman.

I love the one who lives in order to understand, and who wants to understand so that one day the Superhuman may live. And so he wants his own going down.

I love the one who works and invents in order to build a house for the Superhuman, and to get the earth, the animals and the plants ready for him. Because that is how he wants his going down.

I love the one who loves his own virtue, because virtue is a will to go down, and an arrow of longing.

I love the one who doesn't keep back even one drop of mind for himself, but wants to be completely the mind of his virtue. That way he walks across the bridge as pure mind.

I love the one who turns his virtue into both his deepest wish and his fate. So, for the sake of his virtue, he is willing to go on living, and also willing to live no longer.

I love the one who doesn't want too many virtues. One virtue is more of a virtue than two, because it is a stronger knot for fate to hang on.

I love the one whose soul spends itself freely, who wants no thanks and gives nothing back. Because he is always giving, and doesn't want to hold on to himself.

I love the one who feels ashamed when the dice land in his favor, and who then asks: "Am I cheating, then?" Because he wants to be destroyed.

I love the one who throws golden words out ahead of his actions, and then always does even more than he promised. Because he wants his going down.

I love the one who makes the people of the future worth it and sets free the people of the past. Because he is willing to be destroyed by the people of the present.

I love the one who punishes his god because he loves his god. Because he must be destroyed by the anger of his god.

I love the one whose soul stays deep even when it is wounded, and who can be destroyed by one small experience. That way he gladly walks across the bridge.

I love the one whose soul is so overflowing that he forgets himself, and all things live inside him. That way all things become his going down.

I love the one who has a free mind and a free heart. Then his head is only the inner workings of his heart, and his heart drives him toward his going down.

I love all those who are like heavy raindrops, falling one by one from the dark cloud that hangs over humanity. They announce that the lightning is coming, and as messengers they are destroyed.

Look, I am a messenger of the lightning, and a heavy drop from the cloud. And this lightning is called the Superhuman.

## 5.

When Zarathustra had said these words, he looked at the crowd again and went quiet. "There they stand," he said to his heart. "There they laugh. They don't understand me. I am not the right mouth for these ears.

Do you first have to smash their ears so that they learn to hear with their eyes? Do you have to make a racket like drums, or like preachers yelling at people to repent? Or do they only believe someone who stammers?

They have something they are proud of. What do they call this thing that makes them proud? They call it education. It makes them feel better than goat herders.

That is why they don't like hearing the word 'contempt' used about themselves. So I will speak to their pride instead.

I will speak to them about the most contemptible thing of all: and that is the last human."

And this is what Zarathustra said to the crowd:

It is time for humans to set themselves a goal. It is time for humans to plant the seed of their highest hope.

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

How terrible! The time is coming when humans will no longer shoot the arrow of their longing out beyond humanity, and when the string of their bow will have forgotten how to hum.

I tell you: you still need to have chaos inside you to be able to give birth to a dancing star. I tell you: you still have chaos inside you.

How terrible! The time is coming when humans will no longer give birth to any star. How terrible! The time is coming of the most contemptible human, who can no longer even feel contempt for himself.

Look! I will show you the last human.

"What is love? What is creating? What is longing? What is a star?" That is what the last human asks, and he blinks.

By then the earth has become small, and on it hops the last human, who makes everything small. His kind can never be wiped out, just like the tiny fleas that jump around in the dirt. The last human lives the longest.

"We have invented happiness," say the last humans, and they blink.

They have left the places where life was hard, because people need warmth. People still love their neighbor and rub up against him, because people need warmth.

To them, getting sick or being suspicious counts as a sin. People walk around carefully. Only a fool still trips over stones or over other people!

A little poison now and then: that gives you pleasant dreams. And a lot of poison at the end, for a pleasant death.

People still work, because work is a way to pass the time. But they make sure this pastime doesn't wear them out.

Nobody becomes poor or rich anymore: both are too much trouble. Who still wants to rule? Who still wants to obey? Both are too much trouble.

No shepherd and one herd! Everyone wants the same thing, everyone is the same. Anyone who feels differently checks himself into the madhouse of his own free will.

"In the old days, the whole world was crazy," say the most refined of them, and they blink.

People are clever and know everything that has ever happened, so there's no end to the things they can make fun of. They still argue, but they soon make up again, because otherwise it upsets their stomach.

They have their little pleasure for the day and their little pleasure for the night. But they put their health above everything.

"We have invented happiness," say the last humans, and they blink.

And this is where Zarathustra's first speech ended, the one that is also called "the Prologue". It ended here because at this point the shouting and delight of the crowd interrupted him. "Give us this last human, O Zarathustra," they shouted. "Make us into these last humans! Then you can keep your Superhuman as a gift from us!" And the whole crowd cheered and smacked their lips. But Zarathustra grew sad and said to his heart:

"They don't understand me. I am not the right mouth for these ears.

"I must have lived too long in the mountains. I listened too much to streams and trees. Now I talk to these people the way a goatherd talks to his goats.

"My soul is calm and bright, like the mountains in the morning. But they think I am cold, someone who mocks them with terrible jokes.

"And now they look at me and laugh. And even while they laugh, they hate me. There is ice in their laughter."

## 6.

But then something happened that made every mouth fall silent and every eye stare. In the meantime, you see, the tightrope walker had started his act. He had stepped out of a small door and was walking

along the rope, which was stretched between two towers so that it hung above the marketplace and the crowd. Just when he was halfway across, the small door opened once more, and a fellow in colorful clothes, like a clown, jumped out and hurried after the first man with quick steps. "Move it, limp-foot!" his terrible voice shouted. "Move it, you lazy slug, you sneak, you pale-face! Or I'll tickle you with my heel! What are you doing up here between the towers? You belong inside the tower. You should be locked up! You're blocking the open road for someone better than you!" And with every word he came closer and closer. But when he was only one step behind him, the terrible thing happened that made every mouth fall silent and every eye stare. He let out a scream like a devil and jumped right over the man who was in his way. And when the tightrope walker saw his rival win like that, he lost his head and lost the rope. He threw away his balancing pole and plunged down faster than it did, like a whirl of arms and legs, into the depths. The marketplace and the crowd were like the sea when a storm rushes into it. Everyone scattered, running apart and tumbling over one another, most of all at the spot where the body was going to hit the ground.

But Zarathustra stayed where he was, and the body fell right next to him, badly hurt and broken, but not yet dead. After a while the shattered man came back to his senses, and he saw Zarathustra kneeling beside him. "What are you doing there?" he said at last. "I've known for a long time that the devil would trip me up someday. Now he's dragging me off to hell. Are you going to stop him?"

"On my honor, friend," Zarathustra answered, "none of the things you're talking about exist. There is no devil and no hell. Your soul will be dead even sooner than your body. So don't be afraid of anything anymore!"

The man looked up, full of doubt. "If you're telling the truth," he then said, "then I lose nothing when I lose my life. I'm not much more than an animal that has been taught to dance with beatings and scraps of food."

"Not at all," said Zarathustra. "You made danger your job, and there's nothing to look down on in that. Now your job is how you are destroyed. For that, I will bury you with my own hands."

When Zarathustra had said this, the dying man didn't answer anymore. But he moved his hand, as if he were reaching for Zarathustra's hand to thank him.

## 7.

Meanwhile evening came, and the marketplace was hidden in darkness. Then the crowd drifted away, because even curiosity and fear get tired. But Zarathustra sat on the ground next to the dead man, lost in thought, and so he forgot the time. At last night fell, and a cold wind blew over the lonely man. Then Zarathustra stood up and said to his heart:

"Well, Zarathustra really made a fine catch today! He didn't catch a single person, only a corpse.

"Human life is eerie, and it still has no meaning. A mere clown can be the end of it.

"I want to teach people the meaning of their existence. That meaning is the Superhuman, the lightning bolt that comes out of the dark cloud called humanity.

"But I am still far away from them, and what I mean does not reach their minds. To people, I am still something halfway between a fool and a corpse.

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

## 8.

When Zarathustra had said this to his heart, he loaded the corpse onto his back and set off. He hadn't gone even a hundred steps when someone crept up to him and whispered in his ear. And look! The one who was talking was the clown from the tower. "Leave this town, O Zarathustra," he said. "Too many people here hate you. The good and righteous people hate you, and they call you their enemy and the one who despises them. The believers of the true faith hate you, and they call you a danger to the crowd. You were lucky that people laughed at you, and honestly, you did talk like a clown. You were lucky that you kept company with that dead dog. By lowering yourself like that, you saved your own skin for today. But get out of this town, or tomorrow I'll jump over you, a living man over a dead one." And when he had said this, the man disappeared. But Zarathustra walked on through the dark streets.

At the town gate he met the gravediggers. They held their torch up to his face, recognized Zarathustra, and made fun of him a lot. "Zarathustra is carrying off the dead dog! Good for him, Zarathustra has become a gravedigger! Because our hands are too clean for this piece of roast meat. Is Zarathustra trying to steal the devil's dinner? Well then, go ahead! Enjoy your meal! As long as the devil isn't a better thief than Zarathustra! He'll steal them both, he'll gobble them both up!" And they laughed together and put their heads together.

Zarathustra didn't say a word to this and went on his way. When he had walked for two hours, past forests and swamps, he had heard too

much of the hungry howling of the wolves, and he got hungry himself. So he stopped at a lonely house where a light was burning.

"Hunger jumps on me like a robber," said Zarathustra. "My hunger attacks me in forests and swamps, and in the middle of the night."

"My hunger has strange moods. Often it only shows up after I've eaten, and today it didn't come at all, the whole day long. Where was it hiding, I wonder?"

And with that, Zarathustra knocked on the door of the house. An old man appeared. He was carrying the light, and he asked, "Who is coming to me and to my bad sleep?"

"A living man and a dead one," said Zarathustra. "Give me something to eat and drink. I forgot to do it during the day. Whoever feeds the hungry refreshes his own soul. That's what wisdom says."

The old man went away, but came right back and offered Zarathustra bread and wine. "This is a bad area for hungry people," he said. "That's why I live here. Animals and people both come to me, the hermit. But tell your companion to eat and drink too. He is more tired than you are." Zarathustra answered, "My companion is dead. I'll hardly be able to talk him into it." "That's none of my business," said the old man grumpily. "Whoever knocks on my door has to take what I offer him. Eat, and goodbye to you both!"

After that, Zarathustra walked for another two hours, trusting the road and the light of the stars. He was used to walking at night, and he liked to look straight into the face of everything that sleeps. But when the morning began to grow light, Zarathustra found himself in a deep forest, and he could no longer see any path. So he laid the dead man inside a hollow tree, up by his own head, because he wanted to protect him from the wolves. Then he lay down himself on the ground

and the moss. And right away he fell asleep, his body tired, but his soul calm and untroubled.

## 8.

Zarathustra slept for a long time. Not only did the dawn pass over his face, but the whole morning too. But finally his eyes opened. Amazed, Zarathustra looked at the forest and the silence. Amazed, he looked inside himself. Then he quickly got up, like a sailor who suddenly sees land, and he shouted for joy, because he saw a new truth. And then he spoke to his heart like this:

"Now I see it clearly. I need companions, and living ones. Not dead companions and corpses that I carry around with me wherever I want to go."

"No, I need living companions who follow me because they want to follow themselves, and who go where I want to go."

"Now I see it clearly. Zarathustra should not speak to the crowd, but to companions! Zarathustra must not become the shepherd and sheepdog of a herd!"

"I came to lure many people away from the herd. Let the crowd and the herd be angry with me. Zarathustra wants the shepherds to call him a robber."

"I say shepherds, but they call themselves the good and righteous people. I say shepherds, but they call themselves the believers of the true faith."

"Look at the good and righteous people! Who do they hate the most? The one who smashes their tablets of rules and values, the breaker, the criminal. But that person is the creator."

"Look at the believers of every faith! Who do they hate the most? The one who smashes their tablets of rules and values, the breaker, the criminal. But that person is the creator."

"The creator looks for companions, not corpses, and not herds and believers either. The creator looks for people who will create alongside him, people who write new values on new tablets of rules."

"The creator looks for companions, people who will bring in the harvest with him. Everything around him is ripe and ready to be harvested. But he is missing the hundred sickles he needs, so he pulls up the ears of grain with his bare hands and gets annoyed."

"The creator looks for companions, people who know how to sharpen their sickles. People will call them destroyers, and people who look down on good and evil. But they are the ones who harvest, and the ones who celebrate."

"Zarathustra looks for people to create with him, to harvest with him, and to celebrate with him. What does he have to do with herds and shepherds and corpses?"

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

"But now I'm leaving you. The time is up. Between one dawn and the next, a new truth came to me."

"I must not be a shepherd, and not a gravedigger either. I don't even want to talk to the crowd ever again. That was the last time I spoke to a dead man."

"I want to join the creators, the harvesters, the celebrators. I want to show them the rainbow, and all the steps that lead up to the Superhuman."

"I will sing my song to those who live alone, and to those who live alone in pairs. And whoever still has ears for things no one has ever heard before, I want to make their heart heavy with my happiness."

"I want to reach my goal, and I'm going my own way. I'll jump right over the ones who hesitate and drag their feet. So let my going on be their going down!"

**10.**

Zarathustra had said this to his heart when the sun stood at midday. Then he looked up, wondering, because he heard the sharp cry of a bird above him. And look! An eagle was gliding through the air in wide circles, and a snake was hanging from it. Not like something it had caught, but like a friend, because the snake was coiled around the eagle's neck.

"Those are my animals!" said Zarathustra, and his heart was filled with joy.

"The proudest animal under the sun and the smartest animal under the sun. They have gone out to scout around."

"They want to find out whether Zarathustra is still alive. Honestly, am I still alive?"

"I found it more dangerous among humans than among animals. Zarathustra walks dangerous paths. Let my animals guide me!"

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

"I wish I were smarter! I wish I were smart through and through, like my snake!"

"But I'm asking for something impossible there. So instead I ask my pride to always go along with my smartness!"

"And if someday my smartness leaves me (oh, it loves to fly away!), then may my pride still fly along with my foolishness!"

And this is how Zarathustra's going down began.

## About the Three Changes

I will tell you about three changes of the mind: how the mind becomes a camel, how the camel becomes a lion, and how, in the end, the lion becomes a child.

There are many heavy things for the mind to carry, for the strong mind that can bear a lot and is full of deep respect. Its strength longs for what is heavy, and for what is heaviest of all.

"What is heavy?" asks the mind that can carry a lot. And it kneels down, like a camel, and wants to be loaded up well.

"What is the heaviest thing, you heroes?" asks the mind that can carry a lot. "Tell me, so that I can take it on myself and be glad of my strength."

"Is it this: to make yourself small and low, so that it hurts your pride? To let your foolishness shine out for all to see, so that you make fun of your own wisdom?"

"Or is it this: to walk away from your cause just when it is celebrating its victory? To climb up high mountains in order to tempt the tempter himself?"

"Or is it this: to feed on the acorns and grass of knowledge, plain and bitter food, and to let your soul go hungry for the sake of the truth?"

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

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

"Or is it this: to love those who look down on us, and to hold out your hand to the ghost when it is trying to scare us?"

The mind that can carry a lot takes all of these heaviest things on itself. Like a camel that hurries off into the desert with its load, it hurries off into its own desert.

But in the loneliest desert the second change happens. Here the mind becomes a lion. It wants to hunt down freedom and capture it for itself, and to be the master in its own desert.

Here it goes looking for its last master. It wants to become the enemy of that master and of its last god. It wants to fight the great dragon for victory.

What is the great dragon that the mind no longer wants to call master and god? The great dragon is called "You-must." But the lion's mind says "I want."

"You-must" lies in its path, sparkling with gold, a creature covered in scales, and on every single scale the words "You-must!" shine in gold.

Values that are a thousand years old shine on these scales. And the mightiest of all dragons speaks like this: "All the value of all things, it shines on me."

"All values have already been created, and every value that was ever created, that is me. Truly, there shall be no more "I want"!" That is what the dragon says.

My brothers, why does the mind need the lion? Why isn't the animal that carries loads enough, the one that gives things up and is full of respect?

Even the lion cannot yet create new values. But to make freedom for itself, so that new creating becomes possible, that is something the lion's power can do.

To make freedom for yourself, and to say a holy "No," even to duty: for that, my brothers, you need the lion.

To take for yourself the right to new values, that is the most terrifying kind of taking for a mind that carries loads and is full of respect. Truly, to such a mind it feels like robbery, the kind of thing a beast of prey would do.

Once, it loved "You-must" as the holiest thing it had. Now it has to find madness and random whim even in the holiest thing, so that it can rob itself of freedom from what it loved. You need the lion for this robbery.

But tell me, my brothers, what can the child do that even the lion could not? Why does the lion, the robber, still have to become a child?

The child is innocence and forgetting. It is a new beginning, a game, a wheel that rolls by itself, a first movement, a holy saying yes.

Yes, my brothers, for the game of creating you need a holy saying yes. Now the mind wants its own will, and the one who had lost the world wins its own world.

I have told you about three changes of the mind: how the mind became a camel, how the camel became a lion, and how, in the end, the lion became a child.

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

## About the Teaching Chairs of Virtue

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

Honor sleep, and show it respect! That is the first thing! And stay out of the way of everyone who sleeps badly and lies awake at night!

Even the thief shows respect for sleep: he always sneaks quietly through the night. But the night watchman has no respect at all; without any shame he carries his horn and blows it.

Sleeping is no small skill. You actually need to stay awake the whole day, working toward it.

Ten times a day you must get past yourself, pushing beyond what you want. That makes you nicely tired, and it works on the soul like a sleeping drug made from poppies.

Ten times you must make peace with yourself again. Because getting past yourself leaves a bitter taste, and someone who hasn't made peace sleeps badly.

You must find ten truths a day. Otherwise you will still be searching for truth at night, and your soul will have stayed hungry.

Ten times a day you must laugh and be cheerful. Otherwise your stomach will bother you at night, and the stomach is the father of gloom.

Few people know this, but you need to have all the virtues to sleep well. Will I tell lies about someone? Will I cheat on my wife?

Will I let myself lust after my neighbor's servant girl? None of that would go well with good sleep.

And even if you have all the virtues, you still need to understand one more thing: you must send the virtues themselves off to sleep at the right time.

So that they don't quarrel with each other, those well-behaved little ladies! And quarrel about you, you poor unlucky man!

Peace with God and with your neighbor: that is what good sleep demands. And peace even with your neighbor's devil! Otherwise he will haunt your house at night.

Honor and obey the people in charge, even the crooked ones! That is what good sleep demands. Is it my fault that power likes to walk around on crooked legs?

I will always call that one the best shepherd who leads his sheep to the greenest meadow. That way it goes well with good sleep.

I don't want lots of honors or great riches: those just inflame your temper. But it's hard to sleep well without a good name and a little bit of money.

I prefer a small group of company to a nasty one. But they have to come and go at the right time. That way it goes well with good sleep.

I also really like people who are poor in mind: they help you sleep. They are blessed, especially if you always agree with them.

That is how the day goes for a virtuous man. Then, when night comes, I am very careful not to call for sleep! Sleep does not want to be called, because sleep is the master of the virtues!

Instead I think about what I did and thought during the day. Chewing it over, as patient as a cow chewing its cud, I ask myself: what were your ten times of getting past yourself?

And what were the ten times of making peace, and the ten truths, and the ten laughs that my heart enjoyed?

While I think things over like this, rocked by forty thoughts, sleep suddenly takes me by surprise. Sleep, the one nobody called, the master of the virtues.

Sleep taps on my eyes, and they grow heavy. Sleep touches my mouth, and it stays open.

Truly, sleep comes to me on soft feet, the dearest of all thieves, and steals my thoughts. I stand there as stupid as this teaching chair.

But I don't stay standing for long: soon I'm already lying down.—

When Zarathustra heard the wise man talk like this, he laughed to himself in his heart, because it had made something clear to him. And this is what he said to his heart:

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

Anyone who lives near this wise man is already lucky! Sleep like his is contagious; it spreads even through a thick wall.

There is a kind of magic even in his teaching chair. And the young men did not sit in front of this preacher of virtue for nothing.

His wisdom is: stay awake so that you sleep well. And truly, if life had no meaning and I had to choose some nonsense, then this would be the nonsense most worth choosing for me too.

Now I understand clearly what people used to look for above all when they looked for teachers of virtue. They were looking for good sleep, and for virtues that work like poppies, like a sleeping drug!

For all these praised wise men in their teaching chairs, wisdom meant sleep without dreams. They knew no better meaning for life.

Even today there are probably still some like this preacher of virtue, and not always such honest ones. But their time is up. They won't stay standing much longer: soon they'll already be lying down.

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

That is what Zarathustra said.

## About the Believers in Another World

Once, Zarathustra too threw his wild fantasy out beyond humans, just like all believers in another world. Back then, the world looked to me like the work of a suffering, tortured god.

Back then, the world looked to me like a dream, like a poem made up by a god. It seemed like colored smoke floating in front of the eyes of a god who was unhappy with himself.

Good and evil, joy and pain, me and you: all of it seemed to me like colored smoke in front of a creator's eyes. The creator wanted to look away from himself, and so he made the world.

For someone who suffers, it is a drunken kind of pleasure to look away from his pain and lose himself. Once, the world seemed to me to be exactly that: a drunken pleasure and a way of losing yourself.

This world, which is never finished and never perfect, a picture of a contradiction that never ends, and only an imperfect picture at that, a drunken pleasure for its imperfect creator: that is how the world once seemed to me.

So once, I too threw my wild fantasy out beyond humans, just like all believers in another world. But was it really beyond humans?

Oh, my brothers, this god that I made was made by humans and came out of human madness, just like all gods!

He was human, and only a poor little piece of a human and of myself. This ghost came to me out of my own ashes and my own fire. And honestly, it did not come to me from some world beyond!

What happened, my brothers? I got past myself, the one who was suffering. I carried my own ashes up the mountain, and I found a brighter flame for myself. And look! Then the ghost left me alone!

Now that I have healed, it would be suffering and torture for me to believe in ghosts like that. It would be suffering for me now, and it would make me small and low. That is what I say to the believers in another world.

Suffering and weakness, that is what made up all those other worlds. That, and the short burst of crazy happiness that only the person who suffers most ever feels.

Tiredness made all the gods and other worlds. It is a tiredness that wants to reach the very end in one jump, a jump into death. It is a poor tiredness that knows nothing, a tiredness that does not even want to want anymore.

Believe me, my brothers! It was the body that gave up hope in the body. Using the fingers of a fooled and confused mind, it felt its way along the very last walls.

Believe me, my brothers! It was the body that gave up hope in the earth. It thought it heard the belly of existence itself talking to it.

And then it wanted to push its head through those last walls, and not only its head, and get across to "that other world."

But "that other world" is well hidden from humans. It is a world with all humanity taken out of it, an inhuman world, a heavenly nothing. And the belly of existence does not speak to humans at all, except in a human voice.

Honestly, it is hard to prove that anything exists, and hard to make existence speak. Tell me, brothers, isn't the strangest of all things still the best proven?

Yes, this "I," with all its contradictions and confusion, still speaks most honestly about its own existence. This "I" that creates, that wants, that gives things their worth, is the measure and the value of all things.

And this most honest being, the "I," talks about the body. It still wants the body, even when it is making up poems, dreaming wild dreams, and flapping around with broken wings.

The "I" keeps learning to speak more and more honestly. And the more it learns, the more words and honors it finds for the body and the earth.

My "I" taught me a new kind of pride, and I teach it to humans: stop sticking your head in the sand of heavenly things. Instead, hold your head up freely, an earthly head, a head that creates the meaning of the earth!

I teach humans a new kind of will: to want this path that humans have walked down blindly, to call it good, and to stop sneaking off to the side of it, like the sick and the dying do!

It was the sick and the dying who looked down on the body and the earth. They invented heavenly things and the drops of blood that are supposed to save us. But even these sweet, dark poisons they took from the body and the earth!

They wanted to run away from their misery, and the stars were too far away for them. So they sighed: "Oh, if only there were heavenly paths to sneak into another life and another happiness!" And so they invented their tricks and their little bloody potions!

These ungrateful people now imagined they had been carried away from their bodies and from this earth. But who did they have to thank for the cramps and the bliss of being carried away? Their bodies and this earth.

Zarathustra is gentle with the sick. Honestly, he is not angry about the ways they comfort themselves or about their ungratefulness. May they get better, may they get past themselves, and may they make a higher body for themselves!

Zarathustra is also not angry with someone who is getting better, when he looks back fondly at his old fantasy and creeps around his god's grave at midnight. But to me, even his tears are still a sign of sickness and of a sick body.

There have always been many sickly people among those who write poems and who crave God. They furiously hate the person who seeks real knowledge, and they hate the youngest of all virtues, which is called honesty.

They always look backward to dark times. Back then, of course, fantasy and faith were a different thing. Back then, reason going wild was seen as being like God, and doubt was a sin.

I know these god-like people far too well. They want everyone to believe in them, and they want doubt to be a sin. I also know far too well what they themselves believe in most.

Honestly, it is not other worlds or saving drops of blood. They too believe most in the body, and their own body is, for them, the thing that is truly real in itself.

But to them the body is a sick thing, and they would love to jump out of their own skin. That is why they listen to the preachers of death, and why they themselves preach about other worlds.

My brothers, you would do better to listen to the voice of the healthy body. It is a more honest and a purer voice.

The healthy body, the complete body that is built straight and true, speaks more honestly and more purely. And it speaks about the meaning of the earth.

That is what Zarathustra said.

## About the People Who Look Down on the Body

I want to say something to the people who look down on the body. I don't want them to learn a new way of thinking, or to start teaching something different. I just want them to say goodbye to their own body, and so go silent.

"I am body and soul." That is how a child talks. And why shouldn't people talk the way children do?

But the one who has woken up, the one who truly knows, says this: "I am body, completely and totally, and nothing else. And 'soul' is just a word for something that belongs to the body."

The body is a big intelligence. It is many things working together with one purpose. It is a war and a peace at the same time. It is a herd of animals and also the shepherd who guides them.

Your small intelligence, my brother, the thing you call your "mind," is also a tool of your body. It is a little tool and a little toy of your big intelligence.

You say "I," and you are proud of that word. But the greater thing is the one you refuse to believe in: your body and its big intelligence. It doesn't say "I," but it actually acts as "I."

What your senses feel and what your mind understands never has its final purpose inside itself. But your senses and your mind would like to convince you that they are the final purpose of everything. That is how vain they are.

Your senses and your mind are tools and toys. Behind them there is something more: the deeper self. The deeper self also searches with the eyes of the senses, and it also listens with the ears of the mind.

The deeper self is always listening and searching. It compares, it overpowers, it conquers, it destroys. It rules, and it is also the ruler of your "I."

Behind your thoughts and feelings, my brother, stands a powerful master, a wise one you don't know. Its name is the deeper self. It lives in your body. In fact, it is your body.

There is more intelligence in your body than in your best wisdom. And who knows why your body needs your best wisdom in the first place?

Your deeper self laughs at your "I" and its proud leaps. It says to itself: "What do these leaps and flights of thought matter to me? They are just a roundabout way of getting to what I want. I am the string that leads the 'I' around, like a toddler on a leash. And I am the one who whispers its ideas into its ear."

The deeper self says to the "I": "Feel pain here!" And then the "I" suffers, and it thinks about how to stop suffering. And that is exactly what it is supposed to think about.

The deeper self says to the "I": "Feel pleasure here!" Then the "I" is happy, and it thinks about how to be happy again many more times. And that is exactly what it is supposed to think about.

I want to say something to the people who look down on the body. The fact that they look down on something comes from the fact that they value things. So what is it that created valuing and looking down, and values, and will?

The creating deeper self created valuing and looking down for itself. It created pleasure and pain for itself. The creating body created the mind for itself, as a hand to carry out what it wants.

Even in your foolishness and your contempt, you who look down on the body, you are still serving your deeper self. I tell you: your deeper self itself wants to die, and it is turning away from life.

It can no longer do the thing it wants most of all: to create something beyond itself. That is what it wants most. That is its whole burning passion.

But now it has become too late for that. And so your deeper self wants to go down, you who look down on the body.

Your deeper self wants to go down, and that is why you became people who look down on the body! Because you can no longer create something beyond yourselves.

And that is why you are now angry at life and at the earth. There is a jealousy you aren't even aware of hidden in the sideways, resentful look of your contempt.

I am not going your way, you who look down on the body! To me, you are no bridges to the Superhuman!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On Joys and Passions

My brother, if you have a virtue, and it is truly your own virtue, then you don't share it with anyone.

Of course, you want to call it by name and cuddle it. You want to tug its ear playfully and have fun with it.

And look! Now you share its name with the crowd. Your virtue has made you part of the crowd and the herd!

You would do better to say: "What gives my soul its pain and its sweetness, and what is even the hunger deep in my gut, cannot be put into words and has no name."

Let your virtue be too high for the easy familiarity of names. And if you have to talk about it, don't be ashamed to stammer when you do.

So speak and stammer like this: "This is my good. I love it. This is exactly how I like it. This is the only way I want the good.

I don't want it as a law from some god. I don't want it as a human rule or as something people just need to get by. I don't want it to be a signpost pointing me to worlds above the earth or to heavens.

The virtue I love belongs to this earth. There isn't much cleverness in it, and least of all the kind of reason that everybody shares.

But this bird built its nest with me. That is why I love it and hug it close. Now let it sit with me on its golden eggs."

That is how you should stammer and praise your virtue.

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

You put your highest goal close to the heart of these passions. Then they became your virtues and your joys, your passions turned into joy-passions.

And it doesn't matter whether you came from the family of the hot-tempered, or of the lustful, or of the fanatics of faith, or of the revenge-seekers:

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

Once you kept wild dogs in your cellar. But in the end they changed into birds and lovely singers.

Out of your poisons you brewed your healing ointment. You milked your cow named Sadness, and now you drink the sweet milk from her udder.

And from now on nothing evil grows out of you anymore, except the evil that grows out of the fight between your virtues.

My brother, if you are lucky, you have one virtue and no more. That way you walk across the bridge more easily.

Having many virtues is a mark of distinction, but it is a hard fate. And more than one person has gone out into the desert and killed himself, because he was tired of being the battle and the battlefield of his virtues.

My brother, are war and battle evil? Even so, this evil is necessary. Envy and distrust and slander among your virtues are necessary.

Look how each of your virtues is greedy for the very highest. Each one wants your whole mind to be its herald, the one who announces it. Each one wants all your strength, in anger, in hate and in love.

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

Whoever is surrounded by the flame of jealousy ends up, like the scorpion, turning its poisoned sting against itself.

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

Humans are something to be outgrown. And that is why you should love your virtues, because you will be destroyed by them.

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The Pale Criminal

You judges, you who offer up sacrifices, you don't want to kill until the animal has nodded its head, as if agreeing? Look, the pale criminal has nodded. Great disgust with yourself speaks out of his eyes.

"My self is something that should be gotten past. To me, my self is the great disgust with humans." That is what speaks out of those eyes.

The moment he judged himself was his highest moment. Don't let this man, who rose so high, sink back down into his lower self!

There is no rescue for someone who suffers from himself this much, except a quick death.

You judges, when you kill, let it be out of pity and not out of revenge. And while you kill, make sure that you yourselves give life a reason to be worth it!

It is not enough for you to make peace with the one you are killing. Let your sadness be love for the Superhuman. That is how you can justify the fact that you are still alive!

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

And you, red-robed judge: if you said out loud everything you have already done in your thoughts, everyone would scream, "Get rid of this filth, this poisonous worm!"

But a thought is one thing, a deed is another, and the picture of the deed is yet another. The wheel of cause and reason does not roll between them. In other words, one does not simply lead to the next.

A picture made this pale man pale. When he did his deed, he was a match for it, as big as it was. But once it was done, he could not stand the picture of it.

From then on he always saw himself as the doer of one single deed. I call this madness: for him, the exception turned into who he really was.

A chalk line can hold a hen frozen in place. In the same way, the blow he struck held his poor reason frozen in place. I call this the madness after the deed.

Listen, you judges! There is another madness too, and it comes before the deed. Oh, you did not crawl deep enough into this soul for me!

The red-robed judge says this: "Why did this criminal murder? He wanted to rob." But I tell you: his soul wanted blood, not loot. He was thirsty for the thrill of the knife!

But his poor reason did not understand this madness, and it talked him around. "What does blood matter!" it said. "Don't you at least want to steal something while you're at it? Or take some revenge?"

And he listened to his poor reason. Its words lay on him like lead. So he robbed while he murdered. He did not want to be ashamed of his madness.

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

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

What is this man? A heap of sicknesses that reach out into the world through the mind. There they want to catch their prey.

What is this man? A tangle of wild snakes that rarely get along with each other. So they each go off on their own and look for prey in the world.

Look at this poor body! What it suffered and what it craved, this poor soul tried to explain to itself. It explained it as a murderous pleasure and a hunger for the thrill of the knife.

Whoever gets sick nowadays is attacked by whatever counts as evil nowadays. He wants to cause pain with the very thing that causes him pain. But there were other times, with a different evil and a different good.

Once, doubt was evil, and so was wanting to be your own self. Back then, the sick person became a heretic or a witch. As a heretic and a witch, he suffered, and he wanted to make others suffer.

But you don't want to hear this. You tell me it harms your good people. But what do I care about your good people!

A lot about your good people disgusts me, and it is truly not their evil. I only wish they had a madness that would destroy them, like this pale criminal!

Truly, I wish their madness were called truth, or loyalty, or justice. But they have their virtue so that they can live a long time, in pathetic comfort.

I am a railing beside the river. Whoever can grab hold of me, let them grab hold! But I am not your crutch.

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On Reading and Writing

Of everything that has ever been written, I love only what someone writes with their own blood. Write with blood, and you will find out that blood is mind.

It is not easy to understand someone else's blood. I hate lazy people who read just to pass the time.

Anyone who really knows readers stops doing anything for them. One more century of readers like these, and the mind itself will start to stink.

Letting everyone learn to read will, in the long run, ruin not only writing but thinking too.

Once the mind was God. Then it became human. And now it is even turning into the mob.

Whoever writes in blood and in short, sharp sayings does not want to be read. They want to be learned by heart.

In the mountains, the shortest way is from peak to peak. But for that you need long legs. Sayings should be like peaks, and the people they are spoken to should be tall and great.

The air thin and clean, danger close by, and the mind full of a cheerful kind of mischief: these things go well together.

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

I no longer feel the way you feel. This cloud I see below me, this blackness and heaviness that I laugh at, that is exactly your storm cloud.

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You look upward when you long to be lifted up. And I look down, because I have already been lifted up.

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

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

Brave, carefree, mocking, and forceful: that is how wisdom wants us to be. Wisdom is a woman, and she only ever loves a warrior.

You tell me, "Life is hard to carry." But then why do you have your pride in the morning and your giving up in the evening?

Life is hard to carry, yes. But don't act so delicate with me! We are all fine, sturdy donkeys, male and female, built to carry loads.

What do we have in common with a rosebud that trembles because a single drop of dew is lying on its body?

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

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

And even to me, someone who is fond of life, it seems that butterflies and soap bubbles, and people who are like them, know the most about happiness.

Seeing these light, silly, delicate, lively little souls flutter around moves Zarathustra to tears and to songs.

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

And when I saw my devil, I found him serious, thorough, deep, and solemn. He was the spirit of heaviness. Because of him, all things fall.

You kill not with anger but with laughter. Come on, let us kill the spirit of heaviness!

I learned to walk; since then I let myself run. I learned to fly; since then I don't need to be pushed before I can move from where I am.

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

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The Tree on the Mountain

Zarathustra had noticed that a certain young man kept avoiding him. One evening he was walking alone through the hills that surround the town called "the Spotted Cow." And look: as he walked, he came across this young man, sitting with his back against a tree and staring down into the valley with tired eyes. Zarathustra took hold of the tree the young man was sitting by, and he said:

"If I tried to shake this tree here with my hands, I wouldn't be able to do it.

But the wind, which we can't see, torments it and bends it whichever way it likes. We are bent and tormented worst of all by hands we cannot see."

At that the young man jumped up, shaken, and said: "I'm hearing Zarathustra, and I was just thinking about him." Zarathustra answered:

"Why does that frighten you? But it's the same with people as it is with trees.

The more a person wants to rise up into the heights and the light, the harder his roots push toward the earth: downward, into the dark, into the deep, into evil."

"Yes, into evil!" cried the young man. "How could you possibly have found out what's in my soul?"

Zarathustra smiled and said: "Some souls you will never find out, unless you invent them first." "Yes, into evil!" the young man cried again.

"You spoke the truth, Zarathustra. Ever since I've wanted to climb higher, I don't trust myself anymore, and nobody trusts me anymore either. How does that happen?

I change too fast: who I am today proves who I was yesterday wrong. When I climb, I often skip steps, and not one of those steps ever forgives me for it.

When I get to the top, I always find myself alone. Nobody talks to me, and the cold of loneliness makes me shiver. What do I even want up there in the heights?

My contempt and my longing grow together. The higher I climb, the more I look down on the one who is climbing. What does he even want up there in the heights?

How ashamed I am of my climbing and my stumbling! How I mock my own heavy panting! How I hate the one who can fly! How tired I am up in the heights!"

Here the young man fell silent. And Zarathustra looked at the tree they were standing beside, and he said:

"This tree stands alone here on the mountain. It has grown high, far above humans and animals.

And if it wanted to speak, there would be no one who could understand it: that is how high it has grown.

Now it waits and waits. But what is it waiting for? It lives too close to where the clouds sit. Maybe it's waiting for the first bolt of lightning?"

When Zarathustra had said this, the young man cried out, waving his arms wildly: "Yes, Zarathustra, you're speaking the truth. When I wanted to climb high, what I was really longing for was my own going down, and you are the lightning I was waiting for! Look, what am I anymore, ever since you showed up among us? It's my envy of you

that has destroyed me!" That is what the young man said, and he cried bitterly. But Zarathustra put his arm around him and led him away with him.

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

"It breaks my heart. Your eyes tell me all the danger you're in, better than your words can.

You are not free yet; you are still searching for freedom. Your searching has kept you up all night and made you too wide awake, worn out from no sleep.

You want to go up into the free heights; your soul is thirsty for the stars. But your bad urges are thirsty for freedom too.

Your wild dogs want to get out into freedom. They bark with excitement down in their cellar whenever your mind tries to unlock every prison.

To me you are still a prisoner who dreams up freedom for himself. Oh, the souls of prisoners like that become clever, but they also become sly and wicked.

Someone whose mind has been set free still has to make himself clean. There is still a lot of prison and rot left inside him: his eyes still have to become clear and pure.

Yes, I know the danger you're in. But by my love and my hope, I beg you: don't throw away your love and your hope!

You still feel noble, and the others still feel that you are noble too, the ones who resent you and give you nasty looks. Understand this: a noble person stands in everyone's way.

A noble person stands in the way of the good people too. And even when they call him a good person, they're doing it to push him aside.

The noble person wants to create something new, and a new virtue. The good person wants the old things, and wants the old things to be kept as they are.

But the danger for the noble person is not that he will turn into a good person. The danger is that he will turn into someone shameless, someone who sneers, someone who destroys.

Oh, I have known noble people who lost their highest hope. And after that they spoke badly of every high hope.

From then on they lived shamelessly, chasing quick little pleasures, and they hardly set any goals beyond the end of the day anymore.

"The mind is just another kind of pleasure," that's what they said. And so their mind's wings broke. Now it crawls around and dirties whatever it gnaws on.

Once they thought they would become heroes; now they are people who live only for pleasure. To them, the hero has become something that makes them bitter and fills them with dread.

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

That is what Zarathustra said.

## About the Preachers of Death

There are preachers of death. And the earth is full of people who need to be preached to about turning away from life.

The earth is full of people who are not needed. Life is spoiled by the far too many people. If only someone would lure them out of this life with the promise of "eternal life"!

People call the preachers of death "the yellow ones" or "the black ones." But I want to show them to you in other colors too.

First there are the terrible ones. They carry a wild beast of prey around inside them, and they have no choice except two: giving in to their cravings, or tearing themselves apart. And even their cravings are just another way of tearing themselves apart.

These terrible ones have not even become human yet. Let them preach turning away from life, and then let them leave this life themselves!

Then there are those whose souls are wasting away, as if from a slow sickness. They are barely born before they start dying, and they long for teachings about tiredness and giving everything up.

They would like to be dead, and we should approve of what they want! Let us be careful not to wake these dead people, and not to damage these living coffins!

They meet a sick person, or an old man, or a dead body, and right away they say: "Life has been proven wrong!"

But the only things proven wrong are they themselves, and their eyes, which see only one single face of existence.

Wrapped up in thick gloom, and eager for the little accidents that bring death: that is how they wait, gritting their teeth.

Or else they reach for sweets, and while they do it, they make fun of themselves for being so childish. They cling to life as if to a straw, and they mock themselves for still clinging to a straw.

Their wisdom goes like this: "Anyone who stays alive is a fool, and that is how foolish we are! And that is exactly the most foolish thing about life!"

"Life is nothing but suffering," others say, and they are not lying. Well then, make sure that you stop! Make sure that the life which is nothing but suffering comes to an end!

So let the teaching of your virtue be this: "You shall kill yourself! You shall sneak yourself away out of life!"

"Sexual desire is a sin," say some of those who preach death. "Let us step aside and not have any children!"

"Giving birth is hard work," say the others. "Why give birth at all? All you bring into the world is unhappy people!" And they too are preachers of death.

"Pity is what we need," say the third kind. "Take what I have! Take what I am! The less I have, the less life ties me down!"

If they were truly full of pity, down to the bottom of their hearts, they would make life unbearable for the people around them, so that those people could let go of it too. Being cruel, that would be their real kindness.

But they only want to get free of life themselves. What do they care that, with their chains and their gifts, they tie other people down to life even tighter!

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

All of you who love wild work, and everything fast, new and strange: you can hardly stand yourselves. Your hard work is a way of running away, a wish to forget yourselves.

If you believed in life more, you would throw yourselves less at the Moment, at whatever is happening right now. But you do not have enough inside you to be able to wait, and not even enough to be lazy!

Everywhere you hear the voice of those who preach death. And the earth is full of people who need death preached to them.

Or "eternal life": it is all the same to me, as long as they leave this life quickly!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On War and Warriors

We don't want our best enemies to go easy on us. And we don't want the people we love deeply to go easy on us either. So let me tell you the truth!

My brothers in war! I love you deeply. I am one of you, and I always have been. And I am also your best enemy. So let me tell you the truth!

I know about the hate and envy in your hearts. You are not big enough to be free of hate and envy. So at least be big enough not to be ashamed of them!

And if you can't be saints of knowledge, then at least be its warriors for me. Warriors like that are the companions of that kind of holiness, and they go ahead of it to prepare the way.

I see many soldiers. I wish I could see many warriors! People call what soldiers wear a "uniform," which means "one form," all the same. I hope that what they hide under it is not also all the same!

I want you to be the kind of people whose eyes are always searching for an enemy—for your own enemy. And some of you feel hate at first sight.

You should look for your own enemy and fight your own war, and fight it for your own ideas! And if your idea loses, your honesty should still cheer about that as a victory!

You should love peace as a way to get ready for new wars. And you should love a short peace more than a long one.

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

You can only stay quiet and sit still when you have a bow and arrows. Otherwise you just chatter and squabble. Let your peace be a victory!

You say it is a good cause that makes even war holy? I tell you: it is a good war that makes any cause holy.

War and courage have done more great things than loving your neighbor has. Up to now, it was not your pity but your bravery that saved people who had met with disaster.

"What is good?" you ask. Being brave is good. Let the little girls say, "Being good means being pretty and touching at the same time."

People call you heartless. But your heart is real, and I love how shy you are about your warm feelings. You are ashamed of your feelings when they rise like a high tide, while others are ashamed of how low and empty theirs are, like the tide when it's out.

You are ugly? Well then, my brothers! Wrap yourselves in what is grand and noble, because that is the cloak that ugly people wear!

And when your soul grows big, it becomes arrogant, and there is spite in your grandness. I know you.

In spite, the arrogant person and the weakling meet each other. But they misunderstand each other. I know you.

You may only have enemies worth hating, not enemies worth looking down on. You must be proud of your enemy. Then your enemy's successes are your successes too.

Rebellion—that is what nobility looks like in a slave. Let your nobility be obedience! Let even your giving of orders be a kind of obeying!

To a good warrior, "You-must" sounds nicer than "I want." And everything you love, you should first let someone order you to do.

Let your love of life be love for your highest hope. And let your highest hope be the highest thought about life!

But you should let me give you your highest thought as an order. And here it is: Humans are something to be outgrown.

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

I am not going easy on you. I love you deeply, my brothers in war!—

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The New Idol

Somewhere out there, there are still peoples and herds. But not here with us, my brothers. Here we have states.

The state? What is that? Come on! Open your ears to me now, because now I am going to tell you what I have to say about the death of peoples.

The state is the name of the coldest of all cold monsters. It lies coldly, too. And this lie crawls out of its mouth: "I, the state, am the crowd, the people."

That is a lie! It was creators who made the peoples. They hung a faith and a love over them, like a sky above their heads. In this way they served life.

But it is destroyers who set traps for the many and call those traps "the state." They hang a sword and a hundred cravings over them.

Wherever a real people still exists, it does not understand the state. It hates the state like an evil eye, like a sin against its customs and its rights.

I give you this sign: every people speaks its own language of good and evil, and the neighbors do not understand it. Each people invented this language for itself, through its customs and its rights.

But the state lies in every language of good and evil. Whatever it says, it lies. And whatever it has, it has stolen.

Everything about it is fake. It bites, this biting beast, but with stolen teeth. Even its guts are fake.

A mix-up of the languages of good and evil: that is the sign I give you, the sign of the state. Truly, this sign points to a wish to die! Truly, it waves the preachers of death closer!

Far too many people are born. The state was invented for the ones who are not needed, the extra ones!

Just look at how it lures them in, the far too many people! Look how it swallows them, chews them, and chews them over again, like a cow chewing its cud!

"There is nothing greater on earth than me. I am the finger of God that puts things in order." That is how the monster roars. And it is not only the long-eared and the short-sighted, the fools and the people who can't see far, who fall to their knees!

Oh, it whispers its gloomy lies into you too, you great souls! Oh, it guesses which hearts are rich, the ones that love to give themselves away!

Yes, it sees through you too, you who defeated the old God! You grew tired in that fight, and now even your tiredness ends up serving the new idol!

The new idol would like to line up heroes and honorable people all around itself! It loves to bask in the sunshine of good consciences, this cold monster!

The new idol will give you everything, if only you worship it. In this way it buys itself the shine of your goodness and the look in your proud eyes.

It wants to use you as bait to catch the far too many people! Yes, a trick straight from hell was invented there: a horse of death, jingling in a fancy harness decorated with godlike honors!

Yes, a way of dying for many people was invented there, one that praises itself as life. Truly, that is a favor straight from the heart to all the preachers of death!

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

Just look at these people who are not needed! They steal the works of inventors and the treasures of the wise, and they call their theft "education." And everything turns into sickness and trouble for them!

Just look at these people who are not needed! They are always sick. They throw up their bile, all their bitterness, and call it a newspaper. They gobble each other up and can't even digest one another.

Just look at these people who are not needed! They gain riches and become poorer by doing it. They want power, and first of all they want the crowbar of power, which is lots of money. These people who are capable of nothing!

Look at them climb, these quick monkeys! They climb over each other, and so they drag each other down into the mud and the depths.

They all want to get to the throne. That is their madness, as if happiness were sitting on the throne! Often it is filth that sits on the throne, and often the throne sits on filth too.

To me they are all madmen, climbing monkeys, and overheated hotheads. Their idol stinks to me, that cold monster. They all stink to me together, these idol worshippers.

My brothers, do you really want to choke in the fumes of their mouths and their cravings? Better to smash the windows and jump out into the open air!

Get out of the way of the bad smell! Get away from the idol worship of the people who are not needed!

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

Even now, the earth is still open to great souls. Many places are still empty for people who live alone or in pairs, places where the scent of calm seas drifts around them.

A free life is still open to great souls. Truly, whoever owns little is owned that much less by things. Praise be to being a little bit poor!

There, where the state ends, that is where the human being who is not useless first begins. There begins the song of what is truly needed, the one-of-a-kind tune that nothing can replace.

There, where the state ends... just look over there, my brothers! Don't you see it, the rainbow and the bridges to the Superhuman?

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The Flies of the Marketplace

Run away, my friend, into your loneliness! I can see you are dazed by the noise of the great men, and stung all over by the stingers of the small ones.

The forest and the rocks know how to be silent with you in a dignified way. Be like the tree you love again, the one with wide branches: it hangs over the sea, quiet and listening.

Where being alone stops, the marketplace begins. And where the marketplace begins, so does the noise of the great actors and the buzzing of the poisonous flies.

In the world, even the best things are worth nothing until someone puts on a show with them. The crowd calls these show-makers "great men."

The crowd understands very little of what is truly great, and that means what creates. But it has a real feel for everyone who performs and acts out great things.

The world turns around the people who invent new values. But it turns invisibly, without anyone seeing it. The crowd and fame, though, turn around the actors. That is just how the world goes.

The actor has a mind, but not much conscience about using it. He always believes in whatever makes people believe most strongly. And what he really wants is for them to believe in him!

Tomorrow he has a new belief, and the day after, an even newer one. Like the crowd, he has quick senses and a nose that keeps changing with the wind.

To him, knocking people over means proving something. Driving people wild means convincing them. And he thinks blood is the best argument of all.

A truth that only slips quietly into sensitive ears, he calls a lie and nothing at all. Honestly, he only believes in gods who make a lot of noise in the world!

The marketplace is full of solemn, self-important clowns. And the crowd is proud of its great men! To the crowd, they are the masters of the moment.

But the moment rushes them, and so they rush you. They want a yes or a no from you too. Oh no, do you really want to set your chair down somewhere between for and against?

You who love the truth, don't be jealous of these people who are so pushy and see everything as all-or-nothing! The truth has never yet walked arm in arm with someone who sees everything as all-or-nothing.

Because of these sudden, hasty people, go back to where you are safe. Only in the marketplace does someone jump on you with "Yes? Or no?"

For all deep wells, experience comes slowly. They have to wait a long time before they know what has fallen into their depths.

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

Run away, my friend, into your loneliness. I can see you are stung all over by poisonous flies. Run to where rough, strong air blows!

Run into your loneliness! You lived too close to the small and pathetic people. Run from their invisible revenge! Toward you, they are nothing but revenge.

Stop raising your arm against them! There are too many of them to count, and it is not your job in life to be a fly swatter.

These small and pathetic people are too many to count. And plenty of proud buildings have already been brought to ruin by raindrops and weeds.

You are not a stone, yet many drops have already worn you hollow. If this goes on, many more drops will make you crack and burst apart.

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

They want your blood, and they think they are completely innocent. Their bloodless souls crave blood, and so they sting you, still thinking they are completely innocent.

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

I think you are too proud to kill these greedy little nibblers. But be careful that carrying all their poisonous wrongs does not end up being your downfall!

They buzz around you even with their praise. Their praise is just a way of pushing in on you. They want to be close to your skin and your blood.

They flatter you as if you were a god or a devil. They whimper in front of you as if you were a god or a devil. So what! They are flatterers and whiners, and nothing more.

They also often act charming and lovable toward you. But that has always been the cleverness of cowards. Yes, cowards are clever!

With their narrow souls they think about you a lot. To them you always seem suspicious! Anything that people think about too much starts to seem suspicious.

They punish you for all your good qualities. The only things they truly forgive you for, deep down, are your mistakes.

Because you are gentle and fair-minded, you say: "They are not to blame for their small lives." But their narrow souls think: "Every great life is a crime."

Even when you are gentle with them, they still feel looked down on by you. And they pay you back for your kindness with hidden acts of meanness.

Your silent pride always goes against their taste. They cheer when, for once, you are modest enough to be vain.

Whatever we recognize in a person, we also stir up and set on fire in them. So watch out for the small people!

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

Didn't you notice how often they went quiet when you walked up to them? And how their strength drained out of them, like smoke rising from a fire that is going out?

Yes, my friend, you are the guilty conscience of the people around you, because they are not worthy of you. That is why they hate you and would love to suck your blood.

The people around you will always be poisonous flies. Whatever is great about you, that very thing is bound to make them more poisonous and more and more like flies.

Run away, my friend, into your loneliness, to where rough, strong air blows. It is not your job in life to be a fly swatter.

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On Chastity

I love the forest. Cities are bad places to live: there are too many people there who are burning with lust.

Isn't it better to fall into the hands of a murderer than into the dreams of a woman burning with lust?

And just look at these men: their eyes give it away. They know nothing better on earth than lying in bed with a woman.

There is mud at the bottom of their souls. And watch out if that mud of theirs even has a mind to go with it!

If only you were at least complete as animals! But being an animal means being innocent.

Am I telling you to kill your senses? No. I am telling you to let your senses be innocent.

Am I telling you to stay chaste and keep away from sex? For a few people, chastity is a virtue. But for many, it is almost a vice.

These people do hold themselves back. But their lust, like a female dog, peers out with envy from everything they do.

This beast and its restlessness follow them even up to the heights of their virtue, and right into their cold mind.

And how sweetly this dog of lust knows how to beg for a scrap of mind when it is refused a scrap of meat!

You love tragic plays and everything that breaks the heart? But I don't trust that dog of yours.

Your eyes are too cruel for my liking, and you look greedily at people who are suffering. Isn't it just your lust that has put on a disguise and now calls itself pity?

And here is another picture for you: quite a few people who wanted to drive out their devil ended up going into the pigs themselves. In other words, trying to cast out their bad urges, they became swine.

If chastity is hard for someone, they should be advised against it, so that it doesn't become their road to hell, that is, to mud and lust in the soul.

Am I talking about dirty things? That is not the worst thing to me.

A person who seeks knowledge doesn't hate stepping into the water of truth when it is dirty. He hates it when it is shallow.

Truly, there are people who are chaste all the way through, by their very nature. They are gentler at heart, and they laugh more gladly and more often than you do.

They even laugh at chastity and ask: "What is chastity anyway?

Isn't chastity foolishness? But this foolishness came to us; we didn't go looking for it.

We gave this guest a place to stay and a place in our hearts. Now it lives with us. Let it stay as long as it likes!"

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On the Friend

"There is always one person too many around me," thinks the hermit. "Always one times one, and in the long run that makes two!"

"I" and "me" are always too caught up in talking to each other. How could anyone stand it if there were no friend?

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

Oh, there are too many depths for all hermits. That is why they long so much for a friend, and for the height a friend can lift them to.

Our faith in other people gives away what we would like to believe about ourselves. Our longing for a friend is what betrays us.

And often, by loving someone, we are only trying to leap over our own envy of them. And often we attack someone and make an enemy, just to hide the fact that we ourselves can be attacked.

"At least be my enemy!" That is how true respect talks, the kind that does not dare to ask for friendship.

If you want to have a friend, you must also be willing to go to war for him. And to go to war, you must be able to be an enemy.

You should still respect the enemy inside your friend. Can you come right up close to your friend without crossing over to his side and losing yourself?

Your friend should be your best enemy. Your heart should be closest to him exactly when you are standing up against him.

You don't want to wear any clothes in front of your friend? You think it should be an honor for your friend that you show yourself to him just as you are? But that is exactly why he wishes you would go to the devil!

Someone who hides nothing about himself makes people angry. That is how much reason you have to fear being naked! Yes, if you were gods, then you could be ashamed of your clothes!

You can never dress yourself up beautifully enough for your friend. Because you should be an arrow for him, and a longing for the Superhuman.

Have you ever watched your friend sleeping, so that you could find out what he really looks like? What is your friend's face anyway? It is your own face, seen in a rough and flawed mirror.

Have you ever watched your friend sleeping? Weren't you shocked that your friend looks like that? Oh, my friend, humans are something to be outgrown.

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

Let your pity be a kind of guessing: first find out whether your friend even wants pity. Maybe what he loves in you is your steady, unbroken eye and your gaze that looks toward eternity.

Your pity for your friend should hide under a hard shell, one you could break a tooth on. That way it will have its delicacy and its sweetness.

Are you fresh air and solitude and bread and medicine for your friend? Some people cannot undo their own chains, and yet they set their friend free.

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

For far too long, a slave and a tyrant were hidden inside woman. That is why woman is not yet capable of friendship. She only knows love.

In a woman's love there is unfairness and blindness toward everything she does not love. And even in a woman's knowing, clear-eyed love, there is still sudden attack and lightning and night right next to the light.

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

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

Oh, how poor you are, you men, and how stingy your souls are! As much as you give to your friend, I would give even to my enemy, and I would not be any poorer for it.

There is comradeship. If only there were friendship!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On the Thousand Goals and the One

Zarathustra saw many lands and many peoples. In this way he discovered what many peoples called good and what they called evil. Zarathustra found no greater power on earth than good and evil.

No people could live without first deciding what things are worth. But if a people wants to survive as itself, it must not judge things the way its neighbor judges them.

Many things that one people called good, another people called shameful and disgraceful. That is what I found. I found many things called evil in one place and, in another place, dressed up in royal purple and honored.

No neighbor ever understood another. Each one's soul was always amazed at the neighbor's madness and wickedness.

Over every people hangs a tablet of rules listing what it counts as good. Look, it is the list of the things that people has had to get past and overcome. Look, it is the voice of its drive for power.

Whatever a people finds hard, it calls praiseworthy. Whatever is both necessary and hard, it calls good. And whatever frees it even from its deepest need, the rare thing, the hardest thing, that it praises as holy.

Whatever makes it rule and win and shine, so that its neighbor feels dread and envy: that is what it counts as the highest thing, the first thing, the measure of everything, the meaning of all things.

Truly, my brother, once you have understood a people's need, its land, its sky and its neighbor, you can probably guess the law behind what it overcomes. You can guess why it climbs up this ladder toward its hope.

"You must always be the first and stand out above the others. Your jealous soul must love no one, except your friend." This made a Greek's soul tremble, and with this in mind he walked his path to greatness.

"Speak the truth and be good with bow and arrow." That seemed both dear and hard to the people my name comes from. And that name is both dear and hard for me too.

"Honor your father and mother, and obey them down to the very roots of your soul." Another people hung this tablet of overcoming above itself, and through it that people became powerful and lasted forever.

"Be loyal, and for loyalty's sake risk your honor and your blood, even for bad and dangerous causes." By teaching itself this, another people mastered itself. And by mastering itself, it became pregnant and heavy with great hopes.

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

It was humans who first put values into things, in order to keep themselves alive. They were the first to give things meaning, a human meaning! That is why a human calls himself "human," which means: the one who sets values.

Setting values is creating. Listen to this, you creators! Setting values is itself the treasure and the jewel of all the things we value.

Only through setting values is there any value at all. Without it, life would be like a nut with nothing inside, hollow. Listen to this, you creators!

When values change, it means the creators change. Whoever has to be a creator always destroys.

At first, whole peoples were the creators, and only later did single individuals create. Truly, the individual is itself still the newest creation.

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

The joy of belonging to the herd is older than the joy of being an "I." And as long as a good conscience means going along with the herd, only a bad conscience says: "I."

Truly, the clever, loveless "I" that looks for its own advantage in the advantage of many people: that is not where the herd came from, but where it goes down.

It was always the ones who loved and the ones who created who made good and evil. The fire of love glows in the names of all the virtues, and so does the fire of anger.

Zarathustra saw many lands and many peoples. Zarathustra found no greater power on earth than the works of those who love. Their names are "good" and "evil."

Truly, the power of all this praising and blaming is a monster. Tell me, brothers, who will tame it for me? Tell me, who will throw a chain over the thousand necks of this beast?

Until now there have been a thousand goals, because there have been a thousand peoples. All that is still missing is the chain around the thousand necks. The one goal is missing. Humanity still has no goal.

But tell me, my brothers: if humanity still has no goal, then isn't humanity itself still missing too?

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On Loving Your Neighbor

You crowd around your neighbor, and you have lovely words for doing it. But I tell you: your love for your neighbor is really a poor, unhealthy love for yourselves.

You run to your neighbor to escape from yourselves, and then you want to call that a virtue. But I see right through your so-called "selflessness."

"You" is older than "I." People long ago declared "you" holy, but they have not yet done the same for "I." That is why people push their way toward their neighbor.

Do I advise you to love your neighbor? I would much rather advise you to run away from your neighbor, and to love those who are farthest away!

Higher than love for your neighbor is love for those who are farthest away and for those still to come. And higher even than love for people is love for things and for ghosts, meaning ideas and dreams that are not yet real.

This ghost that runs ahead of you, my brother, is more beautiful than you are. Why don't you give it your flesh and your bones, and make it real with your own life? But you are afraid, and so you run to your neighbor instead.

You can't stand being with yourselves, and you don't love yourselves enough. So now you want to trick your neighbor into loving you, and then cover yourselves in gold with his mistake, as if his wrong opinion of you made you shine.

I wish you could not stand all sorts of neighbors and their neighbors too. Then you would have to create your friend, with his overflowing heart, out of yourselves.

When you want to talk well about yourselves, you invite a witness. And once you have tricked him into thinking well of you, you then think well of yourselves.

It is not only the person who speaks against what he knows who is lying. Even more so, it is the person who speaks against what he does not know. And that is how you talk about yourselves when you are with others: you lie to your neighbor about yourselves.

This is what the fool says: "Spending time with people ruins your character, especially if you don't have one."

One person goes to his neighbor because he is looking for himself. Another goes because he wants to lose himself. Your poor love for yourselves turns being alone into a prison for you.

It is the people farther away who pay the price for your love of your neighbor. And as soon as five of you are together, a sixth always has to die, meaning someone outside the group is always shut out and sacrificed.

I don't love your celebrations either. I found too many actors there, and even the audience often behaved like actors.

I do not teach you the neighbor; I teach you the friend. Let the friend be a celebration of the earth for you, and a first taste of the Superhuman.

I teach you the friend and his overflowing heart. But if you want to be loved by overflowing hearts, you have to know how to be a sponge, ready to soak that love up.

I teach you the friend in whom the world stands complete, like a bowl filled with good. I mean the creating friend, who always has a whole, finished world to give away.

And just as the world rolled apart for him, it rolls back together for him in rings. It shows him how good grows out of evil, and how purpose grows out of chance.

Let the future and the farthest things be the reason for your today. In your friend, you should love the Superhuman as your reason for being.

My brothers, I do not advise you to love your neighbor. I advise you to love those who are farthest away.

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The Way of the Creator

My brother, do you want to go off and be alone? Do you want to search for the way to your own self? Wait a little longer and listen to me.

"Whoever goes searching easily gets lost himself. Going off alone is always a wrong": that is what the herd says. And you belonged to the herd for a long time.

The voice of the herd will still ring inside you too. And when you say, "I no longer share one conscience with you," it will come out as a complaint and a pain.

Look, this very pain was still born from that one shared conscience. And the last faint glow of that conscience still shines over your sadness.

But you want to walk the road of your sadness, which is the road to your own self? Then show me that you have the right and the strength to do it!

Are you a new strength and a new right? A first movement? A wheel that rolls by its own power? Can you even force stars to turn around you?

Oh, there is so much greedy hunger for high places! There are so many cramps and spasms among the ambitious! Show me that you are not one of the greedy and the ambitious!

Oh, there are so many great ideas that do no more than a pair of bellows: they puff you up and leave you emptier.

You call yourself free? I want to hear the main idea that rules you, not just that you escaped from a yoke, from something that held you down.

Are you the kind of person who had the right to escape a yoke? There are plenty of people who threw away the last thing that made them worth anything when they threw away their service to others.

Free from what? Zarathustra does not care about that! But your eyes should tell me clearly: free for what?

Can you give yourself your own bad and your own good, and hang your will above you like a law? Can you be your own judge, and the one who punishes anyone who breaks your law?

It is terrible to be alone with the judge and punisher of your own law. That is how a star gets thrown out into empty space and into the icy breath of being alone.

Today you still suffer because of the many, you who are one alone. Today you still have all your courage and your hopes.

But one day loneliness will wear you out. One day your pride will bend and your courage will grind its teeth. One day you will scream, "I am alone!"

One day you will no longer see what is high in you, and you will see what is low in you far too close. Even what is noble in you will frighten you like a ghost. One day you will scream, "Everything is false!"

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

My brother, do you already know the word "contempt"? And do you know the torment of your sense of fairness, which makes you be fair to the very people who look down on you?

You force many people to change their minds about you, and they hold that hard against you. You came close to them and still walked on past them: they will never forgive you for that.

You go beyond them. But the higher you climb, the smaller the eye of envy sees you. And the one who flies is hated most of all.

You must say to them: "How could you ever be fair to me! I choose your unfairness as the share that is meant for me."

They throw unfairness and dirt at the lonely person. But, my brother, if you want to be a star, you must not shine any less for them because of it!

And watch out for the good and righteous people! They like to crucify those who invent their own virtue. They hate the lonely person.

Watch out also for holy simple-mindedness! To it, everything that is not simple-minded is unholy. It also likes to play with fire: the fire of burning people at the stake.

And watch out too for sudden rushes of your own love! The lonely person reaches out his hand too quickly to anyone he meets.

There are some people you should not give your hand to, only your paw. And I want your paw to have claws as well.

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

Lonely one, you are walking the road to your own self! And your road leads right past yourself, and past your seven devils!

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

You must be willing to burn yourself up in your own flame. How could you become new if you have not first turned to ashes!

Lonely one, you are walking the way of the creator: you want to make a god for yourself out of your seven devils!

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

The lover wants to create because he despises! What does anyone know about love who has never had to despise the very thing he loved!

Go into your loneliness with your love and with your creating, my brother. Only much later will fairness come limping along behind you.

Go into your loneliness with my tears, my brother. I love the one who wants to create beyond himself, and is destroyed because of it.

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On Old and Young Women

"Why are you sneaking so shyly through the twilight, Zarathustra? And what are you hiding so carefully under your coat?

Is it a treasure someone gave you? Or a child that was born to you? Or are you now walking the paths of thieves yourself, you friend of the wicked?"

"Truly, my brother," said Zarathustra, "it is a treasure that was given to me. It is a little truth that I am carrying.

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

Today, as I was walking along alone, at the hour when the sun goes down, I met a little old woman, and she spoke to my soul like this:

'Zarathustra has said many things to us women too, but he has never spoken to us about woman.'

And I answered her: 'One should only talk about woman to men.'

'Talk to me about woman too,' she said. 'I am old enough to forget it again right away.'

So I did what the little old woman asked, and I spoke to her like this:

Everything about woman is a riddle, and everything about woman has one answer. That answer is pregnancy.

For a woman, the man is a means to an end. The goal is always the child. But what is the woman for the man?

A real man wants two things: danger and play. That is why he wants woman, as the most dangerous toy of all.

Man should be raised for war, and woman should be raised to give the warrior rest and comfort. Everything else is foolishness.

Fruits that are far too sweet: the warrior doesn't like those. That is why he likes woman. Even the sweetest woman still has something bitter about her.

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

Inside a real man there is a child hidden, and it wants to play. Come on, you women, find the child in the man for me!

Let woman be a toy, pure and fine, like a precious jewel, lit up by the good qualities of a world that does not exist yet.

Let the light of a star shine in your love! Let your hope be: 'May I give birth to the Superhuman!'

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

Let your honor be in your love! Otherwise woman doesn't understand much about honor. But let this be your honor: to always love more than you are loved, and never to come second.

Let man be afraid of woman when she loves. Then she makes every sacrifice, and nothing else is worth anything to her.

Let man be afraid of woman when she hates. Because deep down in his soul, man is only wicked, but woman, down there, is bad all the way through.

Whom does woman hate the most? This is what the iron said to the magnet: 'I hate you most of all, because you attract me, but you are not strong enough to pull me all the way to you.'

Man's happiness is: I want. Woman's happiness is: he wants.

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

And woman has to obey, and find a depth to go with her surface. A woman's heart is surface: a restless, stormy skin on top of shallow water.

But a man's heart is deep. Its stream roars in underground caves. Woman senses its power, but she does not understand it.

Then the little old woman answered me: 'Zarathustra has said many nice things, especially for those who are young enough for them.

It's strange. Zarathustra knows very little about women, and yet he is right about them! Is that because, with a woman, nothing is impossible?

And now, as thanks, take a little truth! After all, I am old enough for it!

Wrap it up and hold its mouth shut. Otherwise it will scream far too loud, this little truth.'

'Give me your little truth, woman!' I said. And this is what the little old woman said:

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

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The Snake Bite

One day it was hot, and Zarathustra had fallen asleep under a fig tree with his arms laid over his face. Then a poisonous snake came and bit him in the neck, so that Zarathustra cried out in pain. When he took his arm away from his face, he looked at the snake. The snake recognized Zarathustra's eyes, twisted around clumsily, and tried to get away. "No, don't go," said Zarathustra. "You haven't accepted my thanks yet! You woke me up just in time, and I still have a long way to go." "Your way is short now," said the snake sadly. "My poison kills." Zarathustra smiled. "When has a dragon ever died from a snake's poison?" he said. "But take your poison back! You are not rich enough to give it to me as a gift." Then the snake wrapped itself around his neck again and licked his wound.

Once, when Zarathustra told this story to his followers, they asked him: "And what, Zarathustra, is the moral of your story?" This is how Zarathustra answered:

The good and righteous people call me the destroyer of morals. So my story is immoral.

But if you have an enemy, don't pay him back for evil by doing him good. That would only make him feel ashamed. Instead, show him that he actually did you some good.

And it is better to be angry than to make someone feel ashamed! And when someone curses you, I don't like it when you want to bless them in return. It's better to curse back a little!

And if someone does you a great wrong, then quickly do five small wrongs back! It is awful to look at someone who is weighed down by a wrong all alone.

Did you know this already? A wrong that is shared is half right. And the one who should take the wrong upon himself is the one who is strong enough to carry it!

A little revenge is more human than no revenge at all. And if punishment is not also a right and an honor for the person who broke the rules, then I don't like your punishing either.

It is nobler to admit you are wrong than to insist you are right, especially when you really are right. But you have to be rich enough inside to do that.

I don't like your cold justice. When I look into the eyes of your judges, I always see the executioner looking back at me, with his cold blade.

Tell me, where can we find a justice that is love with open, seeing eyes?

Then go and invent for me a love that carries not only all the punishment, but also all the guilt!

Then go and invent for me a justice that sets everyone free, except the one who is judging!

Do you want to hear this too? For someone who wants to be truly fair all the way down, even a lie becomes a kindness to people.

But how could I ever be fair all the way down? How can I give everyone what is theirs? Let this be enough for me: I give everyone what is mine.

Finally, my brothers, be careful never to do wrong to anyone who lives alone, apart from others! How could someone who lives alone forget? How could he pay it back and be done with it?

Someone who lives alone is like a deep well. It is easy to throw a stone into it. But once the stone has sunk all the way to the bottom, tell me, who can ever get it out again?

Be careful not to hurt someone who lives alone! But if you have done it, well then, you might as well kill him too!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On Children and Marriage

I have a question just for you, my brother. I drop this question into your soul the way you drop a weight on a rope into water, so that I can find out how deep your soul goes.

You are young, and you want a child and a marriage. But I ask you: are you the kind of person who has the right to want a child?

Are you the winner, the one who has conquered himself, the one who rules his senses, the master of your own virtues? That is what I am asking you.

Or is it the animal in you and plain need that is speaking through your wish? Or loneliness? Or being at war with yourself?

I want your victory and your freedom to be what longs for a child. You should build living monuments to your victory and to your freedom.

You should build beyond yourself. But first, I tell you, you yourself must be well built, straight and true in body and soul, like a wall with perfect right angles.

You should not just carry yourself forward into the next generation, but carry yourself upward! May the garden of marriage help you do that!

You should create a higher body, a first movement, a wheel that rolls by its own power. You should create a creator.

Marriage: that is what I call the will of two people to create the one who is more than the two who created it. I call marriage the deep respect two people have for each other, as people who share such a will.

Let this be the meaning and the truth of your marriage. But what the far too many people call marriage, those people the world could do without, oh, what should I call that?

Oh, this poverty of soul shared by two! Oh, this filth of soul shared by two! Oh, this pathetic coziness shared by two!

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

Well, I do not like it, this heaven of the useless people! No, I do not like them, these animals all tangled up together in heaven's net!

And keep far away from me that God who comes limping along to bless what he never joined together!

Don't laugh at such marriages! What child would not have reason to cry over its parents?

This man seemed worthy to me, and ready for the meaning of the earth. But when I saw his wife, the earth seemed to me like a home for madmen.

Yes, I wish the earth would shake in fits whenever a saint and a silly goose pair up with each other.

This one set out like a hero hunting for truths, and in the end all he caught was a small, dressed-up lie. He calls it his marriage.

That one was cold and distant with people and very picky about whom he chose. But all at once he ruined his company forever. He calls it his marriage.

That one was looking for a maid with the virtues of an angel. But all at once he became the servant of a woman, and now he would need to turn into an angel himself just to bear it.

I have found that all buyers are careful now, and all of them have sharp, sly eyes. But even the slyest one still buys his wife without looking, like buying something in a closed bag.

Many short bursts of foolishness: that is what you call love. And your marriage puts an end to many short bursts of foolishness by turning them into one long stupidity.

Your love for a woman, and a woman's love for a man: oh, if only it were pity for gods who are suffering and hidden! But mostly it is just two animals sniffing each other out.

But even your best love is only a thrilled symbol and a painful fire. It is a torch that should light your way to higher paths.

Someday you should love beyond yourselves! So first learn how to love! And that is why you had to drink from the bitter cup of your love.

There is bitterness in the cup of even the best love. That is how it creates a longing for the Superhuman, and that is how it makes you thirsty, you the creator!

Thirst for the creator, an arrow and a longing aimed at the Superhuman: tell me, my brother, is this your will to marry?

I call such a will and such a marriage holy.

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On Choosing Your Own Death

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

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

Of course, if someone never lives at the right time, how could he ever die at the right time? It would be better if he had never been born! That is my advice to the people nobody needs.

But even the people nobody needs make a big deal of their dying. Even the emptiest nut still wants to be cracked.

Everyone takes dying seriously, but death is not yet a celebration. People have not yet learned how to hold the most beautiful celebrations.

I will show you the death that completes a life. It becomes a sting and a promise for those still living: it pushes them on, and they swear to carry on.

The one who has completed his work dies his own death, in victory, surrounded by people who hope and who make promises.

That is how we should learn to die. And there should be no celebration where a person dying like this does not bless the promises of the living!

To die like that is the best thing. The second best is to die fighting, and to pour out a great soul all at once.

But the fighter hates it just as much as the winner does: your grinning death, which creeps up like a thief, and yet arrives as the master.

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

And when will I want it? Whoever has a goal and someone to carry it on wants death at the right time, for the sake of the goal and the one who inherits it.

And out of deep respect for that goal and that heir, he will no longer hang dried-up wreaths in the holy temple of life. In other words, he won't hang around once he has withered.

Honestly, I don't want to be like rope-makers. They stretch their thread out longer and longer, and while doing it they themselves keep walking backwards.

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

And anyone who wants to be famous has to say goodbye to honor in good time, and practice the hard skill of leaving at the right moment.

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

Of course there are sour apples whose fate is to wait until the very last day of autumn. And at the same moment they become ripe, yellow, and wrinkled.

For some people the heart grows old first, and for others the mind. And some are old men while they are still young. But those who become young late stay young for a long time.

For some people, life turns out badly: a poisonous worm eats its way into their heart. So let them make sure that at least their dying turns out all the better.

Some never become sweet; they are already rotting in summer. It is cowardice that keeps them clinging to their branch.

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

If only preachers of a quick death would come! They would be the right storms for me, the right shakers of the trees of life. But all I hear is preaching about slow death, and patience with everything "earthly."

Oh, you preach patience with earthly things? It is the earth that has too much patience with you, you slanderers!

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

He still knew only tears and the deep sadness of the Hebrew people, together with the hatred of the good and righteous people. That was Jesus the Hebrew. And then a longing for death came over him.

If only he had stayed in the desert, far away from the good and righteous people! Maybe he would have learned to live, and learned to love the earth, and learned to laugh as well!

Believe me, my brothers! He died too early. He himself would have taken back his teaching if he had lived to my age! He was noble enough to take it back!

But he was not yet mature. A young man loves in an immature way, and in an immature way he also hates people and the earth. His feelings and the wings of his mind are still tied down and heavy.

But a grown man has more of the child in him than a young man does, and less gloom. He understands death and life better.

Free to die and free in dying, a holy sayer of no when it is no longer time to say yes: that is how he understands death and life.

My friends, let your dying not be an insult to people and the earth. That is what I ask of the honey of your soul, the sweetest part of you.

As you die, your mind and your virtue should still glow, like a red sunset around the earth. Otherwise your dying has gone badly.

That is how I want to die myself, so that you, my friends, will love the earth more because of me. And I want to become earth again, so that I can find rest in the one who gave birth to me.

Honestly, Zarathustra had a goal, and he threw his ball. Now you, my friends, are the heirs of my goal. I am throwing the golden ball to you.

More than anything, my friends, I want to see you throwing the golden ball! And so I stay on the earth a little longer. Forgive me for that!

That is what Zarathustra said.

# On the Giving Virtue

## 1.

Zarathustra said goodbye to the town he had grown fond of, the town called "the Spotted Cow." Many people who called themselves his followers came after him and walked along with him. So they came to a crossroads. There Zarathustra told them that from now on he wanted to walk alone, because he loved walking alone. But as a goodbye gift, his followers handed him a walking stick. On its golden handle, a snake was coiled around the sun. Zarathustra was glad of the stick and leaned on it. Then he spoke to his followers like this.

"Tell me, then: how did gold come to be valued highest of all? Because it is rare, and useless, and shining, and gentle in its glow. It always gives itself away.

Gold came to be valued highest only because it is a picture of the highest virtue. The eyes of someone who gives shine like gold. The glow of gold makes peace between the moon and the sun.

The highest virtue is rare and useless. It is shining and gentle in its glow. The highest virtue is a giving virtue.

Truly, I can guess what you are like, my followers. Like me, you are reaching for the giving virtue. What would you have in common with cats and wolves, who only grab for themselves?

This is your thirst: to become gifts and offerings yourselves. And that is why you are thirsty to pile up every kind of wealth inside your souls.

Your soul can never get enough of treasures and jewels, because your virtue can never get enough of wanting to give things away.

You pull all things toward you and into you, so that they can flow back out of you, as if from a spring, as the gifts of your love.

Truly, a giving love like this has to become a robber of all values. But I call this kind of selfishness healthy and holy.

There is another kind of selfishness. It is far too poor, a hungry selfishness that always wants to steal. That is the selfishness of the sick, a sick selfishness.

It looks at everything shiny with the eyes of a thief. With hungry greed, it sizes up anyone who has plenty to eat. And it is always sneaking around the table of those who give.

Sickness speaks through this kind of craving, and a hidden decay. The thieving greed of this selfishness tells of a body that is ill and wasting away.

Tell me, my brothers: what do we think of as bad, as the very worst? Isn't it decay, a falling away from what we should be? And wherever the giving soul is missing, we always suspect decay.

Our path goes upward, from our kind to something beyond our kind. But we are horrified by the decaying mind that says: "Everything for me."

Our mind flies upward. So it is a picture of our body, a picture of the body rising higher. The names of the virtues are pictures of such risings.

So the body goes through history, growing and fighting. And the mind, what is it to the body? It is the announcer of the body's fights and victories, its companion, and its echo.

All the names for good and evil are just pictures. They don't spell things out; they only give hints. Anyone who wants to get exact knowledge from them is a fool!

My brothers, pay attention to every moment when your mind wants to speak in pictures. That is where your virtue begins.

At that moment your body is lifted up and comes back to life. With its joy it delights the mind, so that the mind becomes a creator, a judge of worth, a lover, and a helper of all things.

When your heart swells wide and full, like a river, a blessing and a danger to the people living along its banks: that is where your virtue begins.

When you rise above praise and blame, and your will wants to command all things, the way a lover's will does: that is where your virtue begins.

When you look down on comfort and soft beds, and you can't put your bed far enough away from soft, spoiled people: that is where your virtue begins.

When all your wanting comes from one single will, and when you call this turning point of all your need your necessity: that is where your virtue begins.

Truly, this virtue is a new good and evil! Truly, it is a new deep rushing sound, the voice of a new spring of water!

This new virtue is power. It is one ruling thought, with a wise soul wrapped around it. It is a golden sun, with the snake of knowledge wrapped around it."

**2.**

Here Zarathustra was silent for a while and looked at his followers with love. Then he went on speaking like this, and his voice had changed.

"My brothers, stay true to the earth, with all the power of your virtue! Let your giving love and your knowledge serve the meaning of the earth! This is what I ask of you, and I beg you to do it.

Don't let your virtue fly away from earthly things and beat its wings against walls that go on forever! Oh, there has always been so much virtue that flew off and got lost!

Do as I do: bring the virtue that flew away back to earth. Yes, back to the body and to life, so that it gives the earth its meaning, a human meaning!

Until now, both mind and virtue have flown off and made mistakes in a hundred ways. Oh, all that madness and all those mistakes still live in our body today. They have become our body and our will.

Until now, both mind and virtue have experimented and gone astray in a hundred ways. Yes, the human being was an experiment. Oh, so much ignorance and so many errors have become part of our bodies!

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

We are still fighting, step by step, with the giant called Chance. And until now, nonsense, the lack of any meaning, has ruled over all of humanity.

My brothers, let your mind and your virtue serve the meaning of the earth. And let the values of all things be set anew by you! That is why you must be fighters! That is why you must be creators!

The body makes itself clean by knowing. By experimenting with knowledge it lifts itself higher. For someone who truly understands, all instincts become holy. For someone who has been lifted higher, the soul becomes happy.

Doctor, heal yourself: that way you will help your patient too. Let this be the best help for the patient: to see with his own eyes someone who makes himself well.

There are a thousand paths that no one has ever walked yet, a thousand kinds of health, and hidden islands of life. Humans and the human earth are still not used up and not discovered.

Stay awake and listen, you lonely ones! Winds are coming from the future with secret beating wings. And good news is coming to those with sharp ears.

You lonely ones of today, you who stand apart from others, one day you will be a people. Out of you, who chose yourselves, a chosen people will grow, and out of that people, the Superhuman.

Truly, the earth will yet become a place of healing! And already a new smell hangs around it, a smell that brings health, and a new hope!"

**3.**

When Zarathustra had said these words, he fell silent, like someone who has not said his last word. For a long time he weighed the stick in his hand, unsure. At last he spoke like this, and his voice had changed.

"Now I go alone, my followers! You, too, go away now, and alone! That is what I want.

Truly, I advise you: go away from me and defend yourselves against Zarathustra! Better still: be ashamed of him! Maybe he lied to you.

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

You repay a teacher badly if you only ever stay his student. And why don't you want to pluck leaves from my crown of honor?

You look up to me. But what if one day your worship falls over? Be careful that a statue doesn't fall on you and crush 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 gone looking for yourselves when you found me. That is what all believers do. And that is why all believing amounts to so little.

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

Truly, my brothers, when that time comes I will look for the ones I lost with different eyes. I will love you then with a different love.

And one day you will have become my friends, children of one and the same hope. Then I will be with you for the third time, so that I can celebrate the great midday together with you.

And this is the great midday: it is when humans stand at the halfway point of their path, between animal and Superhuman. It is when they celebrate their road toward evening as their highest hope, because it is the road to a new morning.

At that time, the one who is going down will bless himself for being one who is crossing over to the other side. And the sun of his understanding will stand at its midday high point for him.

"All the gods are dead. Now we want the Superhuman to live." Let this be our last will one day, at the great midday!

That is what Zarathustra said.

# Part Two

"—and only when all of you have denied me will I come back to you. Truly, my brothers, I will then look for the ones I have lost with different eyes. I will then love you with a different love."

Zarathustra, from "On the Giving Virtue"

## The Child with the Mirror

After this, Zarathustra went back up into the mountains, to the loneliness of his cave, and kept away from people. He waited, like a farmer who has scattered his seeds and now has to wait for them to grow. But his soul filled up with impatience and with longing for the people he loved, because he still had a lot to give them. You see, this is the hardest thing of all: to close your open hand out of love, and, as someone who gives, to keep a sense of modesty and not push your gifts on others.

So months and years went by for the lonely man. But his wisdom kept growing, and there was so much of it that it began to hurt him.

One morning, though, he woke up even before the sun began to rise. He lay on his bed thinking for a long time, and finally he spoke to his own heart:

"Why was I so frightened in my dream that it woke me up? Didn't a child come up to me, carrying a mirror?

'Oh Zarathustra,' the child said to me, 'look at yourself in the mirror!'

But when I looked into the mirror, I screamed, and my heart was shaken. Because I didn't see myself in it. I saw the twisted face of a devil, laughing at me with scorn.

Honestly, I understand the sign and the warning of this dream all too well. My teaching is in danger. Weeds want to be called wheat! In other words, false ideas are passing themselves off as my true ones.

My enemies have become powerful, and they have twisted the picture of my teaching, so badly that the people dearest to me must now feel ashamed of the gifts I gave them.

I have lost my friends. The time has come for me to go and look for the ones I lost!"

With these words Zarathustra jumped up. But he didn't jump up like a frightened person gasping for air. He was more like a prophet or a singer who has suddenly been seized by inspiration. His eagle and his snake looked at him in surprise, because a coming happiness lay on his face, like the first glow of dawn.

"What has happened to me, my animals?" said Zarathustra. "Haven't I been changed? Didn't pure bliss come over me like a storm wind?

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

My happiness has wounded me. Let everyone who is suffering be my doctors!

I may go back down to my friends again, and to my enemies too! Zarathustra may speak again and give gifts again, and do the most loving thing for the people he loves!

My impatient love is overflowing in rivers, flowing downhill, toward where the sun rises and where it sets. Out of the silent mountains and the thunderstorms of pain, my soul comes rushing down into the valleys.

For too long I was full of longing and stared into the distance. For too long I belonged to loneliness. And so I have forgotten how to keep silent.

I have become nothing but a mouth, and the roaring of a stream that falls from high rocks. I want to pour my words down into the valleys.

And even if my river of love crashes into places where there is no path, so what! How could a river not find its way to the sea in the end?

It's true, there is a lake inside me, a lonely lake that keeps to itself and needs nothing else. But my river of love sweeps it along with it, down, all the way to the sea!

I am taking new paths, and a new way of speaking is coming to me. Like every creator, I have grown tired of the old ways of talking. My mind doesn't want to walk around in worn-out shoes anymore.

Talking is all too slow for me. Storm, I'm jumping into your chariot! And I'll even whip you on with my wickedness, to make you go faster!

Like a shout and a cry of joy, I want to sail across wide seas until I find the Happy Islands, where my friends are living,

and my enemies among them! How much I love everyone now, if only I'm allowed to speak to them! Even my enemies are part of my bliss.

And when I want to climb onto my wildest horse, it's always my spear that helps me up best. It is always ready to serve my foot, like a step,

the spear that I throw at my enemies! How grateful I am to my enemies that at last I get to throw it!

The pressure in my cloud has grown too great. In between the laughing flashes of lightning, I want to hurl showers of hail down into the depths.

Then my chest will heave mightily, and mightily it will blow its storm across the mountains. That is how it will find relief.

Truly, my happiness and my freedom come like a storm! But my enemies will think the Evil One himself is raging over their heads.

Yes, you too will be frightened by my wild wisdom, my friends. And maybe you'll run away from it, together with my enemies.

Oh, if only I knew how to lure you back with a shepherd's flute! Oh, if only my wisdom, which is like a lioness, would learn to roar gently! And we have already learned so much together!

My wild wisdom became pregnant up on the lonely mountains. On rough stones she gave birth to her young one, her very youngest.

Now she runs around like a fool through the hard desert, searching and searching for soft grass, my old wild wisdom!

On the soft grass of your hearts, my friends, on your love, she would like to lay down what she loves most!"

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On the Happy Islands

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

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

Look how much richness there is around us! And when you have more than enough, it is lovely to look out from there at faraway seas.

People used to say "God" when they looked out at faraway seas. But now I have taught you to say: "Superhuman."

God is a guess. But I want your guessing to reach no further than your will to create.

Could you create a god? Then please stop talking to me about any gods at all! But you could very well create the Superhuman.

Maybe not you yourselves, my brothers! But you could remake yourselves into the fathers and ancestors of the Superhuman. Let that be the best thing you ever create!

God is a guess. But I want your guessing to stay within the limits of what can be thought.

Could you think a god? Then let your will to truth mean this to you: that everything should be turned into what humans can think, what humans can see, what humans can feel! You should follow your own senses all the way through to the end in your thinking!

And what you used to call "the world" is something you must first create yourselves. Your reason, your picture, your will, your love: that is what the world should become! And truly, it will be for your happiness, you who seek knowledge!

And how could you stand life without this hope, you who seek knowledge? You should not have been born into something you can never understand, or into something that makes no sense.

But let me open my heart to you completely, my friends: if there were gods, how could I bear not being a god myself! So there are no gods.

It is true that I drew this conclusion. But now the conclusion is drawing me along with it.

God is a guess. But who could drink down all the torment of this guess and not die? Should the creator have his faith taken away from him? Should the eagle lose its gliding through the far-off heights where eagles fly?

God is a thought that makes everything straight crooked and makes everything that stands still start spinning. What? Time would be gone, and everything that passes away would be nothing but a lie?

Thinking that makes human bones whirl and feel dizzy, and it even makes the stomach throw up. Truly, I call it the spinning sickness, to guess such things.

I call it evil and an enemy of humans: all these teachings about the One, the Complete, the Unmoving, the Satisfied, and the Everlasting!

Everything everlasting is only a figure of speech! And the poets lie too much.

But the best images and comparisons should speak about time and becoming. They should be a praise and a defense of everything that passes away!

Creating is the great rescue from suffering, and it is what makes life light. But for the creator to exist at all, suffering is needed, and a lot of change.

Yes, there must be a lot of bitter dying in your lives, you creators! That is how you become the speakers for and defenders of everything that passes away.

For the creator to be the child who is born anew, he must also want to be the mother giving birth, and to feel the pain of giving birth.

Truly, I have made my way through a hundred souls, and through a hundred cradles and birth pains. I have already said many goodbyes. I know those heartbreaking last hours.

But that is what my creating will wants, my fate. Or, to say it to you more honestly: it is exactly this kind of fate that my will wants.

Everything in me that feels is suffering and is locked up as if in prisons. But my wanting always comes to me as the one who sets me free and brings me joy.

Wanting sets you free: that is the true teaching about will and freedom. That is how Zarathustra teaches it to you.

No longer wanting, no longer valuing, no longer creating! Oh, may this great tiredness always stay far away from me!

Even when I am seeking knowledge, all I feel is my will's joy in making new life and in becoming. And if there is innocence in my knowledge, it is because there is a will to make new life in it.

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

But my burning will to create keeps driving me back to human beings, again and again. It drives me the way a hammer is driven toward stone.

Oh, you humans, there is a figure sleeping in the stone for me, the figure of all my figures! Oh, why must it sleep in the hardest, ugliest stone!

Now my hammer rages cruelly against its prison. Pieces fly off the stone like 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 came to me as a shadow. Oh, my brothers! What do the gods matter to me anymore!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On the Pitying

My friends, a mocking remark reached your friend's ears: "Just look at Zarathustra! Doesn't he walk among us as if he were walking among animals?"

But it is better put like this: "The person who truly understands walks among humans as if among animals."

And to the person who understands, the human being itself is called: the animal with red cheeks.

How did that happen to humans? Isn't it because they have had to feel ashamed far too often?

Oh my friends! This is what the person who understands says: shame, shame, shame. That is the story of the human race!

And that is why the noble person makes it a rule not to shame others. He makes himself feel modest and respectful in front of everyone who is suffering.

Truly, I don't like them, those merciful people who feel so blissful in their pity. They are far too lacking in shame.

If I have to feel pity, I still don't want to be called pitying. And if I do feel it, I prefer to feel it from a distance.

I also like to cover my head and run away before anyone recognizes me. And that is what I tell you to do too, my friends!

May my fate always lead people across my path who are free of suffering, like you, people with whom I am allowed to share hope, meals and honey!

Truly, I have done this and that for people who were suffering. But I always felt I was doing something better when I learned to enjoy myself better.

For as long as humans have existed, humans have enjoyed themselves too little. That alone, my brothers, is our original sin, the sin we were all born with!

And if we learn to enjoy ourselves better, that is the best way to unlearn hurting other people and dreaming up ways to hurt them.

That is why I wash the hand that helped the suffering person. That is why I even wipe off my soul as well.

Because when I saw the suffering person suffering, I felt ashamed for the sake of his shame. And when I helped him, I badly wounded his pride.

When people owe you a great deal, it doesn't make them grateful. It makes them want revenge. And when a small kindness is not forgotten, it turns into a worm that keeps gnawing at them.

"Be slow and choosy about accepting things! Let your accepting be an honor to the giver!" That is my advice to those who have nothing to give away.

But I am a giver. I like to give, as a friend to friends. But strangers and poor people should pick the fruit off my tree themselves. That way it shames them less.

But beggars should be done away with completely! Truly, it annoys you to give to them, and it annoys you not to give to them.

And the same goes for sinners and people with bad consciences! Believe me, my friends: the bites of a guilty conscience train people to bite others.

But the worst thing of all is small thoughts. Truly, it is better to do something evil than to think small!

Of course you say: "Enjoying little acts of spite saves us from doing many big evil deeds." But this is not a place where you should want to save.

An evil deed is like a boil. It itches and scratches and bursts out into the open. It speaks honestly.

"Look, I am a sickness." That is what the evil deed says. That is its honesty.

But the small thought is like a fungus. It creeps and ducks down and doesn't want to be anywhere you can see it, until the whole body is rotten and withered from tiny fungi.

But to the person who is possessed by a devil, I whisper this into his ear: "Better still, raise your devil to be big! Even for you there is still a road to greatness!"

Oh, my brothers! We know a little too much about everyone! And some people become see-through to us, but that doesn't mean we can go right through them, not by a long way.

It is hard to live with people, because keeping quiet is so hard.

And we are not most unfair toward the person we dislike, but toward the person who means nothing at all to us.

But if you have a friend who is suffering, be a resting place for his suffering, but a hard bed, so to speak, a camp bed. That way you will help him the most.

And if a friend does you wrong, say: "I forgive you for what you did to me. But that you did it to yourself, how could I forgive that!"

That is how all great love speaks. It gets past even forgiveness and pity.

You should hold your heart tight. Because if you let it run loose, how quickly your head runs away with you too!

Oh, where in the world has more foolishness happened than among the pitying? And what in the world has caused more suffering than the foolishness of the pitying?

Woe to all those who love but don't have some higher place that stands above their pity!

This is what the Devil once said to me: "Even God has his hell: it is his love for humans."

And recently I heard him say this: "God is dead. God died of his pity for humans."

So be warned about pity: a heavy cloud is still coming to humans from there! Truly, I know how to read the signs of the weather!

But remember this saying too: all great love stands even above all its pity, because it still wants to create the one it loves!

"I offer myself to my love, and my neighbor just as I offer myself." That is how all creators talk.

But all creators are hard.

That is what Zarathustra said.

## About the Priests

And once Zarathustra gave his followers a sign and said these words to them:

"Here come some priests. And even though they are my enemies, walk past them quietly, with your swords asleep in their sheaths!

There are heroes among them too. Many of them have suffered too much, and so they want to make others suffer.

They are nasty enemies. Nothing is more hungry for revenge than their humbleness. And whoever attacks them easily gets himself dirty.

But my blood is related to theirs. And I want my own blood to be honored, even in theirs."

And when the priests had passed by, pain took hold of Zarathustra. He had not struggled with his pain for long before he began to speak like this:

I feel sorry for these priests. They are not to my taste, either. But that matters least to me, ever since I have been among people.

But I suffer with them, and I have suffered with them. To me they are prisoners, people who have been branded. The one they call their Savior put them in chains.

He chained them with false values and crazy words! Oh, if only someone would save them from their Savior!

Once, when the sea was tossing them about, they thought they were landing on an island. But look, it was a sleeping monster!

False values and crazy words: those are the worst monsters for human beings. Doom sleeps inside them for a long time and waits.

But at last it comes. It wakes up, and it eats and swallows everything that built huts on its back.

Oh, just look at these huts that these priests built for themselves! They call their sweet-smelling caves churches.

Oh, this fake light, this stale, swampy air! This place where the soul is not allowed to fly up to its heights!

Instead, their faith gives this order: "Climb the stairs on your knees, you sinners!"

Honestly, I would rather look at someone with no shame at all than at their eyes, twisted with shame and devotion!

Who built such caves and such stairs for doing penance? Wasn't it people who wanted to hide, and who were ashamed in front of the clear sky?

Only when the clear sky looks in again through broken roofs, and down onto the grass and red poppies growing by broken walls, will I turn my heart toward the places of this God again.

They called whatever went against them and hurt them "God". And truly, there was a lot of heroism in the way they worshipped!

And the only way they knew to love their God was by nailing human beings to the cross!

They planned to live like corpses. They dressed their own corpse in black. Even in their speeches I can still smell the nasty spices of burial rooms.

And whoever lives near them lives near dark ponds, where the toad sings its song with a sweet, deep gloom.

They would have to sing me better songs before I could learn to believe in their Savior. His followers would have to look more saved to me!

I would like to see them naked, because only beauty should preach about turning your life around. But who could ever be convinced by this sadness wrapped up in disguise?

Truly, their saviors themselves did not come from freedom, or from the seventh heaven of freedom! Truly, they themselves never walked on the carpets of real knowledge!

The minds of these saviors were made of gaps. But in every gap they had put their delusion, their gap-filler, which they called God.

Their minds had drowned in their pity. And whenever they swelled up and overflowed with pity, a great foolishness always floated on top.

Eagerly and with lots of shouting they drove their flock over their own little footbridge, as if there were only one footbridge to the future! Truly, these shepherds were still sheep themselves!

These shepherds had small minds and roomy souls. But, my brothers, up to now even the roomiest souls have been such tiny countries!

They wrote signs in blood along the road they walked, and their foolishness taught that you prove the truth with blood.

But blood is the worst witness for the truth. Blood poisons even the purest teaching and turns it into madness and hatred in people's hearts.

And if someone walks through fire for his teaching, what does that prove? It truly means more when your own teaching comes out of your own inner fire!

A hot, stuffy heart and a cold head: where these two meet, a roaring storm wind is born, the "Savior".

Truly, there have been greater and nobler people than the ones the crowd calls saviors, these sweeping, thrilling storm winds!

And, my brothers, you must be saved by people even greater than all the saviors were, if you want to find the way to freedom!

There has never yet been a Superhuman. I have seen both of them naked, the greatest human and the smallest human.

They are still far too much alike. Truly, I found even the greatest one far too human!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## About the Virtuous

When people's senses are lazy and asleep, you have to speak to them with thunder and fireworks from the sky.

But the voice of beauty speaks softly. It only slips quietly into the most wide-awake souls.

Today my shield trembled softly and laughed at me. That is the holy laughing and trembling of beauty.

You virtuous people, today my beauty laughed at you. And this is what its voice said to me: "They still want to be paid!"

You still want to be paid, you virtuous people! Do you want a reward for your goodness, heaven in return for the earth, and something that lasts forever in return for your today?

And now you are angry with me because I teach that there is no one keeping the books, no one handing out wages and payments? And honestly, I don't even teach that being good is its own reward.

Oh, this is what makes me sad: people have lied reward and punishment into the very bottom of things. And now they have lied them into the bottom of your souls too, you virtuous people!

But my words will rip open the bottom of your souls, the way a wild boar's snout tears up the ground. I want you to call me a plow blade.

All the secrets hidden down at your bottom will come out into the light. And when you lie in the sun, dug up and broken apart, then your lies will also be separated from your truth.

Because this is your truth: you are too clean for the dirt of these words: revenge, punishment, reward, payback.

You love your virtue the way a mother loves her child. But whoever heard of a mother wanting to be paid for her love?

Your virtue is your own dearest self. The thirst of a ring is inside you: every ring struggles and turns so that it can reach itself again.

And every deed of your virtue is like a star that is dying out: its light is always still on its way, still traveling. And when will it stop traveling?

In the same way, the light of your virtue is still on its way, even after the deed is done. The deed may now be forgotten and dead, but its ray of light is still alive and traveling.

That your virtue should be your own self, and not something foreign to you, not a skin, not a cover to hide behind: that is the truth from the bottom of your soul, you virtuous people!

But there certainly are people for whom virtue means twitching in pain under a whip. And you have listened far too much to their screaming!

And there are others who call it virtue when their bad habits get lazy. And as soon as their hatred and their jealousy stretch out to rest for once, their "sense of justice" wakes up and rubs its sleepy eyes.

And there are others who are being pulled downward: their devils are dragging them. But the deeper they sink, the more fiercely their eyes glow, and the hotter burns their longing for their God.

Oh, their screaming reached your ears too, you virtuous people. They cry: "Whatever I am not, that is what God and virtue are to me!"

And there are others who come along heavy and creaking, like carts carrying stones downhill. They talk a lot about dignity and virtue. They call their brakes virtue!

And there are others who are like ordinary clocks that have been wound up. They go tick-tock, and they want people to call tick-tock virtue.

Honestly, these ones are my favorite. Wherever I find clocks like that, I will wind them up with my mockery. And they will even have to purr for me while I do it!

And others are proud of their little handful of justice, and for its sake they commit crimes against everything. So the world gets drowned in their injustice.

Oh, how ugly the word "virtue" sounds coming out of their mouths! And when they say, "I am just," it always sounds just like, "I have had my revenge!"

They want to use their virtue to scratch out their enemies' eyes. And they only lift themselves up so that they can push others down.

And then there are those who sit in their swamp and speak out from among the reeds: "Virtue means sitting quietly in the swamp.

We don't bite anyone, and we get out of the way of anyone who wants to bite. And about everything, we hold whatever opinion we are given."

And then there are those who love gestures and think: virtue is a kind of gesture.

Their knees are always kneeling in worship, and their hands are always praising virtue, but their hearts know nothing about it.

And then there are those who think it is virtuous to say, "Virtue is necessary." But deep down, the only thing they really believe is that the police are necessary.

And many a person who cannot see what is high and great in people calls it virtue that he sees their low side far too closely. So he calls his own nasty way of looking at people virtue.

And some want to be uplifted and set upright, and they call that virtue. And others want to be knocked over, and they call that virtue too.

And so almost everyone believes they have some share in virtue. And at the very least, everyone wants to be an expert on "good" and "evil."

But Zarathustra did not come to say to all these liars and fools: "What do you know about virtue! What could you possibly know about virtue!"

No, he came so that you, my friends, would grow tired of the old words you learned from the fools and liars:

So that you would grow tired of the words "reward," "payback," "punishment," and "revenge in the name of justice."

So that you would grow tired of saying: "What makes an action good is that it is unselfish."

Oh, my friends! Let your own self be in your action the way a mother is in her child. Let that be your saying about virtue!

Honestly, I have taken away from you maybe a hundred words, and your virtue's favorite toys. And now you are angry with me, the way children get angry.

They were playing by the sea, and then a wave came and dragged their toy down into the deep. Now they are crying.

But that same wave will bring them new toys, and pour out new colorful seashells in front of them!

That is how they will be comforted. And like them, you too, my friends, will have your comforts, and new colorful seashells!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On the Scum

Life is a spring of joy. But wherever the scum drinks too, every well is poisoned.

I love everything that is clean. But I don't want to see their grinning mouths, or the thirst of the unclean.

They cast their eyes down into the well. Now their nasty smile shines back up at me out of the well.

They have poisoned the holy water with their greed for pleasure. And when they called their dirty dreams "joy," they poisoned even the words.

The flame turns sullen when they hold their damp hearts up to the fire. The mind itself bubbles and smokes wherever the scum steps up to the fire.

In their hands, fruit turns sickly sweet and too soft. Just their look makes the fruit tree drop its fruit too early and dry out at the top.

And many who turned away from life only turned away from the scum. They did not want to share the well and the flame and the fruit with the scum.

And many who went into the desert and suffered thirst alongside wild beasts only wanted to avoid sitting around the water tank with dirty camel drivers.

And many who came along like a destroyer, like a hailstorm to every field of crops, only wanted to shove a foot into the scum's mouth and so stuff its throat shut.

And the bite I choked on most was not knowing that life itself needs hostility and dying and crosses of torture:—

No. Once I asked a question, and I nearly choked on it: What? Does life need the scum as well?

Are poisoned wells needed, and stinking fires, and dirtied dreams, and maggots in the bread of life?

It was not my hatred but my disgust that hungrily ate away at my life! Oh, I often grew tired of the mind, when I found that even the scum was clever!

And I turned my back on the rulers when I saw what they now call ruling: haggling and bargaining for power—with the scum!

I lived among peoples who spoke foreign languages, with my ears shut, so that the language of their haggling and their bargaining for power would stay foreign to me.

And holding my nose, I walked in a bad mood through all of yesterday and today. Truly, all of yesterday and today stinks of the scum that writes!

Like a cripple who has gone deaf and blind and mute: that is how I lived for a long time, so that I would not have to live with the power-scum, the writing-scum, and the pleasure-scum.

My mind climbed stairs slowly and carefully. Little handouts of joy were its only comfort. Like a blind man with a cane, life crept along for me.

So what happened to me? How did I free myself from disgust? Who made my eyes young again? How did I fly up to the heights where no scum sits by the well anymore?

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

Oh, I found it, my brothers! Here, in the highest place, the spring of joy bubbles up for me! And there is a life that no scum drinks from!

You pour out for me almost too wildly, 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 humbly. My heart still rushes toward you far too wildly:—

My heart, where my summer burns: short, hot, heavy with sadness, and overflowing with happiness. How my summer heart longs for your coolness!

Gone is the slow, hesitant gloom of my spring! Gone are my nasty snowflakes in June! I have become all summer, and summer midday!

A summer in the highest place, with cold springs and blissful stillness. Oh come, my friends, so that the stillness becomes even more blissful! For this is our height and our home. We live here too high and too steep for all the unclean and their thirst. Go ahead, friends, cast your clean eyes into the spring of my joy! How could that make it cloudy? It will laugh back at you with its clearness.

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

Truly, this is no 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 to the eagles, neighbors to the snow, neighbors to the sun. That is how strong winds live.

And one day, like a wind, I still want to blow in among them and, with my mind, take the breath away from their minds. That is what my future wants.

Truly, Zarathustra is a strong wind to all low places. And this is the advice he gives his enemies and everything that spits and spews: Be careful not to spit into the wind!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## About the Tarantulas

Look, this is the tarantula's cave! Do you want to see it for yourself? Here hangs its web. Touch it, so that it shakes.

Here it comes, happy to come: welcome, tarantula! On your back sits your black triangle, your badge. And I also know what sits inside your soul.

Revenge sits in your soul. Wherever you bite, a black scab grows. Your poison fills the soul with revenge and makes it spin around and around!

That is how I speak to you, in a picture, you who make souls spin, you preachers of equality! To me, you are tarantulas, people secretly hungry for revenge!

But I will drag your hiding places out into the light. That is why I laugh in your faces, with the laughter of someone standing high above you.

That is why I tug at your web: so that your anger will lure you out of your cave of lies, and your revenge will jump out from behind your word "justice."

Because for people to be set free from revenge: that, to me, is the bridge to the highest hope, and a rainbow after long storms.

But of course the tarantulas want something different. "What we call justice is exactly this: that the world should be filled with the storms of our revenge." That is how they talk to each other.

"We will take revenge on everyone who is not equal to us, and insult them all." That is the promise the tarantula-hearts make to each other.

"And from now on, 'the will to equality' itself shall be the name for virtue. And against everything that has power, we will raise our screaming!"

You preachers of equality, what screams "equality" out of you is the crazy wish of the powerless to be tyrants. This is how your most secret longings to rule over others disguise themselves in words about virtue!

Bitter pride, held-back envy, maybe the pride and envy of your fathers: it bursts out of you like a flame, a madness of revenge.

What the father kept quiet about, the son speaks out loud. And often I have found that the son was simply the father's secret laid bare.

They look like people full of passion. But it is not the heart that fires them up. It is revenge. And when they become sharp and cool, it is not their mind that makes them sharp and cool, but their envy.

Their jealousy even leads them onto the paths that thinkers walk. And this is the sign of their jealousy: they always go too far, so far that in the end their tiredness has to lie down and sleep on snow.

In every one of their complaints you can hear revenge. In every bit of praise they give, there is a wish to hurt. And being a judge seems like perfect happiness to them.

So this is my advice to you, my friends: do not trust anyone in whom the urge to punish is strong!

These are people of a bad sort and bad background. Out of their faces looks the executioner and the bloodhound.

Do not trust any of those who talk a lot about how just they are! Truly, honey is not the only sweet thing their souls are missing.

And when they call themselves "the good and righteous people," do not forget that the only thing they lack to be Pharisees, those self-righteous hypocrites, is power!

My friends, I do not want to be mixed up with them or mistaken for them.

There are some who preach my teaching about life, and at the same time they are preachers of equality, and tarantulas.

These poison spiders sit in their cave, turned away from life. And yet they speak in favor of life. Why? Because they want to hurt someone with it.

They want to hurt those who have power right now. Because among those people, preaching about death is still most at home.

If it were the other way around, the tarantulas would teach something else. And it was exactly them who, in earlier times, were the best at slandering the world and burning heretics.

I do not want to be mixed up with these preachers of equality or mistaken for them. Because this is what justice tells me: "People are not equal."

And they should not become equal, either! What would my love for the Superhuman be worth if I said anything else?

On a thousand bridges and narrow paths they should push and crowd their way toward the future. And more and more war and inequality should be placed between them. That is what my great love makes me say!

In their hostility toward each other, they should become inventors of images and ghosts. And with those images and ghosts they should still fight the highest battle against each other!

Good and evil, rich and poor, high and low, and all the names of values: these should be weapons, clanging signs that life must get past itself again and again!

Life itself wants to build itself upward, with pillars and steps. It wants to look into the far distance and out toward wonderful beauty. That is why it needs height!

And because it needs height, it needs steps, and it needs the steps and the climbers to be at odds with each other! Life wants to climb, and by climbing, to get past itself.

And just look, my friends! Here, where the tarantula's cave is, the ruins of an old temple rise upward. Look at them with clear, opened eyes!

Truly, whoever once piled up his thoughts here in stone, reaching toward the sky, knew the secret of all life just like the wisest person!

That there is struggle and inequality even in beauty, and war over power and more power: that is what he teaches us here, in the clearest picture.

Look how the vaulted ceilings and arches here break against each other like gods in a wrestling match. Look how they push against each other with light and shadow, these godlike strivers—

Let us be enemies like that too, my friends, just as steady and beautiful! Like gods, let us strive against each other!—

Ouch! The tarantula, my old enemy, has bitten me myself! Steady and beautiful as a god, it bit me on the finger!

"There must be punishment and justice," it thinks. "He shall not get away with singing songs here in honor of hostility!"

Yes, it has taken its revenge! And oh no! Now, with revenge, it will make my soul spin around too!

But so that I do not start spinning, my friends, tie me tight to this pillar here! I would rather be a pillar saint, one of those holy men who lived on top of a column, than a whirlwind of revenge!

Truly, Zarathustra is no spinning whirlwind. And if he is a dancer, he is never a tarantula dancer, whirling around from a poisonous bite!—

That is what Zarathustra said.

## About the Famous Wise Men

You served the crowd and the crowd's superstitions, all you famous wise men! You did not serve the truth! And that is exactly why people respected you.

And that is also why people put up with your lack of faith: because it was just a clever trick, a roundabout way of reaching the crowd. In the same way, a master lets his slaves do as they please, and even enjoys their cheeky high spirits.

But the one the crowd hates, the way dogs hate a wolf, is the free mind: the enemy of chains, the one who will not worship, the one who lives in the forests.

To hunt him out of his hiding place has always been what the crowd calls "a sense of what is right." Even now, the crowd sets its sharpest-toothed dogs on him.

"For the truth is already here: after all, the crowd is here! Woe, woe to those who go searching!" That is what people have always shouted.

You wanted to prove your crowd right in what it worshipped, and you called that "the will to truth," you famous wise men!

And your heart always said to itself: "I came from the crowd, and that is also where the voice of God came to me from."

Stubborn and clever, like a donkey, that is how you always were as the crowd's spokesmen.

And many a powerful man who wanted to get along well with the crowd harnessed one more animal in front of his horses: a little donkey, a famous wise man.

And now, you famous wise men, I wish you would finally throw off that lion's skin completely!

The skin of the wild beast, the spotted, colorful one, and the shaggy fur of the one who explores, searches and conquers! In other words, stop dressing up as bold seekers when you are not.

Oh, if I am ever to learn to believe in your "honesty," you would first have to break your will to worship.

Honest: that is what I call the person who goes out into deserts where there are no gods, and who has broken his worshipping heart.

Standing in the yellow sand, burned by the sun, he may well look sideways, thirsty, at the islands full of springs, where living things rest under dark trees.

But his thirst does not talk him into becoming like those comfortable ones. Because wherever there are oases, there are also idols to worship.

Hungry, violent, lonely, without God: that is how the lion's will wants itself to be.

Free from the happiness of servants, set free from gods and from worshipping, fearless and fearsome, great and alone: that is the will of the honest person.

The honest ones, the free minds, have always lived in the desert, as masters of the desert. But in the cities live the well-fed, famous wise men: the work animals.

Because they are always pulling, like donkeys, the crowd's cart!

It is not that I am angry with them for this. But to me they remain servants, animals in harness, even if their harness shines with gold.

And they have often been good servants, worth praising. Because this is what virtue says: if you have to be a servant, look for the one whom your service helps the most!

"The mind and the virtue of your master should grow because you are his servant. That way you yourself grow along with his mind and his virtue!"

And truly, you famous wise men, you servants of the crowd! You yourselves grew along with the crowd's mind and virtue, and the crowd grew through you! I say this to your credit!

But to me you are still the crowd, even in your virtues: a crowd with dull, foolish eyes, a crowd that does not know what the mind is!

The mind is life that cuts into life itself. Through its own pain it increases its own knowledge. Did you know that already?

And the happiness of the mind is this: to be anointed with oil and blessed with tears, like an animal made ready to be sacrificed. Did you know that already?

And the blindness of the blind man, and his searching and fumbling around, should still show how powerful the sun was that he stared into. Did you know that already?

And the person who seeks knowledge should learn to build with mountains! It is a small thing for the mind to move mountains. Did you know that already?

You only know the sparks of the mind. But you do not see that the mind is the anvil itself, and you do not see how cruel its hammer is!

Truly, you do not know the pride of the mind! But you would be even less able to stand the mind's modesty, if it ever wanted to speak!

And you have never yet been allowed to throw your mind into a pit of snow: you are not hot enough for that! So you also do not know the thrills of its coldness.

But in everything, you act far too friendly and familiar with the mind, as far as I am concerned. And you have often turned wisdom into a poorhouse and a hospital for bad poets.

You are not eagles, so you have also never felt the joy inside the terror of the mind. And whoever is not a bird should not lie down to rest above deep chasms.

To me you are lukewarm. But every deep insight flows cold. The innermost wells of the mind are ice-cold: a relief for hot hands and for people who act.

You stand there in front of me so respectable, stiff, with your backs straight, you famous wise men! No strong wind and no strong will pushes you along.

Have you never seen a sail moving across the sea, rounded and puffed out and trembling before the wild force of the wind?

Like that sail, trembling before the wild force of the mind, my wisdom moves across the sea: my wild wisdom!

But you servants of the crowd, you famous wise men, how could you ever go along with me!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The Night Song

It is night. Now all the bubbling fountains speak louder. And my soul is a bubbling fountain too.

It is night. Only now do all the songs of people in love wake up. And my soul is the song of someone in love too.

There is something in me that has never been satisfied and never can be, and it wants to be heard. There is a longing for love in me, and that longing itself speaks the language of love.

I am light. Oh, if only I were night! But this is my loneliness: that I am wrapped all around in light.

Oh, if only I were dark and full of night! How I would drink from the light, like a baby feeding at its mother's breast!

And I would even bless you, you little twinkling stars and glowworms up there! And I would be so happy because of the gifts of light you give.

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

I don't know the happiness of someone who receives. And I often dreamed that stealing must be even more wonderful than receiving.

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

Oh, the unhappiness of everyone who gives! Oh, my sun going dark! Oh, the craving to crave something! Oh, the ravenous hunger that comes even when I am full!

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

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

I pull my hand back just when another hand is already reaching out to it. I hesitate like a waterfall that hesitates even while it is falling. That is how I hunger for meanness.

This is the kind of revenge my overflowing richness dreams up. This is the kind of spite that bubbles up out of my loneliness.

My happiness in giving died from all the giving. My virtue grew tired of itself because it had too much!

Anyone who always gives is in danger of losing all sense of shame. Anyone who is always handing things out gets calluses on hand and heart from so much handing out.

My eyes no longer fill with tears when I see the shame of people begging. My hand has become too hard to feel the trembling of hands that have just been filled.

Where did the tears in my eyes go, and the softness in my heart? Oh, the loneliness of everyone who gives! Oh, the silence of everyone who shines!

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

Oh, this is how light is the enemy of anything else that shines. Without mercy, it travels along its path.

Deep in its heart it is unfair to anything that shines, and cold toward other suns. That is how every sun travels.

The suns fly along their paths like a storm. That is how they travel. They follow their own unbending 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, the way a calf drinks from a cow's udder!

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

It is night. Oh, that I have to be light! And this thirst for the things of night! And this loneliness!

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 louder. And my soul is a bubbling fountain too.

It is night. Only now do all the songs of people in love wake up. And my soul is the song of someone in love too.

That is what Zarathustra sang.

## The Dance Song

One evening Zarathustra was walking through the forest with his followers. As he was looking for a spring of water, he suddenly came upon a green meadow, quietly surrounded by trees and bushes. On it, some girls were dancing together. As soon as the girls recognized Zarathustra, they stopped dancing. But Zarathustra came up to them in a friendly way and said these words:

"Don't stop dancing, you lovely girls! No killjoy has come to you with a nasty look, no enemy of girls.

I speak up for God against the devil, and that devil is the spirit of heaviness. So how could I, you light-footed ones, be against dances fit for gods? Or against girls' feet with pretty ankles?

It's true that I am a forest, a night of dark trees. But anyone who isn't scared of my darkness will also find slopes full of roses under my cypress trees.

And he may well find the little god too, the one girls love most. He's lying next to the spring, quiet, with his eyes closed.

Honestly, he fell asleep on me in broad daylight, the lazybones! Did he spend too much time chasing butterflies?

Don't be angry with me, you beautiful dancers, if I punish the little god a bit! He'll probably scream and cry. But even when he cries, he's funny!

And with tears in his eyes he will ask you for a dance. And I myself will sing a song for his dance:

A dance song and a mocking song about the spirit of heaviness, my highest and mightiest devil, the one people say is 'the lord of the world.'"

And this is the song that Zarathustra sang while Cupid, the little god of love, and the girls danced together.

I looked into your eyes not long ago, oh life! And it seemed to me that I was sinking into something with no bottom.

But you pulled me out with a golden fishing hook. You laughed at me mockingly when I called you bottomless and impossible to understand.

"That's how all fish talk," you said. "Whatever they can't get to the bottom of, they call bottomless.

But I'm just changeable, and wild, and a woman in every way, and not a well-behaved one.

Even if you men call me 'the deep one,' or 'the faithful one,' 'the eternal one,' 'the mysterious one.'

But you men always give us your own virtues as gifts. Oh, you virtuous men!"

That's how she laughed, the unbelievable one. But I never believe her, or her laughter, when she speaks badly about herself.

And when I talked privately with my wild wisdom, she said to me angrily: "You want, you desire, you love. That's the only reason you praise life!"

I almost gave a nasty answer then and told the angry one the truth. And there is no nastier answer than when you 'tell the truth' to your own wisdom.

Because this is how things stand between the three of us. Deep down I love only life. And honestly, I love it most when I hate it!

But the reason I'm fond of wisdom, and often too fond, is that she reminds me so very much of life!

She has life's eyes, life's laugh, and even her little golden fishing rod. Is it my fault that the two of them look so much alike?

And once, when life asked me, "Who is this wisdom, anyway?" I said eagerly: "Oh yes! Wisdom!

You are thirsty for her and never get enough. You look at her through veils. You try to catch her through nets.

Is she beautiful? How would I know! But even the oldest carp still get hooked with her as bait. Even the oldest, wisest fish fall for her.

She is changeable and stubborn. I've often seen her bite her lip and comb her hair against the way it grows.

Maybe she is wicked and false, and a woman in every way. But exactly when she speaks badly about herself, that's when she is most tempting."

When I said this to life, she laughed wickedly and closed her eyes. "Who are you talking about?" she said. "Me, probably?

And even if you were right, is that something you say to my face? But now go on, talk about your wisdom too!"

Oh, and then you opened your eyes again, oh beloved life! And again it seemed to me that I was sinking into something with no bottom.

That is what Zarathustra sang. But when the dance was over and the girls had gone away, he became sad.

"The sun went down a long time ago," he said at last. "The meadow is damp, and coolness is coming from the woods.

Something unknown is around me, looking at me thoughtfully. What! You're still alive, Zarathustra?

Why? What for? By what means? Where to? Where? How? Isn't it foolish to go on living?

Oh, my friends, it's the evening that is asking these questions through me. Forgive me for my sadness!

Evening has come. Forgive me that evening has come!"

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The Grave Song

"Over there is the island of graves, the silent island. The graves of my youth are there too. I want to carry an evergreen wreath of life to that place."

That is what I decided in my heart, and so I sailed across the sea.

Oh, you visions and sights of my youth! Oh, all you loving glances, you holy Moments! How quickly you died on me! Today I remember you the way I remember my dead.

From you, my dearest dead, a sweet smell reaches me, a smell that opens the heart and brings out tears. Truly, it shakes the heart of the lonely sailor and makes it soft.

Even now I am the richest one, the one most worth envying, even though I am the loneliest! Because I did have you once, and you still have me. Tell me, who else ever had such rosy apples fall into his lap from the tree, the way I did?

I am still the heir of your love, and the soil it grew in. In memory of you, I bloom with colorful virtues that grow wild, oh you that I loved most!

Oh, we were made to stay close to each other, you lovely, strange wonders. You did not come to me and my longing like shy birds. No, you came as ones who trust, to one who trusts!

Yes, you were made for faithfulness, like me, and for tender forevers. And now must I name you after your unfaithfulness, you holy glances and Moments? I have not yet learned any other name for you.

Truly, you died on me too quickly, you runaways. And yet you did not run away from me, and I did not run away from you. We are both innocent of the unfaithfulness between us.

To kill me, they strangled you, you songbirds of my hopes! Yes, it was always at you, my dearest ones, that wickedness shot its arrows, in order to hit my heart!

And it did hit! You were always what was dearest to my heart, the thing I owned and the thing that owned me. That is why you had to die young, far too early!

They aimed the arrow at the most easily wounded thing I had. That was you, whose skin is like soft down, and even more like a smile that dies at a single cold look!

But I want to say this to my enemies: what is all the murder of humans compared to what you did to me!

You did something worse to me than any murder of humans. You took from me what can never be brought back. That is what I say to you, my enemies!

You murdered the visions of my youth and my dearest wonders! You took away my playmates, those blessed spirits! In their memory I lay down this wreath, and this curse.

This curse is against you, my enemies! You made what was eternal in me short, the way a musical note breaks off in a cold night! It barely came to me as a flash of holy eyes, just as a Moment, a blink!

Once, in a good hour, my purity said this: "All living things shall be holy to me."

Then you attacked me with filthy ghosts. Oh, where did that good hour run off to?

"Every day shall be holy to me": that is what the wisdom of my youth once said. Truly, those were the words of a happy wisdom!

But then you enemies stole my nights and sold them off to sleepless torment. Oh, where did that happy wisdom run off to?

Once I longed for lucky signs from the birds. Then you sent a monstrous owl across my path, a nasty one, a bad omen. Oh, where did my tender longing run off to then?

Once I promised to give up all disgust. Then you turned the people close to me, my nearest ones, into oozing sores. Oh, where did my noblest promise run off to then?

Once I walked blessed paths like a blind man, trusting and unseeing. Then you threw filth onto the blind man's path, and now he felt disgust for the old footpath he used to walk.

And when I did the hardest thing I ever did and celebrated my victory over what I had gotten past, you made the people who loved me scream that I was hurting them most of all.

Truly, that is what you always did. You turned my best honey bitter, and spoiled the hard work of my best bees.

When I wanted to be generous, you always sent me the cheekiest beggars. When I felt pity, you always crowded the hopelessly shameless around it. That is how you wounded my virtue in its faith.

And when I laid down what was most holy to me as a sacrifice, your "religiousness" quickly put its fatter offerings right beside it, so that my holiest thing was choked in the smoke of your burning fat.

And once I wanted to dance as I had never danced before. I wanted to dance away over all the skies. Then you talked my favorite singer into turning against me.

And now he started a creepy, gloomy tune. Oh, he blared it into my ears like a dark, mournful horn!

Murderous singer, tool of wickedness, you most innocent one! I was already standing ready for my best dance, and then with your notes you murdered my joy and delight!

Only in dancing do I know how to speak in pictures about the highest things. And now my highest picture stayed unspoken, stuck in my arms and legs!

My highest hope stayed unspoken and never set free! And all the visions and comforts of my youth died on me!

How did I ever stand it? How did I get over such wounds and get past them? How did my soul rise again out of these graves?

Yes, there is something in me that cannot be wounded and cannot be buried, something that can blow apart rock. It is called my will. It walks silently through the years and does not change.

It wants to walk its own way on my feet, my old will. Its mind is hard-hearted and cannot be wounded.

The only place where I cannot be wounded is my heel. You still live there, my will, and you are still the same, you most patient one! You have always broken your way out through every grave!

In you, what was never set free in my youth still lives too. And as life and youth, you sit here full of hope on yellowed, broken gravestones.

Yes, you are still the one who smashes all graves for me. Hail to you, my will! And only where there are graves can there be rising from the dead.

That is what Zarathustra sang.

## On Beating Your Own Limits

You wisest of people, you call it the "will to truth," the thing that drives you and sets you on fire with longing?

I call your will something else: a will to make everything that exists thinkable!

You want to make everything that exists thinkable first. That is because you doubt, with healthy suspicion, whether it can already be thought about at all.

But it has to give way to you and bend to you! That is what your will wants. It is supposed to become smooth and obey the mind, like a mirror that reflects the mind back to itself.

That is the whole of your will, you wisest ones: it is a drive for power. And it is that even when you talk about good and evil and about how you judge what things are worth. You still want to create a world you can kneel down in front of. That is your final hope and the thing that makes you drunk with joy.

The ones who are not wise, of course, the crowd, are like a river with a little boat floating along on it. And sitting in the boat, solemn and in disguise, are the judgments about what things are worth.

You placed your will and your values on the river of change, of everything always becoming something new. What the crowd believes to be good and evil gives away to me an old drive for power.

It was you, you wisest ones, who put such guests into this boat and gave them fancy decorations and proud names. You and your will to rule!

Now the river carries your boat onward. It has no choice but to carry it. It matters little if the broken wave foams and angrily pushes back against the bottom of the boat!

The river is not your danger, you wisest ones, and it is not what will end your good and evil. The danger is that will itself, the drive for power: the never-exhausted will of life that keeps creating.

But so that you understand what I say about good and evil, I also want to tell you what I have to say about life and about the nature of everything that is alive.

I followed living things. I walked the biggest and the smallest paths so that I could understand what they are like.

Even when life kept its mouth shut, I caught its glance with a hundred mirrors, so that its eyes would speak to me. And its eyes did speak to me.

But wherever I found anything living, I also heard talk about obedience. Everything that lives is something that obeys.

And this is the second thing: whoever cannot obey themselves gets ordered around by others. That is the way of living things.

But this is the third thing I heard: giving orders is harder than obeying. And not only because the one who gives orders carries the weight of everyone who obeys, and because that weight can easily crush him.

I saw that every act of giving orders is an experiment and a risk. And whenever something living gives an order, it puts itself on the line.

Yes, even when it gives orders to itself, even then it has to pay for its commanding. It has to become the judge, the punisher, and the victim of its own law.

How does this happen? I asked myself. What talks living things into obeying and commanding, and into still practicing obedience even while they command?

Now listen to what I have to say, you wisest ones! Test it seriously, and see whether I have crawled into the very heart of life, all the way down to the roots of its heart!

Wherever I found something living, I found a drive for power. And even in the will of the servant, I found the will to be a master.

The weaker serves the stronger because its own will talks it into it. That will wants to be master over things that are weaker still. This one pleasure is the thing it cannot bear to give up.

The smaller gives itself over to the bigger, so that it can enjoy having power over the smallest. In the same way, even the biggest gives itself over too, and for the sake of power it risks its life.

This is how the biggest gives itself: it is a risk and a danger, a game of dice with death as the stakes.

And where there is sacrifice and service and loving looks, there too is the will to be master. There the weaker one sneaks along secret paths into the castle of the more powerful one, right into his heart, and steals power there.

And life itself told me this secret. "Look," it said, "I am the thing that always has to get past itself."

"Of course, you call it the will to have offspring, or the urge toward a goal, toward something higher, farther away, more varied. But all of this is one thing and one secret."

"I would rather go down than give up this one thing. And truly, wherever there is going down, wherever leaves fall, look: there life is sacrificing itself, for power!"

"I have to be struggle and change and purpose, and also the clash between purposes. Oh, whoever guesses what my will is will surely also guess what crooked paths it has to take!"

"Whatever I create, and however much I love it, soon I have to turn against it and against my love. That is what my will wants."

"And you too, you who seek knowledge, are only a path and a footprint of my will. Truly, my drive for power also walks on the feet of your will to truth!"

"The one who shot off the phrase 'the will to exist' at the truth certainly missed it. That will does not exist!"

"Because what does not exist cannot want anything. And how could something that already exists still want to exist?"

"Only where there is life is there also will. But it is not a will to live. Instead, and this is what I teach you, it is a drive for power!"

"Living things value many things more highly than life itself. But out of that very valuing speaks the drive for power!"

That is what life once taught me. And with it, you wisest ones, I will also solve the riddle of your hearts for you.

Truly, I tell you: a good and evil that would last forever, that does not exist! Good and evil have to keep getting past themselves, again and again, from within.

You who judge what things are worth, you use force with your values and your words about good and evil. And this is your hidden love, the shining, trembling, and overflowing of your souls.

But a stronger force grows out of your values, and a new way of getting past them. Against it, the egg and the eggshell break.

And whoever has to be a creator in good and evil, truly, must first be a destroyer and break values.

So the highest evil belongs together with the highest good. And that highest good is the creative kind.

Let us just talk about it, you wisest ones, even though it is a bad thing. Keeping silent is worse. All truths that are kept quiet turn poisonous.

And let everything break that can be broken by our truths! There are still many houses to build!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On the Lofty Ones

The floor of my sea is calm. Who would ever guess that it hides playful monsters?

My depths cannot be shaken. But they shimmer with riddles and bursts of laughter swimming about in them.

Today I saw one of the lofty ones, a solemn man, someone who punishes his own mind like a man doing penance. Oh, how my soul laughed at how ugly he was!

He stood there with his chest pushed out, like people who are holding in a deep breath. That is how he stood, the lofty one, and he said nothing.

He was hung all over with ugly truths, the prey he had hunted down, and he wore plenty of torn clothes. Many thorns were stuck to him as well, but I did not yet see a single rose.

He has not yet learned to laugh, and he has not learned beauty. This hunter came back gloomy from the forest of knowledge.

He came home from fighting wild animals. But out of his seriousness a wild animal is still staring too, one he has not gotten past!

He still stands there like a tiger about to pounce. But I do not like these tense, wound-up souls. My taste has no love for all these people who pull back into themselves.

And you tell me, my friends, that there is no point arguing about taste and tasting? But all of life is an argument about taste and tasting!

Taste is the weight, and the scale, and the one doing the weighing, all at once. And too bad for any living thing that wants to live without arguing over weight and scale and who does the weighing!

If this lofty one ever grew tired of his own loftiness, only then would his beauty begin. And only then will I want to taste him and find him to my taste.

And only when he turns away from himself will he jump over his own shadow, and truly, jump right into his own sunlight.

He sat in the shadows far too long. The cheeks of this man who punishes his mind grew pale. He nearly starved to death on his own expectations.

There is still contempt in his eyes, and disgust hides around his mouth. It is true that he is resting now, but his rest has not yet gone and lain down in the sun.

He ought to act like a bull. His happiness should smell of the earth, not of looking down on the earth.

I would like to see him as a white bull, snorting and bellowing as he walks in front of the plow. And his bellowing should still praise everything that belongs to the earth!

His face is still dark; the shadow of a hand plays across it. The look in his eyes is still clouded over by shadow.

His own deed is still the shadow lying on him: the hand darkens the one who acts. In other words, what he has done is still hanging over him. He has not yet gotten past his own deed.

Yes, I love the bull's neck on him, his strength. But now I also want to see the eyes of an angel.

He also still has to unlearn his hero's will, his straining effort. I want him to be lifted up, not just to hold himself up high. The open sky itself should lift him, this man who no longer forces anything with his will!

He beat monsters, he solved riddles. But he should also set his monsters and riddles free; he should still turn them into children of heaven.

His knowledge has not yet learned to smile and to be without jealousy. His rushing passion has not yet grown calm in beauty.

Truly, his longing should not go quiet and sink down because he is full and satisfied, but because of beauty! Grace is part of the generosity of a person with a great heart.

With his arm laid over his head: that is how the hero should rest. And that is how he should get past even his resting.

But for the hero especially, beauty is the hardest thing of all. No fierce, forceful will can ever win beauty.

A little more, a little less: here that is exactly what counts for a lot. Here it counts for the most.

To stand with relaxed muscles and with your will unharnessed, like a horse taken out of its harness: that is the hardest thing for all of you, you lofty ones!

When power becomes gracious and comes down into what can be seen, I call that coming down beauty.

And from nobody do I want beauty as much as from you, you mighty one. Let your kindness be the last time you conquer yourself.

I believe you are capable of every kind of evil. That is exactly why I want good from you.

Truly, I have often laughed at the weaklings who think they are good just because their paws are lame!

You should strive for the virtue of a column. The higher it rises, the more beautiful and delicate it becomes, but inside it grows harder and better at carrying weight.

Yes, you lofty one, someday you will still be beautiful, and you will hold up a mirror to your own beauty.

Then your soul will shiver with godlike longings, and there will be worship even in your vanity!

Because this is the soul's secret: only when the hero has left it does the super-hero come near to it, in a dream.

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The Land of Education

I flew too far ahead into the future, and a horror came over me.

And when I looked around me, look! Time was the only one living alongside me. There was nobody else of my own age.

So I fled backward, toward home, faster and faster. That is how I came to you, you people of today, and into the land of education.

For the first time I brought along eyes ready to see you, and a real wish to like you. Truly, I came with longing in my heart.

But what happened to me? As scared as I was, I had to laugh! My eyes had never seen anything so splashed with every color!

I laughed and laughed, while my foot was still shaking, and my heart too. "Why, this is the home of all the paint pots!" I said.

Painted with fifty blotches on your faces and your arms and legs: that is how you sat there, to my amazement, you people of today!

And you had fifty mirrors around you, which flattered your play of colors and repeated it back to you!

Truly, you could not wear a better mask, you people of today, than your own face! Who could ever recognize you, or see what you really are?

You are covered all over with writing, the signs of the past, and those signs are painted over again with new signs. In this way you have hidden yourselves well from everyone who tries to read signs!

And even if someone is an expert at looking into people's insides, who would still believe that you have any insides at all? You seem to be baked out of paint and scraps of paper glued together.

All ages and peoples peek out colorfully from behind your veils. All customs and beliefs speak colorfully through your gestures.

If anyone stripped you of your veils and wraps and colors and gestures, he would have just enough left over to scare the birds with, like a scarecrow.

Truly, I myself am the frightened bird who once saw you naked and without color. And I flew away when the skeleton waved at me with love.

I would rather be a day laborer in the underworld, among the ghosts of the past! Even the people of the underworld are fatter and fuller than you are!

This, yes this, is what tastes bitter in my gut: that I cannot stand you either naked or dressed, you people of today!

Everything strange and creepy about the future, and everything that ever frightened birds that strayed too far, is truly more homely and cozy than your so-called "reality."

For this is what you say: "We are completely real, and we have no faith and no superstition." That is how you puff out your chests, and oh, you don't even have chests to puff out!

Yes, how could you be able to believe anything, you multicolored people? You are paintings of everything that was ever believed!

You are walking proof against belief itself, and you break every thought apart limb by limb. "Unbelievable," meaning not worth believing in: that is what I call you, you so-called real people!

All the ages chatter against each other inside your minds. And the dreams and chatter of all the ages were still more real than your being awake is!

You are barren, unable to create anything, and that is why you have no faith. But whoever had to create always had his true dreams and signs in the stars, and believed in believing!

You are half-open gates where gravediggers stand waiting. And this is your reality: "Everything deserves to be destroyed."

Oh, how you stand there in front of me, you barren ones, so thin in the ribs! And some of you have probably noticed this yourselves.

And one of them said: "Did some god secretly steal something from me while I was asleep? Truly, enough to make himself a little woman out of it, like Eve from Adam's rib!

How strangely poor my ribs are!" That is what many a person of today has already said.

Yes, you make me laugh, you people of today! And especially when you are amazed at yourselves!

And it would be terrible for me if I could not laugh at your amazement, and had to drink down all the nasty stuff in your bowls!

But as it is, I will take you more lightly, since I have heavy things to carry. And what does it matter to me if beetles and flying bugs land on my bundle too!

Truly, that will not make my load any heavier! And my great tiredness will not come from you, you people of today. Oh, where else can I climb now with my longing? From every mountain I look out for fatherlands and motherlands.

But I found a home nowhere. I am restless in every city, and at every gate I am already leaving.

The people of today, toward whom my heart drove me not long ago, are strangers to me and a joke. And I am driven out of fatherlands and motherlands.

So the only land I still love is my children's land, the undiscovered one, in the farthest sea. I tell my sails to search and search for it.

Through my children I want to make up for being the child of my fathers. And through the whole future I want to make up for this present!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On Spotless Knowledge

Yesterday, when the moon came up, I thought it was about to give birth to a sun. It lay there on the horizon so wide and swollen, like it was pregnant.

But it lied to me with its pregnancy. I would sooner believe in a man in the moon than in a woman in the moon.

Mind you, it is not much of a man either, this shy creature that wanders around at night. Honestly, it creeps over the rooftops with a guilty conscience.

Because it is full of lust and jealousy, this monk in the moon. It lusts after the earth and after all the pleasures of people in love.

No, I do not like it, this tomcat on the rooftops! Everyone who sneaks around half-closed windows disgusts me!

It walks along, pious and silent, on carpets of stars. But I do not like any man's feet that tread so softly, with not even a spur jingling on them.

Every honest person's footsteps make a sound, as if they speak. But a cat steals across the floor without a noise. Look, the moon comes along like a cat, and it is not honest.—

I give you this picture, you oversensitive hypocrites, you who call yourselves the "pure knowers"! I call you something else: lustful!

You love the earth and earthly things too. I saw right through you! But there is shame in your love, and a guilty conscience. You are just like the moon!

Someone talked your mind into looking down on earthly things, but they did not talk your guts into it. And your guts are the strongest part of you!

And now your mind is ashamed that it does what your guts want. To escape its own shame, it takes sneaky paths and lying paths.

Your lying mind says to itself: "The highest thing for me would be to look at life without wanting anything, and not like a dog with its tongue hanging out.

To be happy just by looking, with my will dead inside me, without the grabbing and greed of selfishness. To be cold and ash-grey all over my body, but with drunken, dreamy moon-eyes!"

The one who has been tricked then tricks himself further, saying: "What I would love most is to love the earth the way the moon loves it, and to touch its beauty only with my eyes.

And this is what I would call spotless knowledge of all things: that I want nothing from things, except to be allowed to lie in front of them like a mirror with a hundred eyes."—

Oh, you oversensitive hypocrites, you lustful people! Your wanting is not innocent. And that is why you now speak badly of wanting itself!

Truly, you do not love the earth the way creators do, the way people who make new life do, the way people who enjoy growing and becoming do!

Where is innocence? It is wherever there is the will to make new life. And whoever wants to create something beyond himself has, in my eyes, the purest will.

Where is beauty? It is wherever I have to want something with all my will. It is where I want to love and to go down, so that a picture does not stay just a picture but becomes real.

Loving and going down: these two have gone together, like a rhyme, since forever. Wanting to love means also being willing to die. That is what I say to you cowards!

But now your weak, unmanly sideways peeking wants to be called "contemplation"! And whatever lets itself be touched by cowardly eyes is supposed to be named "beautiful"! Oh, you who dirty noble names!

But this will be your curse, you spotless ones, you pure knowers: you will never give birth to anything, even if you lie there on the horizon wide and swollen like you are pregnant!

Truly, you fill your mouths with noble words. And we are supposed to believe that your hearts are overflowing, you liars?

But my words are small, looked-down-on, crooked words. I am happy to pick up whatever falls under the table during your meals.

With those scraps I can still tell hypocrites the truth! Yes, my fish bones, shells and prickly leaves will tickle the noses of hypocrites!

There is always bad air around you and your meals. Your lustful thoughts, your lies and your secrets hang in the air!

Just dare to believe in yourselves first, in yourselves and in your guts! Whoever does not believe in himself is always lying.

You "pure" ones have hung a god's mask in front of yourselves. And inside that god's mask, your disgusting coiling worm has crawled away to hide.

Truly, you are fooling people, you "contemplative" ones! Even Zarathustra was once fooled by your godlike skins. He did not guess that they were stuffed full of coiled-up snakes.

Once I thought I saw a god's soul playing in your games, you pure knowers! Once I thought there was no art better than your arts!

The distance hid from me the snake filth and the foul smell. It also hid that the cunning of a lizard was sneaking around here, full of lust.

But I came close to you. Then daylight came to me, and now it is coming to you too. The moon's love affair has come to an end!

Just look! There it stands, caught in the act and pale, in front of the dawn!

Because she is already coming, the glowing one, the sun. Her love for the earth is coming! All the sun's love is innocence and a creator's hunger to make things!

Just look how impatiently she comes over the sea! Can you not feel the thirst and the hot breath of her love?

She wants to suck at the sea and drink its depths up to her heights. And the sea's desire rises up toward her with a thousand breasts, as its waves swell.

The sea wants to be kissed and sucked by the sun's thirst. It wants to become air, and height, and a footpath for light, and even light itself!

Truly, I love life and all deep seas the way the sun does.

And this is what I call knowledge: everything deep should rise up, up to my height!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## About Scholars

While I lay asleep, a sheep came and ate from the ivy wreath on my head. It ate, and as it ate it said: "Zarathustra is not a scholar anymore."

It said this and walked off, stiff-legged and proud. A child told me about it.

I like lying here, where the children play, by the broken wall, among thistles and red poppies.

To the children I am still a scholar, and to the thistles and red poppies too. They are innocent, even when they are being naughty.

But to the sheep I am not a scholar anymore. That is how my fate wants it, and I bless it for that!

Because this is the truth: I have moved out of the house of the scholars. And I even slammed the door behind me as I left.

For too long my soul sat hungry at their table. I am not like them. I have not been trained to do knowing the way you train someone to crack nuts.

I love freedom, and the air above freshly turned soil. I would rather sleep on rough ox hides than on their honors and their respectability.

I am too hot, burned up by my own thoughts. Often they nearly take my breath away. Then I have to get outside, away from all the dusty rooms.

But they sit cool in the cool shade. In everything, they only want to be onlookers. They take care never to sit where the sun beats down on the steps.

They are like people who stand in the street and stare at whoever walks by. In the same way, they wait around and stare at thoughts that other people have thought.

If you grab hold of them, they puff out dust all around them, like sacks of flour, without even meaning to. But who would ever guess that their dust comes from grain, from the golden joy of summer fields?

When they act wise, their little sayings and little truths give me the chills. Their wisdom often has a smell, as if it came out of a swamp. And honestly, I have even heard a frog croaking out of it!

They are skillful; they have clever fingers. What chance does my simple way have against all their complicated ways! Their fingers know all about threading and knotting and weaving. That is how they knit the socks of the mind!

They are good clockwork. Just make sure you wind them up properly! Then they tell the time without a mistake, and make a modest little noise while they do it.

They work like mills and pounding machines. Just throw them your seeds and grain! They know very well how to grind the grain down small and turn it into white dust.

They keep a close eye on each other's fingers and do not trust one another at all. They are inventive when it comes to small tricks, and they lie in wait for people whose knowledge limps along on lame feet. They wait like spiders.

I always saw them mixing poison carefully, and every time they pulled glass gloves over their fingers while they did it.

They also know how to play with loaded dice. And I found them playing so eagerly that they were sweating.

We are strangers to each other. And their good qualities taste even worse to me than their lies and their loaded dice.

And when I lived with them, I lived above them. That made them resent me.

They do not want to hear about anyone walking around above their heads. So they piled wood and dirt and garbage between me and their heads.

That way they muffled the sound of my footsteps. And so far, the most learned of them are the ones who have heard me worst.

They laid all of humanity's faults and weaknesses between themselves and me. In their houses they call that a "false floor"—a word that also sounds like "floor of faults."

But even so, I walk with my thoughts above their heads. And even if I wanted to walk on my own faults, I would still be above them and their heads.

Because people are not equal: that is what justice says. And what I want, they are not allowed to want!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On the Poets

"Ever since I have come to know the body better," Zarathustra said to one of his followers, "the mind is only a mind in a manner of speaking. And everything that is called 'everlasting' is also just a picture, a figure of speech."

"I heard you say that once before," the follower answered. "And back then you added: 'But the poets lie too much.' Why did you say that the poets lie too much?"

"Why?" said Zarathustra. "You ask why? I am not one of those people you are allowed to ask for their reasons.

Do you think the things I lived through happened only yesterday? It was a long time ago that I lived through the reasons for my opinions.

Wouldn't I have to be a whole barrel full of memory if I wanted to carry my reasons around with me as well?

It is already too much for me just to hold on to my opinions themselves. And many a bird flies away from me.

And now and then I also find a stray animal that has moved into my dovecote. It is a stranger to me, and it trembles when I lay my hand on it.

But what was it that Zarathustra once told you? That the poets lie too much? But Zarathustra is a poet too.

So do you believe that he was telling the truth when he said that? Why do you believe it?"

The follower answered: "I believe in Zarathustra." But Zarathustra shook his head and smiled.

"Believing does not make me blessed or happy," he said, "and least of all believing in me.

But suppose someone said in all seriousness that the poets lie too much. Then he would be right. We do lie too much.

We also know too little, and we are bad at learning. So we just have to lie.

And which of us poets hasn't watered down or tampered with his wine? Many a poisonous mix was brewed in our cellars. Many things too awful to describe were done down there.

And because we know so little, we are fond, with all our hearts, of people who are poor in mind, especially when they are young women!

And we even crave the things that old women tell each other in the evenings. That is what we ourselves call 'the Eternal Feminine' in us.

And as if there were a special secret path to knowledge, one that gets buried and blocked for anyone who actually learns something, we believe in the crowd and its 'wisdom.'

But all poets believe this: that whoever lies in the grass or on a lonely hillside and pricks up his ears will learn something about the things that exist between heaven and earth.

And whenever tender feelings come over them, the poets always think that Nature herself is in love with them:

that she creeps up to their ear to whisper secrets into it and sweet, flattering words of love. And they show off about this and puff themselves up in front of everyone else!

Oh, there are so many things between heaven and earth that only the poets have ever dreamed of!

And especially above heaven. For all gods are just pictures made up by poets, things poets have sneaked into the world by trickery!

Truly, we are always being pulled upward, that is, up to the land of the clouds. We set our colorful, stuffed puppets on the clouds and then call them gods and Superhumans.

After all, they are just light enough for those seats! All these gods and Superhumans.

Oh, how tired I am of all the shabby, inadequate stuff that insists on being treated as a great event! Oh, how tired I am of the poets!"

When Zarathustra spoke like this, his follower was angry with him, but he kept quiet. And Zarathustra kept quiet too. His eyes had turned inward, as if they were looking into far distances. At last he sighed and took a breath.

"I belong to today and to the past," he then said. "But there is something in me that belongs to tomorrow, and to the day after tomorrow, and to some day far ahead.

I grew tired of the poets, the old ones and the new ones. To me they are all shallow, like seas with no depth.

They did not think deeply enough. That is why their feelings never sank all the way down to the bottom.

A bit of lust and a bit of boredom: that has been the best of their thinking so far.

All their harp-plinking sounds to me like the breath and flitting of ghosts. What have they ever known about the burning passion that music can have!

They are also not clean enough for me. They all stir up the mud in their waters so that the waters will look deep.

And they like to present themselves as peacemakers who bring things together. But to me they remain go-betweens and mixers, half-and-half people, unclean people!

Oh, I did cast my net into their seas, and I wanted to catch good fish. But every time, I pulled up the head of some old god.

So the sea gave a stone to the hungry man. And the poets themselves may well have come from the sea.

Certainly, you can find pearls in them. That only makes them all the more like hard shellfish. And instead of a soul, I often found salty slime in them.

They also learned vanity from the sea. Isn't the sea the peacock of all peacocks?

Even in front of the ugliest of all buffaloes, it spreads out its tail. It never gets tired of its lacy fan of silver and silk.

The buffalo looks on stubbornly and sullenly. In its soul it is close to the sand, closer still to the thicket, and closest of all to the swamp.

What does beauty or the sea or peacock finery mean to it! This is the picture I offer the poets.

Truly, their mind itself is the peacock of all peacocks and a sea of vanity!

The poet's mind wants an audience, even if it is only buffaloes!

But I grew tired of this kind of mind. And I can see the time coming when it will grow tired of itself.

I have already seen poets who have changed and who have turned their gaze against themselves.

I saw people coming who do penance for the mind, who punish their own minds. They grew out of the poets."

That is what Zarathustra said.

## About Great Events

There is an island in the sea, not far from Zarathustra's Happy Islands, where a volcano is always smoking. The crowd says about this island, and especially the little old women among the crowd say it, that it was set down like a huge rock in front of the gate of the underworld. And they say that right through the volcano itself runs the narrow path downward that leads to this gate of the underworld.

Now, around the time when Zarathustra was staying on the Happy Islands, a ship happened to drop anchor at the island where the smoking mountain stands. Its crew went ashore to shoot rabbits. But around midday, when the captain and his men were back together, they suddenly saw a man coming toward them through the air, and a voice said clearly: "It is time! It is high time!" When the figure was closest to them, though, it flew past quickly like a shadow, heading toward where the volcano was. And then, to their great shock, they recognized that it was Zarathustra. All of them had seen him before, except the captain himself, and they loved him the way the crowd loves: with love and fear mixed together in equal parts.

"Look at that!" said the old helmsman. "There goes Zarathustra, off to hell!"

At about the same time that these sailors landed on the fire island, a rumor was going around that Zarathustra had disappeared. And when people asked his friends, they said he had boarded a ship at night without saying where he meant to go.

So people grew uneasy. Then, after three days, the sailors' story was added to this uneasiness, and now the whole crowd said that the devil had taken Zarathustra away. His followers laughed at this talk, it's

true. One of them even said: "I'd sooner believe that Zarathustra took the devil away." But deep down in their souls they were all full of worry and longing. So their joy was great when Zarathustra showed up among them on the fifth day.

And this is the story of Zarathustra's conversation with the fire dog.

The earth, he said, has a skin, and this skin has diseases. One of these diseases, for example, is called "human."

And another of these diseases is called "fire dog." People have told themselves a lot of lies about it, and let others tell them a lot of lies too.

To get to the bottom of this secret, I went across the sea. And I have seen the truth naked, truly! Barefoot right up to the neck.

Now I know what the fire dog is really about. And the same goes for all the devils of eruption and overthrow, the ones that spew things out and turn everything upside down, which not only little old women are afraid of.

"Come out of your depths, fire dog!" I shouted. "And confess how deep those depths really are! Where does the stuff you're snorting up come from?"

"You drink plenty from the sea. Your salty way of talking gives that away! Honestly, for a dog that's supposed to come from the depths, you take too much of your food from the surface!"

"At most, I'd call you the earth's ventriloquist, someone who makes it seem the earth is talking. And whenever I've heard the devils of overthrow and eruption speak, I've found them just like you: salty, full of lies, and shallow."

"You all know how to roar and how to darken the sky with ash! You're the best at bragging, and you've learned more than enough about the art of making mud boil."

"Wherever you are, there always has to be mud nearby, and lots of spongy, hollow, squeezed-in things that want to break out into freedom."

"'Freedom!' is what all of you love to roar most. But I stopped believing in 'great events' as soon as there's a lot of roaring and smoke around them."

"And just believe me, my friend Hell-Noise! The greatest events are not our loudest hours, but our quietest ones."

"The world doesn't turn around the inventors of new noise. It turns around the inventors of new values. And it turns without a sound."

"Just admit it! Very little had ever actually happened once your noise and smoke cleared away. So what if a city got turned into a mummy, buried and preserved, and a statue ended up lying in the mud!"

"And I have one more thing to say to those who knock down statues. It's probably the biggest foolishness of all to throw salt into the sea and statues into the mud."

"The statue lay in the mud of your contempt. But that is exactly its law: out of contempt, life and living beauty grow back in it!"

"Now it rises again with features more godlike than before, and its suffering makes it even more tempting. And truly! It will even thank you for knocking it down, you knockers-down!"

"But this is the advice I give to kings and churches and everything that has grown weak from age and from virtue: just let yourselves be knocked down! So that you come back to life, and so that virtue comes back to you!"

That is how I spoke in front of the fire dog. Then he interrupted me grumpily and asked: "Church? What's that supposed to be?"

"Church?" I answered. "That's a kind of state, and the most lying kind of all. But be quiet, you hypocrite dog! You probably know your own kind best already!"

"Just like you, the state is a hypocrite dog. Just like you, it likes to talk with smoke and roaring, so that it can make people believe, just like you do, that it speaks from the belly, from the very insides, of things."

"Because the state absolutely wants to be the most important animal on earth. And people even believe it."

When I had said that, the fire dog went wild with envy, as if he'd lost his mind. "What?" he screamed. "The most important animal on earth? And people even believe it?" And so much steam and so many horrible voices came out of his throat that I thought he would choke on his anger and envy.

At last he grew quieter, and his panting eased off. But as soon as he was quiet, I said, laughing:

"You're angry, fire dog. So I'm right about you!

And so that I stay right, listen to me tell you about another fire dog. That one really does speak from the heart of the earth.

His breath blows out gold and golden rain. That's what his heart wants. What do ash and smoke and hot slime matter to him anymore!

Laughter flutters out of him like a colorful cloud. He has no liking for your gurgling and spitting and the rumbling of your guts!

But the gold and the laughter, he takes those from the heart of the earth. Because, just so you know, the heart of the earth is made of gold."

When the fire dog heard this, he couldn't stand listening to me any longer. Ashamed, he tucked in his tail, said "Woof! Woof!" in a small, meek voice, and crawled back down into his cave.

That is the story Zarathustra told. But his followers hardly listened to him, because they were so eager to tell him about the sailors, the rabbits, and the flying man.

"What am I supposed to make of that?" said Zarathustra. "Am I a ghost, then?

It must have been my shadow. I suppose you've already heard a few things about the wanderer and his shadow?

But one thing is certain: I have to keep him on a shorter leash. Otherwise he'll end up ruining my reputation."

And once more Zarathustra shook his head and wondered. "What am I supposed to make of that?" he said again.

"Why did the ghost shout: 'It is time! It is high time!'?

High time for what?"

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The Fortune-Teller

"…and I saw a great sadness come over people. The best of them grew tired of their own work.

A teaching went around, and a belief ran right alongside it: 'Everything is empty, everything is the same, everything is over!'

And from every hill the echo came back: 'Everything is empty, everything is the same, everything is over!'

Yes, we brought in our harvest. But why did all our fruit go rotten and brown? What fell down on us from the evil moon last night?

All our work was for nothing. Our wine has turned to poison. An evil eye has scorched our fields and our hearts until they turned yellow.

We have all dried up. If fire falls on us, we just puff away like dust, like ashes. Yes, we have even made the fire itself tired.

All our wells have dried up, and even the sea has pulled back from us. The ground everywhere wants to crack open, but the depths below refuse to swallow us!

'Oh, where is there still a sea deep enough to drown in?' That is our complaint, and it drifts out over shallow swamps.

Truly, we have grown too tired even to die. So we stay awake and keep on living, inside tombs!"

That is what Zarathustra heard a fortune-teller say. And the prophecy went straight to his heart and changed him. He walked around sad and tired, and he became just like the people the fortune-teller had talked about.

"Truly," he said to his followers, "it won't be long before this long twilight comes. Oh, how am I going to carry my light safely through to the other side?

I must not let it be smothered in this sadness! After all, it is meant to be a light for faraway worlds, and even for the most distant nights!"

So Zarathustra walked around with this worry in his heart. For three days he did not eat or drink anything. He could not rest, and he stopped speaking. At last he fell into a deep sleep. His followers sat around him through long nights, keeping watch. They waited anxiously to see whether he would wake up, speak again, and be healed of his gloom.

And this is the speech Zarathustra gave when he woke up. His voice reached his followers as if it came from far away.

"Listen to the dream I had, my friends, and help me guess what it means!

This dream is still a riddle to me. Its meaning is hidden inside it, trapped there, and it can't yet fly up above it on free wings.

In my dream, I had given up on all of life. I had become a night watchman and a guard of graves, up there in the lonely mountain castle of Death.

Up there I guarded Death's coffins. The stuffy vaults were full of them, like trophies of his victories. From glass coffins, lives that had been defeated stared out at me.

I breathed in the smell of dusty eternities. My soul lay there, stuffy and covered in dust. And who could have aired out their soul in a place like that!

The brightness of midnight was always around me. Loneliness crouched beside it. And third came the rattling, gasping silence of death, the worst of all my companions.

I carried keys, the rustiest keys there are. And I knew how to use them to open the creakiest gate there is.

When the two halves of the gate swung open, the sound ran down the long hallways like a bitter, nasty croaking. This bird screeched in an ugly way; it did not like being woken up.

But it was even more frightening, and it squeezed my heart even tighter, when the sound stopped and everything went quiet again, and I sat alone in that sneaky, treacherous silence.

That is how time passed for me, creeping along, if there was still such a thing as time. What do I know about it! But in the end, something happened that woke me up.

Three times there were blows on the gate, like thunder. Three times the vaults echoed and howled. So I went to the gate.

'Alpa!' I shouted. 'Who is carrying his ashes up the mountain? Alpa! Alpa! Who is carrying his ashes up the mountain?'

And I turned the key and pushed and lifted at the gate and struggled with it. But it would not open even a finger's width.

Then a roaring wind tore its two halves apart. Whistling, shrieking and cutting, it hurled a black coffin at me.

And in the middle of all that roaring and whistling and shrieking, the coffin burst open and spat out a thousand kinds of laughter.

And out of a thousand grinning faces, faces of children, angels, owls, fools, and butterflies as big as children, it laughed at me and mocked me and roared against me.

I was horribly frightened by this. It knocked me to the ground. And I screamed in terror, as I had never screamed before.

But my own scream woke me up, and I came back to myself."

That is how Zarathustra told his dream, and then he went quiet, because he did not yet know what his dream meant. But the follower he loved most quickly stood up, took Zarathustra's hand, and said:

"Your own life explains this dream to us, oh Zarathustra!

Aren't you yourself the wind with the shrill whistling, the wind that tears open the gates of Death's castles?

Aren't you yourself the coffin full of colorful mischief and the grinning angel faces of life?

Truly, Zarathustra comes into every chamber of the dead like a thousand kinds of children's laughter. He laughs at these night watchmen and grave guards, and at anyone else who rattles gloomy keys.

You will frighten them and knock them over with your laughter. When they faint and then wake up, that will prove your power over them.

And even when the long twilight comes, and the deathly tiredness, you will not go down from our sky, you who speak up for life!

You let us see new stars and new wonders of the night. Truly, you stretched laughter itself over us like a colorful tent.

From now on, children's laughter will always come bubbling out of coffins. From now on, a strong wind will always come and win out over all deathly tiredness. You yourself are our guarantee of that, and the one who foretells it!

Truly, it was them you were dreaming of: your enemies. That was your hardest dream!

But just as you woke up from them and came back to yourself, they too shall wake up from themselves, and come over to you!"

That is what the follower said. And now all the others crowded around Zarathustra, took hold of his hands, and tried to talk him into leaving his bed and his sadness and coming back to them. But Zarathustra sat upright on his bed with a strange look in his eyes. Like someone coming home after a long time in foreign lands, he looked at his followers and studied their faces, and he still did not recognize them. But when they lifted him up and set him on his feet, suddenly, all at once, his eyes changed. He understood everything that had happened. He stroked his beard and said in a strong voice:

"All right! That has had its time. But now, my followers, see to it that we have a good meal, and quickly! That is how I plan to make up for bad dreams!

And the fortune-teller shall eat and drink by my side. And truly, I will yet show him a sea he can drown in!"

That is what Zarathustra said. But after that, he looked for a long time into the face of the follower who had played the dream interpreter, and he shook his head as he did so.

## On Being Set Free

One day, when Zarathustra was walking across the great bridge, the disabled people and the beggars crowded around him. A man with a hunched back spoke to him like this:

"Look, Zarathustra! Even the crowd is learning from you and starting to believe in what you teach. But before they believe in you completely, one more thing is needed: first you have to win over us disabled people! Here you have a fine selection to choose from, and honestly, a chance you can grab with both hands! You can heal the blind and make the lame walk. And for the man who carries too much on his back, you could surely take a little of it off. That, I think, would be the right way to make disabled people believe in Zarathustra!"

But Zarathustra answered the man who had spoken, like this: "If you take away the hunchback's hump, you take away his mind. That is what the crowd teaches. And if you give the blind man his eyes, he sees too many bad things on earth, so that he curses the one who healed him. And whoever makes the lame man walk does him the greatest harm of all. Because as soon as he can walk, his bad habits run off with him. That is what the crowd teaches about disabled people. And why shouldn't Zarathustra learn from the crowd too, if the crowd learns from Zarathustra?

But ever since I have been among people, the smallest thing for me is to see this: 'This one is missing an eye, and that one an ear, and a third one a leg, and there are others who have lost their tongue, or their nose, or their head.'

I see, and I have seen, worse things. Many things so disgusting that I don't want to talk about all of them, and about some of them I don't

even want to stay silent. I mean people who are missing everything, except that they have too much of one thing. People who are nothing more than one big eye, or one big mouth, or one big belly, or some other big thing. I call people like that upside-down cripples.

And when I came out of my loneliness and crossed this bridge for the first time, I couldn't believe my eyes. I looked, and looked again, and finally I said: 'That is an ear! An ear as big as a person!' I looked even more closely. And really, under the ear something else was moving, something pitifully small and poor and skinny. And truly, the huge ear sat on a little thin stalk, and the stalk was a person! If you held a magnifying glass to your eye, you could even make out a tiny, jealous little face, and also a puffed-up little soul dangling from the stalk. But the crowd told me that the big ear was not just a person, but a great person, a genius. But I have never believed the crowd when it talked about great people. And I held on to my belief that it was an upside-down cripple, who had too little of everything and too much of one thing."

When Zarathustra had spoken like this to the hunchback, and to the people for whom the hunchback was the mouthpiece and spokesman, he turned to his followers in deep annoyance and said:

"Truly, my friends, I walk among people as if I were walking among broken pieces and loose limbs of people!

This is the terrible thing for my eyes: that I find humans smashed to bits and scattered around, as if over a battlefield or a slaughterhouse floor.

And if my eyes run away from the present to the past, they always find the same thing: broken pieces and limbs and awful accidents, but no whole people!

The present and the past on earth, oh, my friends, that is what I find hardest of all to bear. And I wouldn't know how to go on living if I weren't also someone who can see what has to come.

Someone who sees ahead, someone who wants, a creator, a future himself and a bridge to the future. And oh, also a kind of cripple standing on this bridge. Zarathustra is all of that.

And you too have often asked yourselves: 'Who is Zarathustra to us? What should we call him?' And just like me, you answered yourselves with more questions.

Is he someone who makes promises? Or someone who keeps them? A conqueror? Or an heir? An autumn, a time of harvest? Or a plow that breaks new ground? A doctor? Or someone who has just got well?

Is he a poet? Or someone who tells the truth? Someone who sets people free? Or someone who tames them? A good man? Or an evil one?

I walk among people as among the broken pieces of the future: that future which I can see.

And this is everything I write and everything I strive for: to put together into one whole what is now just broken pieces and riddles and awful accident.

And how could I stand being human, if humans were not also poets and solvers of riddles and the ones who rescue chance from being mere accident!

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 truly set free!

The will: that is the name of the one who sets you free and brings you joy. That is what I taught you, my friends! And now learn this as well: the will itself is still a prisoner.

Wanting sets you free. But what is the name of the thing that puts even the one who sets free in chains?

'It was': that is what makes the will grind its teeth, and that is its loneliest sorrow. Powerless against what has already been done, the will stands watching everything in the past with anger.

The will cannot want backward. It cannot break time and time's hunger to swallow everything. That is the will's loneliest sorrow.

Wanting sets you free. So what does wanting come up with, to get rid of its sorrow and to laugh at its prison?

Oh, every prisoner turns into a fool! And the imprisoned will also sets itself free in a foolish way.

That time does not run backward: that is what makes it furious. 'What was': that is the name of the stone it cannot roll away.

And so, out of fury and resentment, it rolls other stones around, and takes revenge on whatever does not feel fury and resentment the way it does.

So the will, the one who sets free, turned into one who causes pain. And on everything that is able to suffer, it takes revenge for the fact that it cannot go back.

This, yes, this alone is what revenge really is: the will's hatred of time and of time's 'It was.'

Truly, a great foolishness lives in our will. And it became a curse on everything human that this foolishness learned to think!

The spirit of revenge: my friends, up to now that has been the best thinking humans have done. And wherever there was suffering, there always had to be punishment.

Because 'punishment' is what revenge calls itself. With a lying word it fakes a clean conscience for itself.

And because there is suffering inside the one who wants, since it cannot want backward, then wanting itself and all of life had to be a punishment!

And now cloud after cloud rolled over the mind, until at last madness preached: 'Everything passes away, so everything deserves to pass away!'

'And this is justice itself, that law of time which says it must eat its own children.' That is what madness preached.

'Things are arranged morally, by right and punishment. Oh, where is the escape from the endless flow of things, and from the punishment called existence?' That is what madness preached.

'Can there be any rescue if there is an eternal justice? Oh, the stone "It was" cannot be rolled away. So all punishments must last forever too!' That is what madness preached.

'No deed can be wiped out. How could punishment ever undo it! This, this is what is eternal about the punishment called "existence": that existence must forever turn into deed and guilt again and again!

Unless the will finally sets itself free, and wanting turns into not-wanting.' But, my brothers, you know this fairy-tale song of madness!

I led you away from these fairy-tale songs when I taught you: "The will is a creator."

Every "It was" is a broken piece, a riddle, a horrible accident. It stays that way until the creating will says to it: "But that is how I wanted it!"

Until the creating will says to it: "But that is how I want it! That is how I will want it!"

But has it ever spoken like that yet? And when does this happen? Has the will been unhitched yet from its own foolishness, like a horse freed from its harness?

Has the will already become its own rescuer and bringer of joy? Has it unlearned the spirit of revenge and all its grinding of teeth?

And who taught it to make peace with time, and something higher than any making of peace?

The will that is the drive for power has to want something higher than any making of peace. But how does it manage that? Who also taught it to want backwards, to want the past too?"

But at this point in his speech, Zarathustra suddenly stopped. He looked exactly like someone who has been frightened to the very core. With frightened eyes he looked at his followers. His eyes pierced their thoughts and their hidden thoughts as if with arrows. But after a little while he was laughing again, and he said in a calmer, soothing voice:

"It is hard to live with people, because keeping quiet is so hard. Especially for someone who talks too much."

That is what Zarathustra said. But the hunchback had been listening to the conversation, and he had covered his face while he listened. When he heard Zarathustra laugh, though, he looked up curiously and said slowly:

"But why does Zarathustra talk to us differently than he talks to his followers?"

Zarathustra answered: "What is so surprising about that? With hunchbacks, you are allowed to talk in a crooked, hunchbacked way!"

"Fine," said the hunchback. "And with students, you are allowed to tell tales out of school, letting out secrets."

"But why does Zarathustra talk to his students differently than he talks to himself?"

## On Being Clever with People

It is not the height that is terrifying. It is the slope!

The slope is the place where your eyes plunge downward while your hand reaches upward. There the heart gets dizzy, because it wants two things at once.

Oh, my friends, can you guess what two things my own heart wants?

This, this is my slope and my danger: my eyes plunge upward, toward the heights, while my hand wants to hold on and steady itself on the depths below!

My will clings to human beings. I tie myself to humans with chains, because something keeps pulling me up toward the Superhuman. That is where my other will wants to go.

And that is why I live blindly among people, as if I did not know them. I do it so that my hand does not completely lose its faith that there is something solid to hold on to.

"I do not know you humans." This darkness, and this comfort, often wraps itself around me.

I sit at the gateway, open to every crook, and I ask: "Who wants to cheat me?"

This is my first piece of cleverness about people: I let myself be cheated, so that I do not have to be on guard against cheaters.

Oh, if I were always on guard against people, how could people be an anchor for my balloon? I would be pulled up and away far too easily!

This is the fate that has been laid over my life: I must live without caution.

Whoever does not want to die of thirst among people must learn to drink from every glass. And whoever wants to stay clean among people must know how to wash even with dirty water.

And so I often said to myself, to comfort myself: "Come on! Let's go! Old heart! A disaster missed you. Enjoy that as your good luck!"

But this is my second piece of cleverness about people: I go easier on vain people than on proud people.

Isn't hurt vanity the mother of every tragedy? But where pride gets hurt, something even better than pride may grow.

For life to be worth watching, its play has to be played well. And for that you need good actors.

I have found that all vain people are good actors. They perform, and they want people to enjoy watching them. Their whole mind is set on that wish.

They show off, they make themselves up as they go. When I am near them, I love to watch life. It cures me of gloom.

That is why I go easy on vain people: they are doctors for my gloom, and they keep me holding on to human beings, the way you hold on to a good show.

And besides: who can measure how deeply modest a vain person really is? I like him, and I feel for him, because of his modesty.

He wants to learn from you how to believe in himself. He feeds on the way you look at him. He eats praise out of your hands.

He even believes your lies, as long as you lie nicely about him. Because deep down, his heart sighs: "What am I, really?"

And if the true virtue is the one that does not know about itself, well then: the vain person does not know about his own modesty!

But this is my third piece of cleverness about people: I do not let your fearfulness spoil my pleasure in looking at wicked people.

I am overjoyed to see the wonders that a hot sun hatches: tigers and palm trees and rattlesnakes.

Among people, too, the hot sun hatches beautiful creatures, and there is much that is wonderful about wicked people.

It is true that your wisest people did not seem all that wise to me. In the same way, I found that human wickedness does not live up to its reputation either.

And I often shook my head and asked: "Why bother rattling, you rattlesnakes?"

Truly, even evil still has a future! The hottest south has not yet been discovered by humans.

So many things are called the very worst wickedness today, and yet they are only twelve feet wide and three months long! But one day bigger dragons will be born.

For the Superhuman must not be without his own dragon, a super-dragon worthy of him. And for that to happen, a lot of hot sun still has to blaze down on the damp jungle!

Your wildcats must first turn into tigers, and your poisonous toads into crocodiles. Because a good hunter deserves a good hunt!

And truly, you good and righteous people! There is a lot about you to laugh at, and most of all your fear of what has always been called the "Devil"!

Your souls are such strangers to greatness that the Superhuman would terrify you, even in his kindness!

And you wise and knowing people, you would run away from the burning sun of wisdom, the sun in which the Superhuman happily bathes his naked body!

You highest people I have ever laid eyes on! This is my doubt about you and my secret laughter: I bet you would call my Superhuman a devil!

Oh, I grew tired of these highest and best people. From their so-called "height" I longed to go up, out, and away, toward the Superhuman!

A shudder came over me when I saw these best people naked. That is when I grew wings, to float away into far-off futures.

Into futures farther away, into souths more southern than any artist ever dreamed of: there, where gods are ashamed to wear any clothes at all!

But you, my neighbors and fellow humans, I want to see you in disguise, nicely dressed up, and vain, and dignified, as "the good and righteous people."

And I myself want to sit among you in disguise, so that I do not recognize you or myself. That, you see, is my last piece of cleverness about people.

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The Quietest Hour

"What happened to me, my friends? You can see I'm shaken, driven away, obeying against my will, ready to leave. Oh, ready to leave you!

Yes, Zarathustra has to go back into his loneliness one more time. But this time the bear goes back to his cave without any joy!

What happened to me? Who is ordering this? Oh, my angry mistress wants it this way. She spoke to me. Have I ever told you her name?

Yesterday, toward evening, my quietest hour spoke to me. That is the name of my terrifying mistress.

And this is how it happened. I have to tell you everything, so that your hearts don't turn hard against someone who is leaving you so suddenly!

Do you know the fright of someone who is falling asleep?

He is startled right down to his toes, because the ground seems to give way under him and the dream begins.

I'm telling you this as a comparison. Yesterday, at the quietest hour, the ground gave way under me, and the dream began.

The clock hand moved forward. The clock of my life took a breath. I had never heard such silence around me, so that my heart was frightened.

Then something spoke to me without a voice: "You know it, Zarathustra, don't you?"

And I cried out in fear at this whisper, and the blood drained from my face. But I said nothing.

Then it spoke to me again without a voice: "You know it, Zarathustra, but you don't say it!"

And at last I answered, like a stubborn child: "Yes, I know it, but I don't want to say it!"

Then it spoke to me again without a voice: "You don't want to, Zarathustra? Is that really true? Don't hide behind your stubbornness!"

And I cried and shook like a child, and I said: "Oh, I would like to, but how can I? Just let me off this one thing! It's more than I have the strength for!"

Then it spoke to me again without a voice: "What do you matter, Zarathustra? Say your word, and let it break you!"

And I answered: "Oh, but is it really my word? Who am I? I'm waiting for someone more worthy. I'm not even good enough to be broken by it."

Then it spoke to me again without a voice: "What do you matter? You're still not humble enough for me. Humility has the toughest skin."

And I answered: "What hasn't the skin of my humility already had to carry! I live at the foot of my own heights. How high are my peaks? Nobody has told me yet. But I know my valleys very well."

Then it spoke to me again without a voice: "Oh Zarathustra, whoever has to move mountains also moves valleys and lowlands."

And I answered: "My word hasn't moved any mountains yet, and what I said never reached people. I did go to people, but I still haven't actually reached them."

Then it spoke to me again without a voice: "What do you know about that! The dew falls on the grass when the night is at its most silent."

In other words, the deepest effects happen quietly, when no one notices.

And I answered: "They made fun of me when I found my own path and walked it. And to be honest, my feet were shaking back then.

And this is what they said to me: 'You've forgotten the path, and now you're forgetting how to walk, too!'"

Then it spoke to me again without a voice: "Who cares about their mockery! You are someone who has forgotten how to obey. So now you must give orders!

Don't you know who everyone needs most? The one who orders great things.

Doing great things is hard. But ordering great things is even harder.

This is the most unforgivable thing about you: you have the power, and you don't want to rule."

And I answered: "I don't have the lion's voice that giving orders takes."

Then it spoke to me again, like a whisper: "It's the quietest words that bring the storm. Thoughts that come on doves' feet, softly and unnoticed, are the ones that steer the world.

Oh Zarathustra, you must walk as a shadow of what has to come. That way you will give orders, and lead the way by giving them."

And I answered: "I'm ashamed."

Then it spoke to me again without a voice: "You still have to become a child, and lose your shame.

The pride of youth is still on you. You became young late. But whoever wants to become a child must get past even his youth."

And I thought it over for a long time, and I trembled. But in the end I said what I had said at first: "I don't want to."

Then laughter broke out all around me. Oh, how that laughter tore at my insides and sliced my heart open!

And it spoke to me for the last time: "Oh Zarathustra, your fruits are ripe, but you are not ripe for your fruits!

So you have to go back into loneliness, because you still need to become soft and ready, like ripe fruit."

And it laughed again and fled. Then it became silent around me, with a double silence. But I lay on the ground, and sweat poured from my arms and legs.

Now you've heard everything, and why I have to go back into my loneliness. I've kept nothing from you, my friends.

But you've also heard from me who is still the most silent of all people, and who wants to stay that way!

Oh, my friends! I still have something to tell you. I still have something to give you! Why don't I give it? Am I really so stingy?"

But when Zarathustra had said these words, the force of his pain and the closeness of saying goodbye to his friends overwhelmed him, so that he cried out loud, and no one knew how to comfort him. But that night he went away alone and left his friends.

# Part Three

"You look up when you long to be lifted high. And I look down, because I have already been lifted high.
Which of you can laugh and be lifted high at the same time?
Whoever climbs the highest mountains laughs at all tragedies, whether they are played on a stage or taken seriously in real life."

Zarathustra, from the speech "On Reading and Writing."

## The Wanderer

It was midnight when Zarathustra set off across the ridge of the island, so that he would reach the other shore by early morning, because that was where he wanted to board a ship. There was a good harbor there, where foreign ships also liked to drop anchor. Those ships often took along people who wanted to leave the Happy Islands and cross the sea. So as Zarathustra climbed up the mountain, he thought along the way about all the lonely wandering he had done since he was young, and about how many mountains and ridges and peaks he had already climbed.

"I am a wanderer and a mountain climber," he said to his heart. "I don't love flat lands, and it seems I can't sit still for long."

"And whatever comes to me now as my fate and my experience, there will be wandering in it, and mountain climbing. In the end, a person only experiences himself."

"The time has run out when things could still happen to me by chance. And what could happen to me now that isn't already my own?"

"It is only coming back. It is finally coming home to me: my own self, and all the parts of it that were far away for a long time, scattered among all kinds of things and chance events."

"And I know one more thing: I am now standing in front of my last peak, and in front of what was saved for me the longest. Oh, I have to climb my hardest path! Oh, I have begun my loneliest journey!"

"But anyone who is my kind of person can't escape an hour like this: the hour that speaks to him and says: 'Only now are you walking your

path of greatness! The peak and the deep pit below have now become one and the same!'"

"'You are walking your path of greatness. What used to be called your last danger has now become your last place of safety!'"

"'You are walking your path of greatness. Now your best courage must be this: that there is no path left behind you!'"

"'You are walking your path of greatness. Here nobody shall sneak along after you! Your own foot erased the path behind you, and above it is written the word: Impossible.'"

"'And if from now on you have no ladders left, then you must learn to climb even onto your own head. How else could you go higher?'"

"'Onto your own head and on past your own heart! Now even the gentlest thing in you must become the hardest.'"

"'Someone who has always protected himself too much will in the end get sick from all that protecting. Praise to whatever makes us hard! I don't praise the land where butter and honey flow!'"

"'You need to learn to look away from yourself in order to see a lot. Every mountain climber needs this kind of hardness.'"

"'But someone who pushes in too close with his eyes when he tries to understand things, how could he see anything more than the front surface of things?'"

"'But you, oh Zarathustra, wanted to see the ground of all things, and what lies behind them. So you have to climb up above yourself, higher and higher, until even your stars are below you!'"

"Yes! To look down on myself, and even on my stars: only that would I call my peak. That is what is still left for me as my last peak!"

That is what Zarathustra said to himself as he climbed, comforting his heart with hard little sayings, because his heart was hurt as it had never been hurt before. And when he reached the top of the ridge, look, there was the other sea spread out in front of him. He stood still and was silent for a long time. Up at this height the night was cold and clear, and bright with stars.

"I recognize my fate," he finally said sadly. "All right! I am ready. My last loneliness has just begun."

"Oh, this black, sad sea below me! Oh, this gloomy night mood, heavy as if it were pregnant with something! Oh, fate and sea! Now I have to climb down to you!"

"I am standing in front of my highest mountain and my longest journey. That is why I first have to go down deeper than I ever went before:"

"deeper down into pain than I ever went before, all the way into its blackest flood! That is what my fate wants. All right! I am ready."

"'Where do the highest mountains come from?' I once asked. Then I learned that they come out of the sea."

"This proof is written into their rock and into the walls of their peaks. The highest thing has to rise to its height out of the deepest place."

That is what Zarathustra said on the top of the mountain, where it was cold. But when he came near the sea and finally stood alone among the cliffs, he had grown tired on the way, and he was filled with more longing than ever before.

"Everything is still asleep now," he said. "Even the sea is asleep. Its eye looks at me sleepy and strange."

"But its breath is warm, I can feel that. And I can also feel that it is dreaming. It twists and turns in its dreams on hard pillows."

"Listen! Listen! How it groans from bad memories! Or is it from bad things it expects to come?"

"Oh, I am sad together with you, you dark monster, and I'm even angry at myself because of you."

"Oh, if only my hand were strong enough! Truly, I would love to free you from your bad dreams!"

And as Zarathustra said this, he laughed at himself, sadly and bitterly. "What!" he said. "Zarathustra! Do you even want to sing comfort to the sea?"

"Oh, you loving fool Zarathustra, you who are far too happy to trust! But you were always like this: you always walked up to every frightening thing in a friendly, trusting way."

"You wanted to pet every monster. A breath of warm air, a little soft shaggy fur on its paw, and right away you were ready to love it and call it to you."

"Love is the danger for the loneliest person: love for everything, as long as it's alive! Truly, my foolishness and my modesty when it comes to love are laughable!"

That is what Zarathustra said, and he laughed a second time. But then he thought of the friends he had left behind, and as if he had done them wrong with his thoughts, he was angry at himself for thinking them. And soon it happened that the one who had been laughing began to cry. Out of anger and longing, Zarathustra cried bitterly.

## The Vision and the Riddle

### 1.

Word got around among the sailors that Zarathustra was on the ship. A man who came from the Happy Islands had come on board at the same time as him. Because of this, everyone grew very curious and expectant. But for two days Zarathustra said nothing. He was cold and deaf with sadness, so he answered neither looks nor questions. But on the evening of the second day he opened his ears again, even though he still kept silent. There was a lot that was strange and dangerous to hear on this ship, which had come from far away and wanted to go even farther. And Zarathustra was a friend of all people like that, people who make long journeys and do not want to live without danger. And look! In the end, as he listened, his own tongue was set free, and the ice around his heart broke. Then he began to speak like this:

To you, the bold searchers and risk-takers, and to anyone who ever set out with clever sails onto terrifying seas,—

to you, who get drunk on riddles, who are happy in the half-light, whose souls are lured by flute music down into every maze and every deep pit:

—because you do not want to feel your way along a safety thread with a cowardly hand; and where you can guess the answer, you hate to work it out step by step—

to you alone I will tell the riddle that I saw,—the vision of the loneliest one.—

Not long ago I was walking, gloomy, through a twilight the color of a corpse,—gloomy and hard, with my lips pressed tight. More than one sun had gone down for me.

There was a path that climbed stubbornly through loose rocks. It was a nasty, lonely path, where no plant and no bush offered any comfort anymore. That mountain path crunched under my stubborn feet.

I walked on in silence over pebbles that clattered as if they were mocking me. I crushed every stone that made my foot slip. That is how my foot forced itself upward.

Upward:—in defiance of the spirit that was pulling it downward, pulling it down toward the abyss. That was the spirit of heaviness, my devil and my worst enemy.

Upward:—even though he was sitting on me, half dwarf, half mole. He was lame himself, and he made me feel lame too. He was dripping lead into my ear, dripping thoughts as heavy as drops of lead into my brain.

"Oh Zarathustra," he whispered, mocking me, one syllable at a time, "you stone of wisdom! You threw yourself up high, but every stone that is thrown must—fall!

Oh Zarathustra, you stone of wisdom, you stone from a slingshot, you smasher of stars! You threw yourself so high,—but every stone that is thrown—must fall!

You are sentenced to yourself and to being stoned by your own stone. Oh Zarathustra, yes, you threw the stone far,—but it will fall back down on you!"

After that the dwarf was silent, and it lasted a long time. But his silence weighed on me. Being two together like this, you are truly lonelier than being alone!

I climbed, I climbed, I dreamed, I thought,—but everything weighed on me. I was like a sick person who is worn out by terrible pain, and who is then woken up again, just as he falls asleep, by an even worse dream.—

But there is something in me that I call courage. Up to now it has killed off every bad mood I had. In the end this courage told me to stand still and say: "Dwarf! It's you! Or me!"—

Because courage is the best killer,—courage that attacks. In every attack there is the sound of a marching band.

Humans are the most courageous animal. That is how they got past every other animal. With the sound of the marching band they got past every pain as well. And human pain is the deepest pain.

Courage also kills the dizziness you feel at the edge of an abyss. And where do humans not stand at the edge of an abyss! Isn't seeing itself —seeing into an abyss?

Courage is the best killer: courage also kills pity. And pity is the deepest abyss. As deeply as a person looks into life, that is how deeply he also looks into suffering.

But courage is the best killer, courage that attacks. It even kills death, because it says: "Was that life? Come on! One more time!"

In a saying like that there is a lot of marching-band music. Whoever has ears, let him hear.—

**2.**

"Stop! Dwarf!" I said. "Me! Or you! But I am the stronger of us two—: you do not know my bottomless thought! That—you could not carry!"—

Then something happened that made me lighter: the dwarf jumped down off my shoulder, the nosy thing! And he squatted on a stone in front of me. Right there, where we had stopped, there was a gateway.

"Look at this gateway, dwarf!" I went on. "It has two faces. Two roads meet here, and nobody has ever walked either of them to the end.

This long lane going back: it goes on forever. And that long lane going forward—that is another forever.

These roads contradict each other. They run head-on into each other: —and here, at this gateway, is where they meet. The name of the gateway is written above it: 'the Moment'.

But if someone walked further along one of them—further and further, farther and farther: do you believe, dwarf, that these roads contradict each other forever?"—

"Everything straight is a lie," the dwarf muttered with contempt. "All truth is bent. Time itself is a circle."

"You spirit of heaviness!" I said angrily. "Don't make it too easy for yourself! Or I will leave you squatting where you squat, you lame-foot,—and remember, I carried you up here!

Look," I went on, "at this Moment! From this gateway called the Moment, a long, endless lane runs backward. Behind us lies forever.

Of all things, must not everything that can run have already run down this lane once? Of all things, must not everything that can happen have already happened once, been done, and gone running past?

And if everything has already been here before: what do you think of this Moment, dwarf? Must this gateway too not have—been here before?

And aren't all things tied together in a knot so tightly that this Moment drags all the things to come along behind it? And so—it drags itself along too?

Because, of all things, whatever can run: it must also run once more down this long lane going forward!—

And this slow spider crawling in the moonlight, and this moonlight itself, and you and I in the gateway, whispering together, whispering about eternal things—must we not all have been here before?

—and must we not come back and run down that other lane, out ahead of us, down this long, creepy lane—must we not come back forever?—"

That is how I talked, and I got quieter and quieter, because I was afraid of my own thoughts and of the thoughts hidden behind them. Then, suddenly, I heard a dog howling nearby.

Had I ever heard a dog howl like that? My mind ran back in time. Yes! When I was a child, in my earliest childhood:

—back then I heard a dog howl like that. And I saw it too, its fur standing on end, its head raised, trembling, in the stillest midnight, when even dogs believe in ghosts:

—so that I felt sorry for it. Because just then the full moon, silent as death, was passing over the house. Just then it stood still, a round glowing ball,—still on the flat roof, as if it were standing on someone else's property:—

that was what terrified the dog back then, because dogs believe in thieves and ghosts. And when I heard that howling again now, I felt sorry once more.

Where had the dwarf gone now? And the gateway? And the spider? And all the whispering? Was I dreaming, then? Was I waking up? All

at once I was standing among wild cliffs, alone, in a bleak place, in the bleakest moonlight.

But there lay a person! And there! The dog, jumping, its fur on end, whimpering,—now it saw me coming—then it howled again, then it screamed:—had I ever heard a dog scream for help like that?

And truly, what I saw, I had never seen anything like it. I saw a young shepherd, twisting, choking, jerking, his face distorted, with a heavy black snake hanging out of his mouth.

Had I ever seen so much disgust and pale horror on one face? Maybe he had been asleep? And then the snake crawled into his throat, and there it bit down and held on tight.

My hand pulled at the snake, pulled and pulled. It was no use! It could not pull the snake out of his throat. Then something shouted out of me: "Bite! Bite down!

Bite its head off! Bite down!" That is what shouted out of me. My horror, my hate, my disgust, my sympathy, all the good and bad in me shouted out of me in one single scream.

You bold people around me! You searchers and testers, and any of you who ever set out with clever sails onto seas no one has explored! You who love riddles!

Then solve the riddle I saw back then! Tell me what it means, this vision seen by the loneliest of all people!

Because it was a vision, and a look into the future. What was I seeing back then, in the form of a picture? And who is the one who still has to come one day?

Who is the shepherd that the snake crawled into the throat of like that? Who is the person whose throat everything heaviest and blackest will crawl into like that?

But the shepherd bit, just as my scream told him to. He bit with a good, strong bite! He spat the snake's head far away, and he jumped up.

He was no longer a shepherd, no longer a human. He was someone changed, someone surrounded by light, and he was laughing! Never before on earth had any human laughed the way he laughed!

Oh my brothers, I heard a laugh that was not a human's laugh. And now a thirst is eating away at me, a longing that will never go quiet.

My longing for that laugh is eating away at me. Oh, how can I stand to go on living! And yet how could I stand to die now!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## Happiness You Didn't Ask For

With riddles and bitter feelings like these in his heart, Zarathustra sailed across the sea. But when he was four days' journey away from the Happy Islands and from his friends, he had gotten past all his pain. He stood on his fate again, like a winner, with his feet planted firmly. And then Zarathustra spoke like this to his own joyful conscience:

"I am alone again, and I want to be alone, alone with a clear sky and an open sea. And once again it is afternoon all around me.

It was in the afternoon that I first found my friends, long ago. And it was in the afternoon the second time too: at the hour when all light grows quieter.

Because whatever happiness is still traveling between sky and earth now looks for a bright soul to stay in, like a traveler looking for an inn. It is because of happiness that all light has now grown quieter.

Oh afternoon of my life! Once my happiness also came down into the valley to look for a place to stay. And there it found these open, welcoming souls.

Oh afternoon of my life! What wouldn't I have given up to have this one thing: this living garden where my thoughts were planted and growing, and this morning light of my highest hope!

Once, the creator went looking for companions and for children of his hope. And look: it turned out that he could not find them unless he first created them himself.

So I am in the middle of my work, going to my children and coming back from them. For the sake of his children, Zarathustra has to complete himself.

Because deep down, the only things you truly love are your child and your work. And wherever there is a great love of yourself, that is a sign that you are pregnant with something. That is what I have found.

My children are still green, in their first spring. They stand close together and get shaken by the same winds. They are the trees of my garden and of my best soil.

And really! Wherever trees like these stand together, there are Happy Islands!

But one day I want to dig them up and plant each one on its own, so that each learns to be alone, and learns to be stubborn and careful.

Then I want each of them to stand by the sea, knotted and bent, tough but able to bend, a living lighthouse of life that cannot be beaten.

There, where the storms crash down into the sea, and where the mountain dips its trunk into the water to drink like an elephant, each of them must one day keep watch by day and by night, to be tested and to come to know himself.

Each one will be examined and tested to see if he is of my kind and my family line. I want to see whether he can be master of a will that lasts a long time, whether he stays quiet even when he talks, and whether he gives in so that in giving he also takes:

so that one day he may become my companion, someone who creates and celebrates together with Zarathustra. Someone who writes my will onto my tablets of rules, so that all things become more fully complete.

And for his sake and for the sake of those like him, I have to complete myself. That is why I am now avoiding my happiness and offering myself up to every kind of unhappiness, as my last test and my last way of knowing myself.

And really, it was time for me to leave. The wanderer's shadow, and the longest boredom, and the quietest hour, all of them urged me on: "It's high time!"

The wind blew through my keyhole and said, "Come!" The door sprang open slyly and said, "Go!"

But I lay chained by my love for my children. Desire set this trap for me, the desire for love, so that I would become my children's prey and lose myself in them.

To desire, for me, already means to have lost myself. I have you, my children! In this having, everything should be certainty, and nothing should be desire.

But the sun of my love sat on me like a hen brooding on eggs, and Zarathustra was stewing in his own juice. Then shadows and doubts flew over me.

I was already longing for frost and winter. "Oh, if only frost and winter would make me crack and creak again!" I sighed. And then icy fogs rose up out of me.

My past broke open its graves. Many a pain that had been buried alive woke up. It had only been sleeping, hidden in the clothes of a corpse, and now it had slept enough.

So everything was calling out to me in signs: "It's time!" But I did not listen, until at last my own depths stirred and my thought bit me.

Oh, bottomless thought, you who are my thought! When will I find the strength to hear you digging and no longer tremble?

My heart pounds all the way up into my throat when I hear you digging! Even your silence wants to choke me, you who are silent like a bottomless pit!

I have never yet dared to call you up to the surface. It was enough that I carried you around with me! I was not yet strong enough for the final, wild, daring boldness of a lion.

Your heaviness alone has always been frightening enough for me. But one day I will find the strength and the lion's voice to call you up!

Once I have gotten past that in myself, then I want to get past something even greater. And a victory will be the seal that marks my completion!

Meanwhile, I am still drifting on uncertain seas. Chance flatters me with its smooth tongue. I look forward and I look back, but I still see no end.

The hour of my last fight has not come to me yet. Or is it coming to me right now? Really, the sea and life all around are looking at me with a treacherous beauty!

Oh afternoon of my life! Oh happiness before evening! Oh harbor out on the open sea! Oh peace in the middle of uncertainty! How I distrust all of you!

Really, I don't trust your treacherous beauty! I am like a lover who doesn't trust a smile that is far too soft and velvety.

Like a jealous man who pushes away the woman he loves most, still tender even in his harshness, that is how I push this happy hour away from me.

Go away, you happy hour! With you came a happiness I didn't want! I am standing here willing to face my deepest pain. You came at the wrong time!

Go away, you happy hour! Go and stay over there instead, with my children! Hurry! And bless them with my happiness before evening comes!

Evening is already coming near. The sun is sinking. Gone is my happiness!"

That is what Zarathustra said. And he waited for his unhappiness all night long, but he waited for nothing. The night stayed bright and still, and happiness itself kept coming closer and closer to him. But toward morning, Zarathustra laughed to his heart and said mockingly: "Happiness is running after me. That's because I don't run after women. And happiness is a woman."

## Before Sunrise

Oh sky above me, you pure one! You deep one! You bottomless pit of light! When I look at you, I tremble with longings that feel godlike.

To throw myself up into your height—that is my depth! To hide myself in your purity—that is my innocence!

A god is hidden by his own beauty. In the same way, you hide your stars. You say nothing, and by saying nothing you tell me your wisdom.

Silent above the roaring sea, you rose for me today. Your love and your shyness speak something revealing to my roaring soul.

You came to me beautiful, wrapped up in your beauty. You speak to me without words, and your wisdom shows itself plainly:

Oh, how could I not guess everything shy and modest in your soul! You came to me before the sun did, to me, the loneliest of all.

We have been friends from the very beginning. We share sorrow, and horror, and the deep ground of things. We even share the sun.

We do not talk to each other, because we know too much. We are silent together, and we smile what we know at each other.

Are you not the light for my fire? Is your soul not a sister to my understanding?

We learned everything together. Together we learned to climb up past ourselves to our true selves, and to smile without a single cloud:—

—to smile down without a cloud, from bright eyes and from miles away, while far below us force and purpose and guilt steam like rain.

And when I wandered alone, what was my soul hungry for, in the nights and on the wrong paths? And when I climbed mountains, who was I ever looking for up there, if not you?

And all my wandering and mountain climbing was only something I had to do, a clumsy way of getting by for someone who could not do better. What my whole will really wants is to fly, to fly right up into you!

And who did I hate more than drifting clouds and everything that stains you? I even hated my own hate, because it stained you too!

I am angry at the drifting clouds, these sneaking cats of prey. They steal from you and from me what we share: the huge, endless saying of Yes and Amen.

We are angry at these go-betweens and mixers, the drifting clouds. They are half-and-half things, who never learned to bless, and never learned to curse with their whole heart either.

I would rather sit in a barrel under a closed-in sky, I would rather sit in a pit with no sky at all, than see you, sky of light, stained by drifting clouds!

And I often wished I could pin them down with jagged golden wires of lightning, so that I could beat on their round, pot-shaped bellies like a drum, the way thunder does:—

—an angry drummer, because they rob me of your Yes! and Amen!, you sky above me, you pure one! You bright one! You bottomless pit of light!—and because they rob you of my Yes! and Amen!

Because I would rather have noise and thunder and storms cursing, than this careful, doubtful calm, like a cat waiting. And among people too, the ones I hate most are all those who tiptoe around, the half-and-halfs, the doubting, hesitating drifting clouds.

And this clear teaching fell to me out of a clear sky: "Whoever cannot bless should learn to curse!" This lesson is like a star that still shines in my sky, even on black nights.

But I am someone who blesses and says Yes, as long as you are near me, you pure one! You bright one! You bottomless pit of light! Then I carry my blessing and my Yes down into every dark pit there is.

I have become someone who blesses and says Yes. And for that I struggled for a long time, I was a wrestler, so that one day I would have my hands free to bless.

And this is my way of blessing: to stand over every single thing as its own sky, as its round roof, its sky-blue dome, and its forever safety. And happy is whoever blesses like this!

Because all things are baptized at the spring of eternity, and they are beyond good and evil. Good and evil themselves are only shadows passing in between, damp gloominess, and drifting clouds.

Truly, it is a blessing and not an insult to God when I teach this: "Over all things stands the sky called Chance, the sky called Innocence, the sky called Accident, the sky called Wild Joy."

"By chance"—that is the oldest noble title in the world. I gave it back to all things. I set them free from being slaves to a purpose.

I placed this freedom and this sky-bright cheerfulness over all things like a sky-blue dome, when I taught that there is no "eternal will" above them or working through them that wants something.

I put this wild joy and this foolishness in the place of that will, when I taught: "In everything, one thing is impossible—making complete sense!"

A little reason, true, a seed of wisdom scattered from star to star—this yeast is mixed into all things. Wisdom is mixed into all things for the sake of foolishness!

A little wisdom is possible. But this happy certainty I found in all things: that they would rather dance on the feet of chance.

Oh sky above me, you pure one! You high one! This is what your purity means to me now: that there is no eternal spider of reason, and no spiderwebs of reason, holding everything in place:—

—that for me you are a dance floor for godlike chances, that for me you are a table of the gods for godlike dice and dice players!—

But are you blushing? Did I say something that should not be said? Did I insult you, when I meant to bless you?

Or is it the shyness two people feel together that made you blush? Are you telling me to go and be quiet, because now the day is coming?

The world is deep, and deeper than the day has ever thought. Not everything may be put into words in front of the day. But the day is coming, so now we part!

Oh sky above me, you shy one! You glowing one! Oh you, my happiness before sunrise! The day is coming, so now we part!—

That is what Zarathustra said.

## About the Virtue That Makes You Smaller

### 1.

When Zarathustra was back on solid land, he did not head straight for his mountains and his cave. Instead he took many roads, asked many questions, and looked into this and that. He did it so much that he joked about himself: "Look, a river that winds back and forth on its way back to its source!" He wanted to find out what had happened to humans while he was away: had they become bigger, or smaller? And once he saw a row of new houses. He was surprised, and he said:

"What do these houses mean? Truly, no great soul put them here as a picture of itself!

Did some silly child take them out of its toy box? If only another child would put them back in its box!

And these rooms and little chambers: can grown men even walk in and out of them? They seem to me to be made for silk dolls. Or for people with a sweet tooth, who like to nibble on treats and probably also let others nibble on them."

And Zarathustra stood still and thought it over. At last he said sadly: "Everything has become smaller!

Everywhere I see lower doorways. Someone like me can still get through them, but he has to bend down!

Oh, when will I get back to my home, where I no longer have to bend down? Where I no longer have to bow before the small people!" And Zarathustra sighed and looked far away.

But that same day he gave his speech about the virtue that makes you smaller.

## 2.

I walk through this crowd and keep my eyes open. They cannot forgive me for not being jealous of their virtues.

They snap at me because I tell them: small people need small virtues. And they snap at me because I find it hard to accept that small people are needed at all!

Here I am still like a rooster on a strange farm, where even the hens peck at him. But I don't hold it against these hens.

I am polite to them, the way I am polite to every small annoyance. Being prickly toward small things seems to me like wisdom fit for hedgehogs.

They all talk about me when they sit around the fire in the evening. They talk about me, but no one actually thinks about me!

This is the new kind of quiet I have learned: their noise around me spreads like a cloak over my thoughts and hides them.

They chatter noisily to each other: "What does this dark cloud want from us? Let's make sure it doesn't bring us some disease!"

And just recently a woman pulled her child back to her when it wanted to come to me. "Take the children away!" she screamed. "Eyes like that burn children's souls."

They cough when I speak. They think coughing is an argument against strong winds. They have no idea of the roaring storm of my happiness!

"We don't have time for Zarathustra yet": that is their excuse. But what is a time worth that "has no time" for Zarathustra?

And even when they praise me: how could I fall asleep resting on their praise? Their praise is like a belt full of spikes to me. It still scratches me even as I take it off.

And I learned this too among them: the person who praises acts as if he is giving something back. But really he wants to be given even more!

Ask my foot whether it likes their way of praising and luring! Truly, to a beat like that, all tick-tock, my foot wants neither to dance nor to stand still.

They would like to lure me and praise me into small virtue. They would like to talk my foot into the tick-tock rhythm of small happiness.

I walk through this crowd and keep my eyes open. They have become smaller, and they keep getting smaller. And what causes it is their teaching about happiness and virtue.

You see, they are modest even in virtue, because they want comfort. And only modest virtue goes well with comfort.

Sure, in their own way they also learn to walk and to walk forward. I call it their limping. Because of it, they get in the way of anyone who is in a hurry.

And many of them walk forward while looking backward, with a stiff neck. I enjoy running right into someone like that.

Your feet and your eyes should not lie, and they should not show each other up as liars. But there is a lot of lying among the small people.

Some of them have a will of their own, but most of them are only moved by the will of others. Some of them are genuine, but most of them are bad actors.

Among them there are actors who don't know they are acting, and actors who don't want to be acting. The genuine ones are always rare, especially the genuine actors.

There is little of the real man here, so their women become manly. For only someone who is man enough will set free the woman inside the woman.

And this is the worst hypocrisy I found among them: that even those who give orders fake the virtues of those who serve.

"I serve, you serve, we serve": that is the prayer here, even of the rulers' hypocrisy. And how terrible it is when the first master is only the first servant!

Oh, my curious eye even flew off into their hypocrisies. And I easily guessed their whole fly-like happiness, the way they buzz around sunny windowpanes.

I see so much kindness, and so much weakness. So much fairness and pity, and so much weakness.

They are smooth, fair, and kind with each other, just the way grains of sand are smooth, fair, and kind with other grains of sand.

Modestly hugging a little happiness: that is what they call "accepting your fate"! And all the while they are already modestly glancing around for a new little happiness.

Deep down, in their simple way, they want one thing most of all: that nobody hurts them. So they get in first and do everyone a favor.

But this is cowardice, even if they call it "virtue."

And when these small people do speak roughly for once, all I hear is how hoarse they are. You see, every little breeze makes them hoarse.

They are clever, and their virtues have clever fingers. But they have no fists. Their fingers don't know how to curl up and hide inside a fist.

To them, virtue is whatever makes you modest and tame. With it they turned the wolf into a dog, and turned humans themselves into the favorite pet of humans.

"We put our chair right in the middle" — that is what their smug little smiles tell me — "just as far from dying gladiators as from happy pigs."

But this is mediocrity, even if they call it moderation.

**3.**

I walk through this crowd and let many words drop. But they know neither how to pick them up nor how to keep them.

They are surprised that I didn't come to rant against pleasures and bad habits. And truly, I didn't come to warn people about pickpockets either!

They are surprised that I am not ready to make their cleverness even sharper and wittier. As if they didn't already have enough know-it-alls, whose voices scratch on my nerves like slate pencils on a slate!

And when I call out: "Curse all the cowardly devils inside you, who like to whine, fold their hands, and worship," they call back: "Zarathustra has no God."

And their teachers of accepting your fate shout it loudest. But those are exactly the people I love to scream into the ear of: Yes! I am Zarathustra, the one without God!

These teachers of accepting your fate! They crawl like lice to every place that is small and sick and scabby. And only my disgust stops me from cracking them between my nails.

Well then! This is my sermon for their ears: I am Zarathustra, the one without God, who says: "Who is more godless than I am, so that I could enjoy learning from him?"

I am Zarathustra, the one without God. Where can I find people like me? All those are like me who give themselves their own will and throw off every kind of meek giving in.

I am Zarathustra, the one without God: I still cook every accident, every chance thing that happens to me, in my own pot. And only when it is fully cooked there do I welcome it, as my food.

And really, many a chance event came to me acting like a master. But my will spoke to it even more like a master. And right away it was down on its knees, begging,

begging to find a place to stay and a warm heart with me, and saying to me in a flattering voice: "Look, oh Zarathustra, I come to you only the way a friend comes to a friend!"

But why am I talking, when nobody here has ears like mine? So I will shout it out into all the winds:

You keep getting smaller, you small people! You are crumbling away, you comfortable ones! You will end up being destroyed,

destroyed by your many small virtues, by your many small things you hold back from doing, by your many small ways of giving in!

Too gentle, too ready to give way: that is the kind of soil you are! But for a tree to grow big, it has to drive hard roots around hard rocks!

Even the things you hold back from doing are weaving the cloth of the whole future of humanity. Even your nothing is a spiderweb, and a spider that lives on the blood of the future.

And when you take something, it is like stealing, you small virtuous people. But even among crooks, honor says: "You should only steal when you can't rob openly."

"It will work itself out," or "It will be given": that is another teaching of giving in. But I tell you, you comfortable people: it takes, and it will take more and more from you!

Oh, if only you would throw off all your half-wanting, and make up your minds firmly, whether for being lazy or for taking action!

Oh, if only you understood what I say: "Go ahead and do whatever you want, but first be the kind of people who are able to want!"

"Go ahead and love your neighbor as yourself, but first, for my sake, be the kind of people who love themselves,

who love with the great love, who love with great disgust with yourself!" That is what Zarathustra says, the one without God.

But why am I talking, when nobody here has ears like mine? It is still an hour too early for me here.

Among this crowd I am my own forerunner, the one who comes ahead to announce myself. I am my own rooster crowing through dark streets before dawn.

But their hour is coming! And mine is coming too! Every hour they become smaller, poorer, less able to grow anything. Poor weeds! Poor soil!

And soon they will stand before me like dry grass and empty plains. And really, they will be tired of themselves, and thirsting for fire even more than for water!

Oh blessed hour of the lightning! Oh secret before midday! Someday I will still turn them into running fires, and into messengers with tongues of flame.

Someday they will still announce it with tongues of flame: He is coming, he is near, the great midday!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On the Mount of Olives

Winter, a nasty guest, is sitting in my home. My hands are blue from the handshake of his friendship.

I respect him, this nasty guest, but I'm happy to leave him sitting alone. I like running away from him. And if you run well, you can get away from him!

With warm feet and warm thoughts I run to the place where the wind stands still: to the sunny corner of my Mount of Olives.

There I laugh at my strict guest, and I still like him, because back home he catches the flies for me and quiets a lot of little noises.

You see, he can't stand it when a single mosquito wants to sing, let alone two. He even makes the street so empty and lonely that the moonlight in it gets scared at night.

He is a harsh guest, but I respect him. And I don't pray, like the soft and pampered people do, to the fat-bellied idol of fire, the stove.

Better to let my teeth chatter a little than to worship idols! That's just how I am. And I especially can't stand all those steamy, stuffy, hot and heavy fire-idols.

The people I love, I love better in winter than in summer. And I make fun of my enemies better and more boldly now, ever since winter has been sitting in my house.

Boldly, really, even when I crawl into bed. Even then my happiness, curled up and hidden, still laughs and plays its pranks. Even my lying dream still laughs.

Me, a crawler? Never in my life have I crawled before powerful people. And if I ever lied, I lied out of love. That's why I'm happy even in my winter bed.

A plain, simple bed warms me more than a rich one, because I guard my poverty jealously. And in winter my poverty is most faithful to me.

I start every day with a bit of mischief: I mock the winter by taking a cold bath. That makes my strict housemate grumble.

I also like to tickle him with a little wax candle, so that he will finally let the sky out of the ash-gray twilight.

You see, I'm especially mischievous in the morning, at that early hour when the bucket rattles at the well and the horses neigh, warm, through the gray streets.

Then I wait impatiently for the bright sky to finally rise for me, the snow-bearded winter sky, that old man with the white head,

the winter sky, the silent one, who often still keeps his sun to himself and says nothing about it!

Did I learn the long, bright silence from him? Or did he learn it from me? Or did each of us invent it on our own?

All good things come from a thousand different beginnings. All good, playful things jump into being out of pure joy. So how could they ever do that only once!

The long silence is a good, playful thing too. So is looking out, like the winter sky, from a bright, round-eyed face,

and, like the winter sky, keeping quiet about your sun and about your unbending will to shine. Truly, I learned this skill and this winter playfulness well!

My favorite trick and skill is this: my silence has learned not to give itself away by being silent.

Rattling words and dice, I outsmart the solemn watchers. My will and my purpose are meant to slip away from all these strict guards.

So that no one can look down into my depths and my final will, I invented the long, bright silence for myself.

I have met many clever people who covered their faces with a veil and muddied their water, so that no one could see through it and down to the bottom.

But it was exactly those people who attracted the cleverer suspicious types, the nutcrackers who crack things open. It was exactly from them that people fished out their most hidden fish!

No, the bright ones, the brave and honest ones, the see-through ones: to me, they are the cleverest at keeping silent. Their depths are so deep that even the clearest water doesn't give them away.

You snow-bearded, silent winter sky, you round-eyed white head above me! Oh, you heavenly picture of my soul and its playfulness!

And don't I have to hide, like someone who has swallowed gold, so that people won't slit my soul open to get at it?

Don't I have to walk on stilts, so that they won't notice my long legs, all these envious grumps and lovers of misery around me?

These smoky, stuffy, room-warm, worn-out, moldy, sour souls: how could their envy stand my happiness!

So I show them only the ice and the winter on my peaks, and not that my mountain still wraps every belt of sunshine around itself!

They hear only my winter storms whistling, and not that I also sweep over warm seas, like longing, heavy, hot south winds.

They even feel sorry for my accidents and the bad luck that happens to me. But my saying is: "Let chance come to me. It is innocent, like a little child!"

How could they stand my happiness if I didn't wrap it up in accidents and winter troubles and polar-bear caps and coverings of snowy sky!

if I didn't myself take pity on their pity, the pity of these envious grumps and lovers of misery!

if I didn't sigh in front of them myself, and shiver with cold, and patiently let myself be wrapped up in their pity!

This is the wise playfulness and kindness of my soul: it doesn't hide its winter and its icy storms. It doesn't even hide its frostbite.

For one person, being alone is the sick person running away. For another, being alone is running away from the sick.

Let them hear me shiver and sigh from the winter cold, all these poor, squinting, jealous rascals around me! With all this sighing and shivering, I still escape from their heated rooms.

Let them pity me and sigh over me because of my frostbite. "He'll freeze to death on the ice of knowledge yet!" That's how they complain.

Meanwhile I run back and forth with warm feet on my Mount of Olives. In the sunny corner of my Mount of Olives I sing, and I make fun of all pity.

That is what Zarathustra sang.

## On Walking Past

So Zarathustra walked slowly through many crowds and many kinds of cities, taking roundabout roads back to his mountains and his cave. And look: on the way, without expecting it, he came to the city gate of the great city. But here a foaming fool came leaping at him with his arms spread wide and blocked his path. This was the same fool whom the crowd called "Zarathustra's ape." He had picked up a little of the way Zarathustra built his sentences and how his speech rose and fell, and he also liked to borrow from the treasure of his wisdom. And the fool spoke to Zarathustra like this:

"Oh Zarathustra, here is the great city. There is nothing here for you to look for, and everything for you to lose.

Why would you want to wade through this mud? Have pity on your feet! Better to spit on the city gate and turn back!

This is hell for the thoughts of someone who lives alone. Here great thoughts are boiled alive and cooked down until they are small.

Here all great feelings rot. Here only tiny feelings, thin as rattling bones, are allowed to rattle!

Can't you already smell the slaughterhouses and cheap food stalls of the mind? Isn't this city steaming with the fumes of butchered minds?

Can't you see the souls hanging there like limp, dirty rags? And on top of that, they make newspapers out of these rags!

Can't you hear how the mind here has turned into a game of words? It throws up disgusting dishwater made of words! And on top of that, they make newspapers out of this word-dishwater.

They chase each other and don't know where they are going. They get each other worked up and don't know why. They jingle their cheap tin, they clink their gold.

They are cold, so they look for warmth in hard liquor. They are overheated, so they look for coolness in frozen minds. They are all sick and addicted to public opinion.

Every pleasure and every vice is at home here. But there are also virtuous people here, plenty of handy, employed virtue:

plenty of handy virtue with fingers made for writing and backsides toughened by sitting and waiting, blessed with little medals pinned on their chests and with stuffed-up daughters who have no backsides at all.

There is also a lot of piety here, and a lot of faithful bootlicking and flattery baked up before the God of armies.

After all, it is "from above" that the medal and the gracious spit drip down. And every chest without a medal longs to reach up there.

The moon has its royal court, and the court has its moon-calves, its fools. And to everything that comes from the court, the begging crowd and all the handy begging virtue say their prayers.

"I serve, you serve, we serve": that is how all handy virtue prays up to the prince, hoping that the medal it has earned will finally be pinned on its narrow chest!

But the moon still turns around all things of the earth. And in the same way the prince still turns around the most earthly thing of all: and that is the shopkeepers' gold.

The God of armies is not a God of gold bars. The prince proposes, but the shopkeeper disposes: the prince thinks he is in charge, but the shopkeeper is the one who steers!

By everything that is bright and strong and good in you, oh Zarathustra! Spit on this city of shopkeepers and turn back!

Here all the blood flows rotten and lukewarm and foamy through every vein. Spit on the great city, which is the great garbage heap where all the scum foams together!

Spit on the city of crushed souls and narrow chests, of sharp, prying eyes and sticky fingers,

on the city of pushy people, shameless people, scribblers and loudmouths, overheated strivers for fame,

where everything that is crumbling, foul-smelling, lustful, gloomy, overripe, full of sores and full of plots festers together like a wound,

spit on the great city and turn back!"

But here Zarathustra interrupted the foaming fool and put his hand over his mouth.

"Stop it, finally!" Zarathustra shouted. "Your talk and your manner have disgusted me for a long time!

Why did you live so long by the swamp that you had to turn into a frog and a toad yourself?

Isn't rotten, foamy swamp blood now flowing through your own veins, so that you learned to croak and to insult like this?

Why didn't you go into the forest? Or plow the earth? Isn't the sea full of green islands?

I despise your despising. And if you warned me, why didn't you warn yourself?

My despising and my bird of warning should fly up out of love alone, and not out of the swamp!

People call you my ape, you foaming fool. But I call you my grunting pig. With your grunting, you will end up spoiling my praise of foolishness.

So what was it that first made you grunt? It was that nobody flattered you enough. That's why you sat yourself down next to this filth, so that you would have reason to grunt a lot,

so that you would have reason for lots of revenge! Because all your foaming, you vain fool, is revenge. I have figured you out!

But your fool's talk hurts me, even where you are right! And even if Zarathustra's words were right a hundred times over, you would still always do wrong with my words!"

That is what Zarathustra said. And he looked at the great city, sighed, and was silent for a long time. At last he spoke like this:

I am disgusted by this great city too, and not only by this fool. In both of them there is nothing to make better and nothing to make worse.

Woe to this great city! And I wish I could already see the pillar of fire in which it will be burned up!

Because pillars of fire like that must come before the great midday. But that has its own time and its own fate.

But I give you this teaching as a farewell, you fool: where you can no longer love, there you should walk past!

That is what Zarathustra said, and he walked past the fool and the great city.

## About the Deserters

### 1.

Oh, is everything already lying withered and gray that stood green and colorful in this meadow only a short while ago? And how much honey of hope I carried from here into my beehives!

These young hearts have all grown old already. And not even old! Just tired, ordinary, and lazy. They call it "We have become religious again."

Only recently I saw them running out early in the morning on brave feet. But their feet, the ones that walked the road of knowledge, got tired. And now they even badmouth the bravery they had in their morning!

Really, some of them once lifted their legs like a dancer. The laughter in my wisdom was waving at him to come. Then he had second thoughts. Just now I saw him, bent over, crawling to the cross.

Once they fluttered around light and freedom, like gnats and young poets. A little older, a little colder, and already they have become people who hide in the dark, whisper and gossip, and sit by the stove.

Did their hearts lose courage because loneliness swallowed me up like a whale? Did their ears listen for me for a long time, full of longing, but in vain, waiting for my trumpet calls and my messenger's shouts?

Oh! There are always only a few whose hearts have long-lasting courage and wild boldness. And in people like that, the mind stays patient too. But the rest are cowards.

The rest: that is always the great majority, the everyday, the leftover, the far too many people. All of these are cowards!

Whoever is my kind of person will also run into my kind of experiences. That means his first companions will have to be corpses and clowns.

But his second companions will call themselves his believers. A lively swarm, lots of love, lots of foolishness, lots of beardless, boyish worship.

Whoever is my kind among people should not tie his heart to these believers. Whoever knows the fleeting, cowardly human type should not put his faith in these springtimes and colorful meadows!

If they could do otherwise, they would also want otherwise. People who are half this and half that spoil everything that is whole. That leaves wither—what is there to complain about in that!

Let them go and let them fall, oh Zarathustra, and don't complain! Better still, blow among them with rustling winds,

blow among these leaves, oh Zarathustra, so that everything withered runs away from you even faster!

**2.**

"We have become religious again": that is what these deserters confess. And some of them are still too cowardly even to confess that.

I look those ones in the eye. I say it to their face and to the red of their blushing cheeks: you are the kind of people who pray again!

But it is a disgrace to pray! Not for everyone, but for you and me and anyone who also has a conscience in his head. For you it is a disgrace to pray!

You know it well: the cowardly devil inside you, who likes to fold his hands, and sit with his hands in his lap, and have an easier time of it —this cowardly devil talks you into it: "There is a God!"

But with that, you belong to the kind that is afraid of light, the kind that light never leaves in peace. Now every day you have to stick your head deeper into night and fog!

And really, you picked your hour well, because right now the night birds are flying out again. The hour has come for all the light-fearing crowd, the evening hour and the hour of rest, when they do not —"rest".

I hear it and I smell it: their hour has come for hunting and going on parade. Not a wild hunt, though, but a tame, lame, sniffing hunt of people who tiptoe quietly and pray quietly,

a hunt for soulful, timid sneaks. All the mousetraps for hearts have been set up again! And wherever I lift a curtain, a little moth comes tumbling out.

Was it crouching there together with another little moth? Because everywhere I smell little hidden-away congregations. And wherever there are little back rooms, there are new prayer brothers inside, and the stuffy smell of prayer brothers.

They sit together for long evenings and say: "Let us become like little children again and say 'dear God'!" Their mouths and stomachs have been ruined by the religious candy makers.

Or for long evenings they watch a cunning, lurking cross spider, which preaches cleverness to the spiders themselves and teaches like this: "Under crosses, spinning is good!"

Or they sit all day by swamps with fishing rods and think that makes them deep. But a man who fishes where there are no fish, I would not even call shallow!

Or they learn, in a pious and cheerful way, to play the harp from a songwriter who would love to strum his way into the hearts of young women. Because he got tired of the old women and their praise.

Or they learn to get the creeps from a learned man who is half crazy, who waits in dark rooms for the spirits to come to him—while his own mind runs away completely!

Or they listen to an old, wandering, droning and grumbling piper, who learned the gloom of his tunes from gloomy winds. Now he whistles whichever way the wind blows and preaches gloom in gloomy tones.

And some of them have even become night watchmen. They now know how to blow horns and walk around at night and wake up old things that fell asleep long ago.

Last night by the garden wall I heard five sayings about old things. They came from some of those old, gloomy, dried-up night watchmen.

The first watchman said: "For a father, he doesn't care enough about his children. Human fathers do this better!"

"He's too old! He doesn't care about his children at all anymore," the other night watchman answered.

"Does he even have children? Nobody can prove it, if he doesn't prove it himself! I've wanted him to prove it properly for a long time."

"Prove it? As if he had ever proved anything! Proving is hard for him. He sets great store by people simply believing him."

"Yes! Yes! Faith makes him happy, faith in him. That's just how old people are! It's the same with us!"

That is how the two old night watchmen, those scarecrows that scare off the light, talked to each other. And then they gloomily tooted their horns. That is what happened last night by the garden wall.

But my heart twisted with laughter and wanted to burst, and didn't know where to go, and sank down into my belly.

Really, this will be the death of me yet, that I choke with laughter when I see donkeys drunk and hear night watchmen doubting God like that.

Hasn't the time for all such doubts long since passed too? Who still has the right to wake up such old, sleeping, light-fearing things!

After all, it has been over for the old gods for a long time. And really, they had a good, cheerful end, as gods go!

They did not fade away into a twilight and die—that's a lie people tell! No, instead, one day they laughed themselves to death!

That happened when the most godless words of all came from a god himself. The words: "There is one God! You shall have no other god besides me!"

An old grim-bearded god, a jealous one, forgot himself like that.

And all the gods laughed then, and rocked on their chairs, and shouted: "Isn't that exactly what being divine means, that there are gods, but not one single God?"

Whoever has ears, let him hear.

That is how Zarathustra spoke in the town he loved, which is called the Spotted Cow. From here he only had two more days to walk before he would be back in his cave and with his animals. And his soul kept cheering because he was so close to coming home.

## Coming Home

Oh loneliness! Loneliness, you are my home! I lived wild for too long in wild, foreign places, so of course I come home to you with tears in my eyes!

Go on, shake your finger at me the way mothers do when they scold. No, smile at me the way mothers smile. Go on and say: "And who was it that once rushed away from me like a storm wind?—

—who shouted as he left: I sat with loneliness too long, and I forgot how to be quiet! Well—have you learned that now?"

Loneliness answers: "Oh Zarathustra, I know everything. I know that out there among the crowds, you, the one who stands apart, were more abandoned than you ever were with me!

Being abandoned is one thing, and being alone is another. That is what you have learned now! And you have learned that among people you will always be wild and a stranger:

—wild and a stranger even when they love you. Because more than anything else, they want to be handled gently!

But here you are at home with yourself. Here you can say everything out loud and pour out all your reasons. Here nothing is ashamed of feelings that are hidden or stubborn.

Here all things come to your words lovingly and flatter you, because they want to ride on your back. Here you ride on every picture and comparison to reach every truth.

Here you may speak to all things standing tall and being honest. And truly, it sounds like praise to their ears when someone talks with all things—straight and direct!

But being abandoned is something else. Do you still remember, oh Zarathustra? Back then, when your bird cried out above you, when you stood in the forest, not sure where to go, not knowing the way, next to a dead body:—

—when you said: Let my animals lead me! I found it more dangerous among people than among animals:—that was being abandoned!

And do you still remember, oh Zarathustra? When you sat on your island, like a fountain of wine among empty buckets, giving and giving away, pouring and pouring out for thirsty people:

—until at last you sat alone and thirsty among drunk people, and complained at night: 'Isn't taking happier than giving? And isn't stealing even happier than taking?'—that was being abandoned!

And do you still remember, oh Zarathustra? When your quietest hour came and drove you away from yourself, when it spoke to you in an evil whisper: 'Speak, and break apart!'—

—when it made you sick of all your waiting and your silence, and took the heart out of your humble courage: that was being abandoned!"—

Zarathustra answers: Oh loneliness! Loneliness, you are my home! How happily and tenderly your voice speaks to me!

We don't question each other, we don't complain to each other. We walk openly together through open doors.

Because with you everything is open and bright, and even the hours run on lighter feet here. In the dark, you see, time weighs on you more heavily than in the light.

Here the words of everything that exists burst open for me, like boxes full of words springing open. Everything that exists wants to become

words here. Everything that is changing and growing wants to learn from me how to speak.

But down there—down there all talking is useless! Down there the best wisdom is to forget and to walk on by. That is what I have learned now!

Anyone who wanted to grasp everything about people would have to put his hands on everything. But my hands are too clean for that.

I don't even like breathing in their breath. Oh, that I lived so long in their noise and their bad breath!

Oh happy silence all around me! Oh clean smells all around me! Oh, how deeply this silence breathes in pure air, as if from a deep chest! Oh, how it listens, this happy silence!

But down there—down there everybody talks, and nobody really hears anything. You could ring in your wisdom with bells, and the shopkeepers in the market would drown it out with the jingling of their pennies!

With them everybody talks, and nobody knows how to understand anymore. Everything falls into the water and is lost; nothing falls into deep wells anymore, where it could be kept.

With them everybody talks, and nothing turns out well or gets finished anymore. Everyone clucks like a hen, but who still wants to sit quietly on the nest and hatch the eggs?

With them everybody talks, and everything gets talked to pieces. What was too hard yesterday even for time itself and its gnawing tooth, today hangs scraped and chewed up out of the mouths of people today.

With them everybody talks, and everything gets given away. What was once called a secret, the private treasure of deep souls, today belongs to the street trumpeters and other fluttering butterflies.

Oh human nature, you strange thing! You noise in dark streets! Now you lie behind me again:—my greatest danger lies behind me!

My greatest danger always lay in going easy on people and in pity. And everything human wants to be handled gently and to be pitied.

Holding back the truth, with a fool's hand and a foolish, love-struck heart, and full of little lies told out of pity:—that is how I always lived among people.

I sat among them in disguise, ready to misjudge myself just so I could put up with them, and happily telling myself: "You fool, you don't know people!"

You forget what people are like when you live among them. There is too much surface on all people, too much in the foreground—so what use are eyes that see far and long for faraway things!

And when they misjudged me, I, the fool, went easier on them than on myself. I was used to being hard on myself, and often I even took revenge on myself for going so easy on them.

Stung all over by poisonous flies, and hollowed out like a stone by many drops of spite, that is how I sat among them, and I still told myself: "Everything small is innocent of being small!"

Especially those who call themselves "the good," I found to be the most poisonous flies. They sting in total innocence, they lie in total innocence. How could they ever manage to be fair to me!

If you live among the good, pity teaches you to lie. Pity makes the air stuffy for every free soul. Because the stupidity of the good has no bottom.

To hide myself and my riches—that is what I learned down there, because I found everyone still poor in mind. That was the lie of my pity: that with every person I knew,

—that I could see it in each of them and smell it on them, how much mind was enough for him and how much mind was already too much!

Their stiff wise men: I called them wise, not stiff—that is how I learned to swallow words. Their gravediggers: I called them researchers and examiners—that is how I learned to swap words.

Gravediggers dig themselves up diseases. Nasty fumes lie under old rubble. You shouldn't stir up the swamp. You should live on mountains.

With happy nostrils I breathe mountain freedom again! At last my nose is set free from the smell of everything human!

Tickled by sharp, fresh air, as if by bubbling wine, my soul sneezes—it sneezes and cheers to itself: Bless you!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On the Three Evil Things

### 1.

In a dream, in my last dream of the morning, I stood today on a high cliff over the sea, beyond the world. I held a pair of scales, and I weighed the world.

Oh, the dawn came to me too early! Its glow woke me up, that jealous thing! The dawn is always jealous of the glowing fire of my morning dreams.

It can be measured by someone who has the time, weighed by a good weigher, flown across by strong wings, and guessed by godlike nut-crackers who can crack the hardest riddles: that is how my dream found the world:—

My dream is a bold sailor, half ship, half whirlwind. It is silent like butterflies and impatient like noble falcons. And yet, how much patience and time it had today for weighing the world!

Did my wisdom secretly talk it into this? My laughing, wide-awake daytime wisdom, which makes fun of all talk about "endless worlds"? Because my wisdom says: "Where there is strength, number becomes the master too. Number has more strength."

How calmly and surely my dream looked at this world, a world with limits. It was not hungry for new things, not hungry for old things, not afraid, not begging:—

—as if a full apple were offering itself to my hand, a ripe golden apple with cool, soft, velvety skin: that is how the world offered itself to me: —

—as if a tree were waving to me, a tree with wide branches and a strong will, bent so that it makes a backrest, and even a footrest, for someone tired from walking: that is how the world stood on my cliff: —

—as if graceful hands were carrying a treasure box toward me, a box opened for the delight of shy, admiring eyes: that is how the world offered itself to me today:—

—not so much of a riddle that it scares human love away, and not so much of an answer that it puts human wisdom to sleep. Today the world seemed to me a humanly good thing, this world that people say such evil things about!

How grateful I am to my morning dream that I weighed the world like this, early today! It came to me as a humanly good thing, this dream that comforts the heart!

And so that I can do the same as my dream did, now during the day, and learn and copy the best from it, I now want to put the three most evil things on the scales and weigh them in a humanly good way.—

Whoever taught people to bless also taught them to curse. Which are the three most cursed things in the world? These are the ones I want to put on the scales.

Sexual pleasure, the craving to rule, and selfishness: up to now, these three have been cursed the most, and slandered and lied about the worst. These three I want to weigh in a humanly good way.

Let's go! Here is my cliff, and there is the sea. It rolls toward me, shaggy and flattering, that loyal old hundred-headed dog-monster that I love.

Let's go! Here I want to hold the scales over the rolling sea. And I also choose a witness to watch: you, lonely hermit tree, you strong-smelling tree with your wide, arching crown, whom I love!—

On what bridge does the now walk over to the someday? What force makes the high bend down to the low? And what does it mean that even the highest still has to grow higher?—

Now the scales are level and still. I threw three heavy questions into one pan, and the other pan holds three heavy answers.

**2.**

Sexual pleasure: for all those who despise the body and wear rough shirts to punish themselves, it is the thorn in their flesh and the stake that pierces them. All believers in another world curse it as "the world." That is because it mocks and fools all teachers of confusion and error.

Sexual pleasure: for the scum, it is the slow fire they are burned on. For all worm-eaten wood and all stinking rags, it is the furnace that is always ready to blaze and bubble.

Sexual pleasure: for free hearts it is innocent and free. It is the garden happiness of the earth, the overflowing thanks that the whole future gives to the present.

Sexual pleasure: only for the withered is it a sickly-sweet poison. For those with the will of a lion, it is the great strengthener of the heart, the wine of wines, saved up and treated with deep respect.

Sexual pleasure: the great happiness that is a picture of a higher happiness and of the highest hope. Because many things are promised marriage, and more than marriage,—

—many things that are even stranger to each other than man and woman are. And who has ever fully understood how strange man and woman are to each other!

Sexual pleasure:—but I want fences around my thoughts, and around my words too, so that pigs and wild dreamers don't break into my gardens!—

The craving to rule: the red-hot whip of the hardest-hearted people. The horrible torture that the cruelest person saves up for himself. The gloomy flame of bonfires where people are burned alive.

The craving to rule: the nasty horsefly that is set on the vainest crowds to sting them. The mocker of every virtue that is unsure of itself. The rider who sits on every horse and on every kind of pride.

The craving to rule: the earthquake that breaks and splits open everything rotten and hollow. The rolling, rumbling, punishing smasher of whitewashed tombs, things that look clean on the outside but are rotten inside. The flashing question mark next to answers that came too early.

The craving to rule: under its gaze people crawl and duck and slave away, and they become lower than snake and pig,—until at last the great disgust with yourself cries out of them—,

The craving to rule: the terrible teacher of the great disgust with yourself. It preaches right into the faces of cities and empires, "Away with you!"—until they themselves cry out, "Away with me!"

The craving to rule: but it also climbs, tempting, up to the pure and the lonely, up to heights that need nothing but themselves. It glows like a love that paints tempting purple pictures of bliss onto the skies of the earth.

The craving to rule: but who would call it a craving when the high longs to reach down for power! Truly, there is nothing sick or addicted about that kind of longing and coming down!

It is so that the lonely height does not stay lonely forever and satisfied only with itself; so that the mountain comes down to the valley, and the winds of the heights come down to the lowlands:—

Oh, who could find the right name for such a longing, a name fit to baptize it and call it a virtue! "Giving virtue"—that is what Zarathustra once called this thing that has no name.

And it was then, too,—and truly, it happened for the first time!—that his words praised selfishness as blessed: the whole, healthy selfishness that springs from a powerful soul:—

—from a powerful soul that has a noble body belonging to it, a beautiful, victorious, refreshing body, around which every single thing becomes a mirror:

—the flexible, persuasive body, the dancer, whose picture and whose essence is the soul that takes joy in itself. The self-joy of such bodies and souls calls itself "virtue."

With its words about good and bad, this self-joy protects itself as if with sacred groves around it. With the names it gives to its happiness, it drives away from itself everything that deserves to be looked down on.

It drives away from itself everything cowardly. It says: "Bad—that means cowardly!" It looks down on the person who is always worrying, sighing, and whining, and on anyone who picks up even the smallest advantages for himself.

It also looks down on all wisdom that wallows in pain. Because, truly, there is also a wisdom that blooms in the dark, a nightshade wisdom,

like a poisonous plant growing in the shadows, a wisdom that always sighs: "Everything is pointless!"

It thinks little of shy distrust, and of everyone who wants sworn promises instead of honest looks and handshakes. It also thinks little of all wisdom that is far too distrustful,—because that is how cowardly souls are.

It thinks even less of the person who is quick to please, the doglike one who right away rolls onto his back, the humble one. And there is also a wisdom that is humble and doglike and pious and quick to please.

It truly hates, and feels disgust for, anyone who never wants to defend himself, who swallows down poisonous spit and nasty looks, the far-too-patient one who puts up with everything and is satisfied with anything: because that is the way of slaves.

Whether someone acts like a slave before gods and the kicks of gods, or before people and stupid human opinions: this blessed selfishness spits on every kind of slavishness!

"Bad": that is what it calls everything that is broken, and stingy, and slavish: unfree, blinking eyes, crushed hearts, and that false, giving-in kind of person who kisses with wide, cowardly lips.

And "fake wisdom": that is what it calls all the clever jokes that slaves and old men and tired people make; and especially the whole nasty, crazy, over-clever foolishness of priests!

But the fake-wise, all the priests, the people tired of the world, and those whose souls are like those of women and slaves,—oh, how badly their game has always treated selfishness!

And that, of all things, was supposed to be virtue and to be called virtue: treating selfishness badly! And "selfless" is what all these

world-weary cowards and cross-spiders wished to be, and they had good reason for it, since it suited them!

But for all of them, the day is now coming: the change, the sword of judgment, the great midday. Then a lot of things will come out into the open!

And whoever calls the I healthy and holy, and calls selfishness blessed, truly, that person also says what he knows, like a prophet: "Look, it is coming, it is near, the great midday!"

That is what Zarathustra said.

## About the Spirit of Heaviness

### 1.

My way of talking belongs to the crowd. I speak too roughly and too warmly for the silky little rabbits, the delicate people. And my words sound even stranger to all the ink-squids and pen-foxes, the people who write for a living.

My hand is a fool's hand. Watch out, all you tables and walls, and anything else that still has room for a fool's decorations and a fool's scribbles!

My foot is a horse's hoof, like the devil's foot. With it I clatter and trot over sticks and stones, across the fields this way and that, and I go wild with joy whenever I run fast.

Is my stomach maybe an eagle's stomach? After all, what it likes best is lamb. But it is certainly a bird's stomach.

I live on innocent things, and on very little. I am ready and impatient to fly, to fly away. That is simply how I am. So how could there not be something bird-like about me!

And above all, being an enemy of the spirit of heaviness is a bird-like thing. And truly, I am its deadly enemy, its sworn enemy, its enemy from the very beginning! Oh, where has my hatred of it not already flown, and lost its way!

I could sing a song about that. And I want to sing it, even though I am alone in an empty house and have to sing it to my own ears.

Of course there are other singers. Only a full house makes their throats smooth, their hands lively, their eyes full of feeling, and their hearts awake. I am not like them.

## 2.

Whoever one day teaches people to fly will have moved all the boundary stones. All the boundary stones themselves will go flying into the air around him. He will give the earth a new name: "the Light One."

The ostrich runs faster than the fastest horse, but even it still sticks its head heavily into the heavy earth. That is what humans are like when they cannot fly yet.

To such a person, the earth and life seem heavy. And that is just what the spirit of heaviness wants! But whoever wants to become light, and become a bird, has to love himself. That is what I teach.

But not, of course, with the kind of love that sick people and addicts have. With them, even loving themselves stinks!

You have to learn to love yourself, that is what I teach, with a whole and healthy love. Then you can stand being with yourself and do not have to wander around.

This wandering around calls itself "loving your neighbor." Until now, that phrase has been the best tool for lying and pretending. And it was used most of all by people who were a heavy burden to everyone.

And truly, learning to love yourself is not a rule you can follow today or tomorrow. Of all the arts, it is the finest, the most cunning, the last to master, and the one that needs the most patience.

You see, everything that is your own is well hidden from you, its owner. Of all buried treasures, your own is the last one to be dug up. That is how the spirit of heaviness arranges things.

Almost while we are still in the cradle, we are handed heavy words and values. "Good" and "evil": that is what this gift is called. In return for carrying it, people forgive us for being alive.

And that is why people let the little children come to them: so they can stop them early from loving themselves. That is how the spirit of heaviness arranges things.

And we, we faithfully drag whatever we are given, on hard shoulders, over rough mountains! And when we sweat, people tell us: "Yes, life is a heavy load to carry!"

But it is only humans who are a heavy load to themselves! That is because they carry too many things on their shoulders that do not belong to them. Like the camel, a person kneels down and lets himself be loaded up well.

Especially the strong person who can carry a lot, and who has deep respect inside him. He loads too many heavy words and values from others onto himself, and then life seems to him like a desert!

And truly! Some of what is your own is also heavy to carry! And much of what is inside a person is like an oyster: disgusting, slippery, and hard to get hold of,

so that a fine shell with fine decoration has to stand in for it and speak up for it. But you have to learn this art too: having a shell, a nice outward look, and a clever way of not seeing!

Then again, people are often misjudged because their shell is plain and sad and too much just a shell. A lot of hidden goodness and strength is never guessed. The most delicious treats find no one to taste them!

Women know this, the most delicious ones: a little fatter, a little thinner, oh how much fate lies in so little!

Humans are hard to discover, and hardest of all to discover for themselves. Often the mind lies about the soul. That is how the spirit of heaviness arranges things.

But a person has discovered himself when he says: "This is my good and my evil." With that, he has silenced the mole and the dwarf who says: "Good for everyone, evil for everyone."

Truly, I also do not like people who call every single thing good, and who even call this world the best one possible. I call them the people who are happy with everything.

Being happy with everything, liking the taste of anything: that is not the best taste! I respect the stubborn, picky tongues and stomachs that have learned to say "I" and "Yes" and "No."

But chewing and digesting everything, that is how pigs do it! Always saying "Ee-yah," yes-yes, only the donkey has learned that, and whoever thinks like a donkey!

Deep yellow and hot red: that is what my taste wants. My taste mixes blood into every color. But whoever paints his house white tells me that he has a whitewashed soul, a soul painted over to look clean.

Some are in love with mummies, others with ghosts. And both are equally hostile to all flesh and blood. Oh, how both of them go against my taste! Because I love blood.

And I do not want to live or stay where everyone spits and throws up. That is my taste. I would rather live among thieves and people who break their oaths. No one carries gold in his mouth.

But even more disgusting to me are all the bootlickers. And the most disgusting human animal I ever found, I named the parasite. It did not want to love, and yet it wanted to live off love.

I call unhappy all those who have only one choice: to become wild beasts, or wild-beast tamers. I would not build my huts among people like that.

I also call unhappy those who always have to wait. They go against my taste: all the tax collectors and shopkeepers and kings and other guards of countries and stores.

Truly, I also learned how to wait, and I learned it thoroughly,

but only how to wait for myself. And above all, I learned to stand and walk and run and jump and climb and dance.

But this is my teaching: whoever wants to learn to fly one day must first learn to stand and walk and run and climb and dance. You cannot just fly your way into flying!

With rope ladders I learned to climb up to many a window. With quick legs I climbed up tall masts. Sitting on the tall masts of knowledge seemed to me no small happiness,

flickering like little flames on tall masts. Only a small light, it's true, but still a great comfort to sailors who have been blown off course, and to people who have been shipwrecked!

I came to my truth by many different paths and in many ways. I did not climb up just one ladder to the height where my eyes look out into my own far distance.

And I never liked asking for directions. That always went against my taste! I preferred to question the roads and try them out myself.

All my walking was a trying and a questioning. And truly, you also have to learn how to answer that kind of questioning! But that is my taste:

not a good taste, not a bad one, but my taste, which I am no longer ashamed of and no longer hide.

"This is my way. Where is yours?" That is how I answered those who asked me for "the way." Because the way, the one right way, does not exist!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## On Old and New Tablets of Rules

**1.**

Here I sit and wait. Around me lie old, broken tablets of rules, and also new tablets that are only half written on. When will my hour come?

I mean the hour when I go down, the hour of my going down. For I want to go to the people one more time.

That is what I am waiting for now. First the signs have to come to me that my hour has arrived. The sign will be the laughing lion with the flock of doves.

In the meantime, I talk to myself, like someone who has plenty of time. Nobody tells me anything new, so I tell myself about myself.

**2.**

When I came to the people, I found them sitting on an old, smug belief. All of them thought they had known for a long time what is good and evil for humans.

To them, all talk about virtue seemed like an old, tired thing. And whoever wanted to sleep well would talk about "good" and "evil" just before going to bed.

I shook them out of this sleepiness when I taught them this: nobody knows yet what is good and evil, nobody except the creator!

And the creator is the one who makes a goal for humans and gives the earth its meaning and its future. Only the creator makes it so that something is good or evil.

And I told them to knock over their old teachers' chairs, and every place where that old smug belief had sat. I told them to laugh at their great masters of virtue, and at their saints and poets and saviors of the world.

I told them to laugh at their gloomy wise men, and at everyone who had ever sat on the tree of life like a black scarecrow, giving warnings.

I sat down beside their great road of graves, right next to the rotting bodies and the vultures. And I laughed at all their past and its crumbling, decaying glory.

Truly, like preachers who call people to repent, and like fools, I shouted in anger and outrage about all their great things and small things. I shouted that their best is so very small! That their worst is so very small! That is how I laughed.

This was my wise longing shouting and laughing out of me. It was born on the mountains, a truly wild wisdom! It was my great longing, roaring like beating wings.

And often it tore me away, up and off, right in the middle of laughing. Then I flew, shivering, like an arrow, through delight that was drunk on sunshine:

out into far-off futures that no dream has ever seen, into hotter southern lands than any artist ever dreamed of. I flew to where gods dance and are ashamed of wearing any clothes at all.

I say it this way because I speak in images and comparisons, and I limp and stutter like poets do. And truly, I am ashamed that I still have to be a poet!

I flew to where all change and growth seemed to me like gods dancing and gods playing pranks. There the world was set free and wild, and kept running back to itself:

like many gods forever running away from each other and looking for each other again, like many gods happily contradicting each other, listening to each other again, and belonging to each other again.

I flew to where all of time seemed to me like a happy mocking of single moments. There, necessity was freedom itself, and it played happily with the sting of freedom.

There I also found my old devil and worst enemy again: the spirit of heaviness, and everything it created: force, laws, need, consequences, purpose, will, and good and evil.

For doesn't there have to be something to dance over, something to dance away across? Don't there have to be moles and heavy dwarves, for the sake of the light ones, the lightest ones?

**3.**

It was there too that I picked up the word "Superhuman" from the road, and the idea that humans are something that has to be outgrown.

I also picked up the idea that humans are a bridge and not a final goal. They can call themselves happy because of their midday and their evening, since these are the way to new dawns.

I picked up Zarathustra's saying about the great midday, and everything else I hung up above humans, like a second purple sunset.

Truly, I let them see new stars too, along with new nights. And over the clouds and the day and the night, I spread out laughter like a colorful tent.

I taught them everything I dream up and strive for: to put together into one whole whatever in humans is broken pieces, riddles, and horrible chance.

As a poet, as someone who solves riddles, and as someone who rescues things from mere chance, I taught them to work at creating the future, and to rescue everything that has been by creating.

I taught them to rescue what is past in humans, and to remake every "It was," until the will says: "But that is how I wanted it! That is how I will want it!"

This is what I called rescue for them. This alone is what I taught them to call rescue.

Now I am waiting for my own rescue: to go to them for the last time.

For I want to go to the people one more time. I want to go down among them. As I die, I want to give them my richest gift!

I learned this from the sun, the overflowing one, when it goes down. Then it pours gold into the sea from its endless riches,

so that even the poorest fisherman rows with a golden oar! I once saw this, and as I watched, I could not stop crying.

Like the sun, Zarathustra also wants to go down. Now he sits here and waits, with old, broken tablets of rules around him, and also new tablets, half written on.

### 4.

Look, here is a new tablet of rules. But where are my brothers who will help me carry it down into the valley and into hearts made of flesh?

This is what my great love for those farthest away demands: do not spare the person next to you! Humans are something that has to be outgrown.

There are many kinds of paths and ways to get past things. That is up to you to figure out! But only a clown thinks: "Humans can also just be jumped over."

Get past yourself even in the person next to you. And a right that you can take for yourself, you should not let anyone hand to you!

What you do, nobody can do back to you. Look, there is no paying back.

Whoever cannot give himself orders should obey. And some people can give themselves orders, but they are still far from also obeying themselves!

5.

This is how noble souls are. They want nothing for free, least of all life.

Whoever belongs to the mob wants to live for free. But the rest of us, to whom life gave itself, we are always thinking about what we can best give in return!

And truly, this is a noble saying: "Whatever life promises us, we want to keep that promise to life!"

You should not want to enjoy where you do not give anything to enjoy. And actually, you should not want to enjoy at all!

For enjoyment and innocence are the shyest things. Neither of them wants to be searched for. You should have them, but you should rather go searching for guilt and pain!

6.

Oh my brothers, whoever comes first is always sacrificed. And we are the ones who come first.

We all bleed on secret altars. We all burn and roast in honor of old idols.

Our best is still young, and that tempts old tastes. Our flesh is tender, our skin is only a lamb's skin. How could we not tempt old priests of idols!

The old priest of idols still lives inside us too, roasting our best for his own feast. Oh, my brothers, how could those who come first not be sacrifices!

But that is how our kind is. And I love those who do not want to protect themselves. I love those who go down with all my love, because they are crossing over.

## 7.

Being true: few people can do it! And those who can, still do not want to! But the good people are the least able to do it.

Oh, these good people! Good people never tell the truth. For the mind, being good in this way is a sickness.

These good people give in, they give themselves up. Their heart just repeats what others say, and their deepest being obeys. But whoever obeys does not hear himself!

Everything that the good people call evil has to come together so that one single truth can be born. Oh my brothers, are you evil enough for this truth?

Daring that takes wild risks, long distrust, a cruel No, being fed up, cutting into living flesh: how rarely all of that comes together! But truth is fathered from seeds like these!

Until now, all knowledge has grown up next to a guilty conscience! You who seek knowledge, break them, break the old tablets of rules for me!

## 8.

When the water has wooden beams across it, when footbridges and railings leap over the river, then truly, nobody believes the person who says: "Everything is flowing, nothing stays put."

Even the fools argue with him. "What?" the fools say. "Everything is flowing? But the beams and railings are above the river!"

"Above the river everything is solid: all the values of things, the bridges, the ideas, everything called 'good' and 'evil'. All of that is solid!"

And when hard winter comes, the tamer of rivers that freezes them still, then even the cleverest people learn to be suspicious. And truly, then it is not only the fools who say: "Maybe everything is actually standing still?"

"Deep down, everything stands still." That is a real winter teaching. It is a handy thing for a barren time, a nice comfort for those who sleep through winter and those who sit huddled by the stove.

"Deep down, everything stands still." But the warm wind that melts the ice preaches against that!

The thawing wind is a bull, but not a bull that pulls a plow. It is a raging bull, a destroyer, who breaks the ice with angry horns! And the ice, in turn, breaks the footbridges!

Oh my brothers, isn't everything flowing now? Haven't all the railings and footbridges fallen into the water? Who would still hold on to "good" and "evil"?

"Woe to us! Hooray for us! The thawing wind is blowing!" Preach that for me, oh my brothers, through every street!

**8.**

There is an old delusion called good and evil. Until now, the wheel of this delusion has turned around fortune-tellers and star-readers.

Once people believed in fortune-tellers and star-readers. And so they believed: "Everything is fate. You must do it, because you have no choice!"

Then later people distrusted all fortune-tellers and star-readers. And so they believed: "Everything is freedom. You can do it, because you want to!"

Oh my brothers, until now people have only imagined things about the stars and the future; they have not known anything. And that is why, until now, people have only imagined things about good and evil; they have not known anything!

**10.**

"You must not steal! You must not kill!" Words like these were once called holy. People bent their knees and bowed their heads before them, and took off their shoes.

But I ask you: where in the world have there ever been better robbers and killers than these holy words themselves?

Isn't there robbing and killing in all of life itself? And by calling such words holy, wasn't the truth itself killed?

Or was it a sermon of death, calling something holy when it went against all of life and warned people away from it? Oh my brothers, break them, break the old tablets of rules for me!

## 11.

This is my pity for everything in the past: I see that it has been handed over and left defenseless,

handed over to the mercy, the mind, and the madness of every generation that comes along and reinterprets everything that came before as a bridge to itself!

A great tyrant could come, a cunning monster, who with his favor and his disfavor would squeeze and press the whole past into shape, until it became his bridge, his sign of what was coming, his herald, his rooster's crow announcing him.

But this is the other danger and my other pity: anyone who belongs to the mob remembers only as far back as his grandfather. With the grandfather, time stops.

So the whole past is left defenseless. Because one day it could happen that the mob takes charge and drowns all of time in shallow water.

That is why, oh my brothers, we need a new nobility, one that stands against all mobs and all tyrants, and writes the word "noble" again, freshly, on new tablets of rules.

Because it takes many noble people, and many different kinds of noble people, for a nobility to exist! Or, as I once said in a picture: "This is exactly what godliness is: that there are gods, but not one single God!"

## 12.

Oh my brothers, I dedicate you and point you toward a new nobility. You are to become fathers and breeders and sowers of the future for me,

and truly, not a nobility you could buy the way shopkeepers buy things, with shopkeepers' gold. Because anything that has a price has little real value.

From now on, let your honor come not from where you come from, but from where you are going! Your will and your foot, which want to go beyond yourselves: let that be your new honor!

Truly, your honor is not that you served a prince. Who cares about princes anymore! Nor is it that you became a fortress wall for whatever already stands, to make it stand more firmly!

Nor is it that your family became polished courtiers at royal courts, and that you learned to stand for long hours in shallow ponds, brightly dressed, like a flamingo.

Because being able to stand is counted as an achievement among courtiers. And all courtiers believe that heavenly bliss after death includes being allowed to sit down!

Nor is it that a spirit they call holy led your ancestors into promised lands, which I do not praise. Because where the worst of all trees grew, the cross, there is nothing to praise about that land!

And truly, wherever this "holy spirit" led its knights, on such marches it was always goats and geese and muddle-headed, cross-eyed fools who ran out in front!

Oh my brothers, your nobility should not look back, but out ahead! You should be exiles, driven out of all your fatherlands and the lands of your forefathers!

You should love your children's land. Let this love be your new nobility: the undiscovered land, in the farthest sea! I tell your sails to search and search for it!

Through your children you should make up for being the children of your fathers. That is how you should rescue everything in the past! I set this new tablet of rules above you!

**13.**

"Why live? Everything is pointless! Living is just threshing straw, beating it with no grain left in it. Living is burning yourself up and still never getting warm."

Old-fashioned chatter like that still counts as "wisdom". In fact, because it is old and smells musty, people honor it even more. Even rot makes things look noble.

Children were allowed to talk like that: they are afraid of fire because it burned them! There is a lot of childishness in the old books of wisdom.

And if someone is always "threshing straw", what right does he have to insult threshing? Someone should tie that fool's mouth shut!

People like that sit down at the table and bring nothing with them, not even a good appetite. And then they complain: "Everything is pointless!"

But eating and drinking well, oh my brothers, is truly not a pointless skill! Break them, break for me the tablets of rules of those who are never happy!

**14.**

"To the pure, everything is pure." That is what the crowd says. But I tell you: to pigs, everything becomes pig!

That is why the dreamy fanatics and the head-hangers, whose hearts hang down too, preach: "The world itself is a filthy monster."

Because all of these have unclean minds. Especially the ones who have no peace and no rest unless they see the world from behind: the believers in another world!

I tell them to their faces, even though it doesn't sound pretty: the world is like a human in this way, that it has a backside. That much is true!

There is a lot of filth in the world. That much is true! But that still doesn't make the world itself a filthy monster!

There is wisdom in the fact that much in the world smells bad. Disgust itself creates wings, and powers that sense where fresh springs of water are!

Even in the best person there is still something disgusting. And even the best person is still something that has to be gotten past!

Oh my brothers, there is a lot of wisdom in the fact that there is a lot of filth in the world!

**15.**

I have heard pious believers in another world say things like this to their own conscience. And truly, they meant no harm and no lies by it, even though there is nothing in the world more false, or more harmful.

"Just let the world be the world! Don't lift even one finger against it!"

"Whoever wants to may choke people and stab them and cut them and scrape them. Let them! Don't lift even one finger against it! That way people will learn to turn their backs on the world."

"And your own reason, your own ability to think: you should strangle it and choke it yourself. Because it is a reason that belongs to this

world. That way you yourself will learn to turn your back on the world."

Break them, break them, oh my brothers, these old tablets of rules of the pious! Take apart, with your words, the sayings of those who slander the world!

## 16.

"Whoever learns a lot unlearns all strong desire." That is what people whisper to each other these days in all the dark alleys.

"Wisdom makes you tired. Nothing is worth it. You must not desire!" I found this new tablet of rules hanging up even in the open marketplaces.

Break it, oh my brothers, break this new tablet too! The people who are tired of the world hung it up, and the preachers of death, and the jailers too. Because look: it is also a sermon that teaches slavery!

They learned badly, and not the best things, and everything too early and everything too fast. They ate badly, you could say, and that is how they got that ruined stomach.

Because their mind is exactly that, a ruined stomach, and it advises them to die! For truly, my brothers, the mind is a stomach: it has to digest what it takes in!

Life is a spring of joy. But when someone has a ruined stomach speaking through him, that father of gloom, then for him every spring is poisoned.

Knowing things, finding things out: that is a joy for anyone with the will of a lion! But whoever has grown tired is no longer someone who wants; he is only someone who gets "wanted", pushed around by others. All the waves play with him.

And that is always the way weak people are: they get lost on their paths. And in the end their tiredness even asks: "Why did we ever go down any path at all? It's all the same anyway!"

To people like that it sounds sweet when someone preaches: "Nothing is worth it! You must not want!" But this is a sermon that teaches slavery.

Oh my brothers, Zarathustra comes like a fresh, roaring wind to everyone who is tired of the road. He will still make many noses sneeze!

My free breath blows even through walls, and into prisons, and into minds that are locked up!

Wanting sets you free, because wanting is creating. That is what I teach. And you should learn only so that you can create!

And even learning itself you must first learn from me: how to learn well! Whoever has ears, let him listen!

**17.**

There is the little boat. Over there, on the other side, it may lead into the great nothing. But who wants to climb into this "maybe"?

Not one of you wants to climb into the boat of death! So why do you claim to be tired of the world?

Tired of the world! And yet you haven't even been carried away from the earth! I always found you still greedy for the earth, still in love even with your own tiredness of the earth!

It's not for nothing that your lower lip hangs down: a little earthly wish is still sitting on it! And in your eye, isn't there a little cloud floating, a pleasure of the earth you haven't forgotten?

There are many good inventions on earth, some useful, others pleasant. Because of them, the earth deserves to be loved.

And there are many things on earth so well invented that they are like a woman's breast: useful and pleasant at the same time.

But you who are tired of the world! You who are too lazy for the earth! You ought to be whipped with switches! With strokes of the switch, someone should get your legs lively again.

Because if you aren't sick, worn-out little wretches that the earth is tired of, then you are sly sloths, or greedy, hidden-away cats sneaking after pleasure. And if you don't want to run happily again, then you should just be gone, pass away!

You shouldn't try to be a doctor to those who can't be cured. That is what Zarathustra teaches. So you should pass away!

But it takes more courage to make an end than to make a new verse. All doctors and poets know that.

## 18.

Oh my brothers, there are tablets of rules that tiredness created, and tablets of rules that laziness created, the rotten kind of laziness. Even though they say the same thing, they want to be heard differently.

Look at this man here, wasting away from thirst! He is only a hand's width from his goal, but out of tiredness he has stubbornly lain down here in the dust. What a brave one!

Out of tiredness he yawns at the road, and the earth, and the goal, and at himself. He won't take a single step further. What a brave one!

Now the sun is burning down on him, and the dogs are licking at his sweat. But he lies there in his stubbornness and would rather waste away:

waste away just a hand's width from his goal! Truly, you will end up having to drag him by the hair into his heaven. What a hero!

Better still, leave him lying where he has lain down, so that sleep can come to him, sleep the comforter, with its cool, rushing rain:

Leave him lying until he wakes up by himself, until he himself takes back all his tiredness, and everything that tiredness taught through him!

Only, my brothers, chase the dogs away from him, those lazy sneaks, and all that swarming vermin:

all that swarming vermin of the "educated" people, who love to feast on the sweat of every hero!

**19.**

I draw circles around myself and holy borders. Fewer and fewer people climb with me up higher and higher mountains. I am building a mountain range out of mountains that get holier and holier.

But wherever you may climb with me, oh my brothers, make sure that no parasite climbs along with you!

A parasite: that is a kind of worm, a creeping, clinging thing that wants to grow fat on your sick, sore spots.

And this is its skill: it guesses where climbing souls are tired. In your grief and your bad moods, in your tender sense of shame, it builds its disgusting nest.

Where the strong one is weak, where the noble one is far too gentle, that is where it builds its disgusting nest. The parasite lives where a great person has small, sore spots.

What is the highest kind of everything that exists, and what is the lowest? The parasite is the lowest kind. But whoever is of the highest kind feeds the most parasites.

Because the soul that has the longest ladder and can climb down the deepest: how could it not have the most parasites sitting on it?

the widest soul, which can run and get lost and wander furthest inside itself; the most necessary soul, which throws itself into chance just for the joy of it;

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

the soul that runs away from itself and catches up with itself in the widest circle; the wisest soul, to whom foolishness speaks most sweetly;

the soul that loves itself most, in which all things flow out and flow back, like the tide going out and coming in. Oh, how could the highest soul not have the worst parasites?

**20.**

Oh my brothers, am I cruel, then? But I say: whatever is falling, you should give it a push as well!

Everything that belongs to today is falling, is falling apart. Who would want to hold it up? But I, I want to give it a push as well!

Do you know the thrill of rolling stones down into steep depths? These people of today: just look at them, how they roll down into my depths!

I am a warm-up act for better players, oh my brothers! I am an example! Follow my example!

And whoever you can't teach to fly, teach him, for my sake, to fall faster!

**21.**

I love brave people. But it's not enough to be someone who just swings his sword. You also have to look carefully at who you strike!

And often there is more courage in holding yourself back and walking on by, so that you can save yourself for a worthier enemy!

You should only have enemies worth hating, not enemies worth looking down on. You must be proud of your enemy. I already taught you that once.

Save yourselves for the enemy who is more worthy of you, oh my friends. That is why you must walk past many things,—

—especially past a lot of scum who make noise in your ears about the crowd and about nations.

Keep your eyes clean of their arguments for and against! There is a lot of right and a lot of wrong in all that, and anyone who watches it gets angry.

Looking in and lashing out—there, they are the same thing. So go away into the forests and let your sword go to sleep!

Go your own ways! And let the crowd and the nations go theirs! They are dark ways, really, where not a single hope flashes anymore, not even like far-off lightning on the horizon!

Let the shopkeeper rule where everything that still shines is only shopkeeper's gold! The time of kings is over. What calls itself the crowd today does not deserve kings.

Just look how these nations now act like shopkeepers themselves: they pick out even the tiniest advantage from every pile of garbage!

They lie in wait for each other, they try to sneak something away from each other,—and they call that "being good neighbors." Oh, that happy, faraway time when a crowd said to itself: "I want to be master over other nations!"

Because, my brothers: the best should rule, and the best also wants to rule! And wherever people teach something different, there—the best is missing.

**22.**

If those people got bread for free, watch out! What would they be screaming for then? Earning their living—that is their real entertainment. And they should have it hard!

They are beasts of prey. In their "working" there is still some robbing, and in their "earning" there is still some cheating! That is why they should have it hard!

So they should become better beasts of prey: finer, smarter, more human. Because the human is the best beast of prey.

Humans have already stolen their virtues from all the animals. That is because, of all the animals, humans have had it the hardest.

Only the birds are still above them. And if humans also learned to fly, watch out! How high would their hunger for prey fly then!

**23.**

This is how I want man and woman to be: the one good at fighting wars, the other good at giving birth, but both good at dancing, with their heads and with their legs.

And let us count every day as lost on which we did not dance even once! And let us call every truth false that did not bring along even one laugh!

**24.**

Your getting married: make sure it is not a badly tied knot! You tied it too fast, and what follows from that is—breaking the marriage, cheating!

And breaking a marriage is still better than bending a marriage, or living a lie in a marriage! A woman once said to me: "Yes, I broke my marriage, but first my marriage broke—me!"

I have always found that badly matched couples are the most revenge-hungry people of all. They make the whole world pay for the fact that they can no longer walk alone.

That is why I want honest people to say to each other: "We love each other. Let's make sure we keep loving each other! Or is our promise going to turn out to be a mistake?"

—"Give us some time and a small marriage, so we can see whether we are fit for the big marriage! It is a big thing to always be two together!"

That is my advice to all honest people. And what would my love for the Superhuman, and for everything that is still to come, be worth if I advised and spoke any other way!

Not just to carry yourselves forward into more children, but to carry yourselves upward—that is what the garden of marriage should help you do, oh my brothers!

## 25.

Whoever has become wise about old beginnings will, look, in the end search for the springs of the future and for new beginnings.—

Oh my brothers, it will not be long before new nations spring up and new springs rush down into new depths.

Because an earthquake buries many wells and makes many people die of thirst. But it also brings hidden inner strengths and secrets up into the light.

An earthquake uncovers new springs. When old nations are shaken by an earthquake, new springs burst out.

And whoever calls out: "Look, here is a well for many thirsty people, one heart for many who long for something, one will for many tools"—around that person a crowd gathers, which means: many people trying things out.

Who can give orders, and who must obey—that is what gets tested there! Oh, with how much long searching and guessing and guessing wrong and learning and trying again!

Human society is an experiment, that is what I teach—a long search. And what it is searching for is the one who gives orders!—

—an experiment, oh my brothers! And not a "contract"! Break it, break that word for me, that word of the soft-hearted and the half-and-half people!

## 26.

Oh my brothers! Where does the greatest danger for the whole future of humanity lie? Isn't it with the good and righteous people?—

—with those who say, and feel in their hearts: "We already know what is good and right, and we have it too. Too bad for anyone who is still searching for it!"—

And whatever harm the evil people may do, the harm done by the good is the most harmful harm of all!

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

Oh my brothers, someone once looked into the heart of the good and righteous people and said: "They are the Pharisees." But nobody understood him.

The good and righteous people themselves were not allowed to understand him. Their mind is trapped inside their good conscience. The stupidity of the good is endlessly clever.

But this is the truth: the good have to be Pharisees—they have no choice!

The good have to crucify anyone who invents his own virtue! That is the truth!

But the second one who discovered their country—the country, the heart and the soil of the good and righteous people—was the one who asked: "Whom do they hate the most?"

They hate the creator the most: the one who breaks tablets of rules and old values. The breaker—they call him a criminal.

Because the good cannot create. They are always the beginning of the end:—

—they crucify the one who writes new values on new tablets of rules. They sacrifice the future to themselves—they crucify the whole future of humanity!

The good—they have always been the beginning of the end.—

**27.**

Oh my brothers, did you understand this saying too? And what I once said about "the last human"?—

Where does the greatest danger for the whole future of humanity lie? Isn't it with the good and righteous people?

Break them, break the good and righteous people for me! Oh my brothers, did you understand this saying too?

**28.**

You are running away from me? You are frightened? You are trembling at these words?

Oh my brothers, only when I told you to break the good and the tablets of rules of the good—only then did I put humans on board a ship and send them out onto their open sea.

And only now does the great terror come over them, the great looking around, the great sickness, the great disgust, the great seasickness.

The good taught you false coasts and false safety. You were born into the lies of the good, and you were kept sheltered in them. Everything has been lied about and twisted, right down to its roots, by the good.

But whoever discovered the country called "human" also discovered the country called "human future." Now you must be sailors for me—brave, patient sailors!

Learn to walk upright in good time, oh my brothers, learn to walk upright! The sea is stormy, and many people will want to lean on you to pull themselves up again.

The sea is stormy: everything is in the sea. Come on! Let's go! You old sailors' hearts!

Forget the fatherland! Our steering wheel wants to point to where our children's land is! Out there, stormier than the sea, our great longing rushes on!—

## 29.

"Why so hard?" the kitchen coal once said to the diamond. "Aren't we close relatives?"—

Why so soft? Oh my brothers, that is what I ask you: aren't you—my brothers?

Why so soft, so quick to back away and give in? Why is there so much denying, so much saying no and turning away, in your hearts? Why is there so little fate in the way you look, so little sense that you are meant for something?

And if you do not want to be fates yourselves, people who cannot be talked out of what they must do, how could you ever win alongside me?

And if your hardness does not want to flash like lightning, and cut, and slice things apart, how could you someday create alongside me?

Because creators are hard. And it must feel like pure bliss to you to press your hand onto thousands of years, as if they were soft wax,

pure bliss to write on the will of thousands of years as if it were bronze. No, harder than bronze, and nobler than bronze. Only the noblest thing is completely hard.

This new tablet of rules, oh my brothers, I hang up above you: Become hard!

## 30.

Oh, my will! You who turn every need around, you who are my necessity, the thing I cannot do without! Protect me from all small victories!

You, what has been sent to my soul, which I call my fate! You who are inside me! You who are above me! Protect me and save me up for one great fate!

And you, my will, save your final greatness for your final task, so that you cannot be stopped when you win! Oh, who has not been beaten by their own victory!

Oh, whose eyes have not gone dark in that drunken twilight of winning! Oh, whose foot has not stumbled, and in the middle of victory forgotten how to stand!

So that someday I may be ready and ripe at the great midday: ready and ripe like glowing, melted bronze, like a cloud heavy with lightning, like a cow's udder swelling with milk,

ready for myself and for my most hidden will: a bow burning with desire for its arrow, an arrow burning with desire for its star,

a star ready and ripe at its own midday, glowing, pierced through, overjoyed by the destroying arrows of the sun,

a sun itself, and a sun-like will that cannot be stopped, ready to destroy as it wins!

Oh will, you who turn every need around, you who are my necessity! Save me up for one great victory!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The One Who Is Getting Better

### 1.

One morning, not long after he had come back to his cave, Zarathustra jumped up from his bed like a madman. He screamed in a terrible voice and acted as if someone else were still lying on the bed who refused to get up. Zarathustra's voice rang out so loudly that his animals came running in fright. And from all the caves and hiding places near Zarathustra's cave, every creature scurried away. They flew, fluttered, crawled and leaped, each in whatever way its feet or wings allowed. But Zarathustra spoke these words:

"Come up, bottomless thought, out of my depths! I am your rooster and your first gray light of dawn, you sleepy worm. Get up! Get up! My voice will crow you awake!"

"Untie whatever is binding your ears shut, and listen! Because I want to hear you! Get up! Get up! There is enough thunder here to teach even graves how to listen!"

"And wipe the sleep out of your eyes, and everything dull and blind along with it! Hear me with your eyes too. My voice is a cure even for people born blind."

"And once you are awake, you must stay awake for me forever. It is not my way to wake great-great-grandmothers from their sleep only to tell them: go back to sleep!"

"You are stirring, stretching, wheezing? Get up! Get up! Don't wheeze at me. Talk to me! Zarathustra is calling you, Zarathustra who has no god!"

"I, Zarathustra, who speak up for life, who speak up for suffering, who speak up for the circle, I am calling you, my most bottomless thought!"

"Lucky me! You are coming. I can hear you! My deepest pit is speaking. I have turned my very lowest depth inside out and dragged it into the light!"

"Lucky me! Come here! Give me your hand. Ha! Let go! Haha! Disgust, disgust, disgust! Oh no, poor me!"

**2.**

But Zarathustra had hardly spoken these words when he fell down like a dead man, and for a long time he stayed like a dead man. When he came to again, he was pale and shaking. He stayed lying down, and for a long time he would neither eat nor drink. He stayed like this for seven days. His animals did not leave him, day or night, except when the eagle flew out to get food. And whatever the eagle gathered and grabbed, it laid on Zarathustra's bed. So in the end Zarathustra was lying among yellow and red berries, grapes, rose apples, sweet-smelling herbs and pine cones. And at his feet lay two lambs, which the eagle had snatched from their shepherds with great effort.

At last, after seven days, Zarathustra sat up on his bed. He picked up a rose apple, smelled it, and found that it smelled lovely. Then his animals thought the time had come to talk to him.

"Oh Zarathustra," they said, "you have been lying like this for seven days now, with heavy eyes. Won't you finally get back on your feet?"

"Step out of your cave. The world is waiting for you like a garden. The wind is playing with rich, heavy scents that want to reach you, and all the streams would like to run after you."

"Everything is longing for you, because you stayed alone for seven days. Step out of your cave! Everything wants to be your doctor!"

"Did some new knowledge come to you, something sour and heavy? You lay there like dough with yeast in it. Your soul rose and swelled up over all its edges."

"Oh my animals," Zarathustra answered, "keep chattering like this and let me listen! It refreshes me so much to hear you chatter. Wherever there is chatter, the world already lies before me like a garden."

"How lovely it is that words and sounds exist! Aren't words and sounds like rainbows, like bridges that only seem to be there, stretched between things that are separated forever?"

"Every soul has its own separate world. For every soul, every other soul is a hidden world behind the one it can see."

"It is exactly between things that are most alike that appearances lie most beautifully. Because the smallest gap is the hardest one to bridge."

"For me, how could there be anything outside of me? There is no outside! But we forget that whenever we hear sounds. How lovely it is that we forget!"

"Weren't names and sounds given to things so that people could enjoy things and be refreshed by them? Speaking is a beautiful kind of foolishness. With it, people dance over everything."

"How lovely all talking is, and all the lies that sounds tell! With sounds, our love dances on colorful rainbows."

Then the animals said, "Oh Zarathustra, for those who think the way we do, all things dance by themselves. They come and hold out their hands to each other and laugh and run away, and then they come back."

"Everything goes, everything comes back. The wheel of being keeps rolling forever. Everything dies, everything blooms again. The year of being keeps running forever."

"Everything breaks, everything is put back together. The same house of being keeps building itself forever. Everything parts, everything greets each other again. The ring of being stays true to itself forever."

"In every single instant, being begins. Around every 'here' rolls the ball of 'there.' The center is everywhere. The path of eternity is curved."

"Oh you jokers and barrel organs!" Zarathustra answered, and he smiled again. "How well you know what had to happen in those seven days."

"And how that monster crawled down my throat and choked me! But I bit its head off and spat it far away from me."

"And you, have you already made a tune for a barrel organ out of it, a song to crank out over and over? But now I lie here, still tired from that biting and spitting, still sick from my own rescue."

"And you watched all of it? Oh my animals, are you cruel too? Did you want to watch my great pain, the way humans do? Because humans are the cruelest animal."

"At tragic plays, bullfights and crucifixions, humans have felt happiest on earth so far. And when they invented hell for themselves, look, that was their heaven on earth."

"When a great person screams, the small person runs over right away, with his tongue hanging out of his mouth with greed. But he calls it his 'pity.'"

"The small person, and especially the poet, how eagerly he accuses life with his words! Listen to him, but don't fail to hear the pleasure hidden in all that accusing!"

"Life gets past people like that, who accuse it, with just a wink. 'You love me?' says life, the cheeky one. 'Wait a little longer. I don't have time for you yet.'"

"Humans are the cruelest animal toward themselves. And with everyone who calls himself a 'sinner' or 'one who carries the cross' or 'one who does penance,' don't fail to hear the delight, the almost lustful pleasure, in all that complaining and accusing!"

"And me, do I want to be the one who accuses humans by saying this? Oh, my animals, the only thing I have learned so far is this: humans need their very worst in order to reach their very best."

"I learned that all their worst is their best strength, and the hardest stone for the highest creator to work with. And I learned that humans must become both better and more evil."

"The thing that nailed me to this torture cross was not knowing that humans are evil. No, what tortured me was that I cried out as no one has ever cried out before:"

"'Oh, their worst is so very small! Oh, their best is so very small!'"

"The great weariness of humans, being so fed up with them, that is what choked me and crawled down my throat. And so did what the fortune-teller predicted: 'Everything is the same, nothing is worth it, knowing chokes you.'"

"A long twilight limped along ahead of me, a sadness that was tired to death and drunk on death, and it spoke with a yawning mouth."

"'He comes back forever, the human you are so tired of, the small human.' That is how my sadness yawned. It dragged its feet and could not fall asleep."

The earth where humans live turned into a cave for me. Its chest caved in. Everything alive became, to my eyes, rotting human remains and bones and a crumbling past.

My sighing sat on every human grave and could not get up again. My sighing and my questioning croaked like a toad, and choked, and gnawed, and complained, day and night:

"Oh, humans come back forever! The small human comes back forever!"

Once I had seen them both naked, the greatest human and the smallest human. They were far too alike. Even the greatest was still far too human!

Even the greatest was far too small! That was what made me sick and tired of humans! And everything coming back forever, even the smallest! That was what made me sick and tired of all existence!

Oh, disgust! Disgust! Disgust!" That is what Zarathustra said, and he sighed and shuddered, because he remembered his illness. But then his animals would not let him go on talking.

"Stop talking, you who are getting well!" his animals answered him. "Go outside instead, where the world is waiting for you like a garden.

Go out to the roses and the bees and the flocks of doves! But most of all, go to the songbirds, so that you can learn singing from them!

Singing is for people who are getting well. Healthy people can just talk. And even when a healthy person wants songs, he wants different songs from the one who is recovering."

"Oh, you joking fools, you barrel organs that play the same tune over and over, be quiet!" Zarathustra answered, and he smiled at his animals. "How well you know what comfort I came up with for myself during those seven days!

That I would have to sing again: that was the comfort I invented for myself, and that was my healing. Do you want to turn even that straight away into a tune you grind out on a hurdy-gurdy?"

"Stop talking," his animals answered him once again. "Better, you who are getting well, first make yourself a lyre, a harp to sing with, a new lyre!

Because look, oh Zarathustra! Your new songs need new lyres.

Sing, and let your voice roar and overflow, oh Zarathustra. Heal your soul with new songs, so that you can carry your great fate, a fate that has never yet been any human's fate!

Because your animals know very well, oh Zarathustra, who you are and who you have to become. Look: you are the teacher of everything coming back forever. That is now your fate!

You have to be the first one to teach this teaching. How could this great fate not also be your greatest danger and your greatest illness!

Look, we know what you teach: that all things come back forever, and we come back with them, and that we have already been here countless times before, and all things with us.

You teach that there is a great year of becoming, a monster of a great year. Like an hourglass, it has to be turned over again and again, so that it can run down and run out once more:

so that all these years are exactly the same as each other, in the biggest things and in the smallest too. And so that we ourselves, in

every great year, are exactly the same as ourselves, in the biggest things and in the smallest too.

And if you wanted to die now, oh Zarathustra: look, we also know how you would talk to yourself then. But your animals beg you not to die yet!

You would speak without trembling. In fact, you would breathe out with deep happiness, because a great weight and a heavy, stifling closeness would be lifted off you, you most patient one!

'Now I die and fade away,' you would say, 'and in an instant I am nothing. Souls die just as bodies do.

But the knot of causes that I am tangled up in comes back, and it will create me again! I myself am one of the causes of everything coming back forever.

I will come back, with this sun, with this earth, with this eagle, with this snake. Not to a new life, or a better life, or a similar life:

I will come back forever to this same, identical life, in the biggest things and in the smallest too, so that I can teach once again that all things come back forever,

so that I can speak once again about the great midday of the earth and of humans, so that I can once again announce the Superhuman to people.

I have spoken my word, and I break apart on my word. That is what my eternal destiny wants. As the one who announces it, I will be destroyed!

The hour has now come for the one who is going down to bless himself. This is how Zarathustra's going down ends.'"

When the animals had said these words, they fell silent and waited for Zarathustra to say something to them. But Zarathustra did not notice that they had gone quiet. Instead, he lay still with his eyes closed, like someone asleep, even though he was not sleeping, because he was in the middle of a conversation with his own soul. And when the snake and the eagle found him so silent, they respected the great stillness around him and carefully slipped away.

## The Great Longing

Oh my soul, I taught you to say "Today" the same way you say "Someday" and "Long ago." I taught you to dance your circle dance right over every Here and There and Over-there.

Oh my soul, I set you free from every narrow corner. I swept the dust, the spiders and the dim half-light off you.

Oh my soul, I washed off your petty shame and your hide-in-the-corner kind of goodness. I talked you into standing naked in front of the sun's eyes.

With the storm that is called "mind," I blew across your rolling sea. I blew all the clouds away. I even strangled the strangler that is called "sin."

Oh my soul, I gave you the right to say No the way a storm does, and to say Yes the way an open sky says Yes. Now you stand and walk as calmly as light, even through storms that say No.

Oh my soul, I gave you back your freedom over everything that has been made and everything not yet made. And who knows the thrill and pleasure of what is still to come as well as you do?

Oh my soul, I taught you a kind of looking down on things that doesn't eat away at you like worms in wood. I taught you the big, loving kind of contempt, the kind that loves the most where it looks down the most.

Oh my soul, I taught you to persuade so well that you even persuade the reasons themselves to come to you. You are like the sun, which persuades even the sea to rise up toward its height.

Oh my soul, I took away from you all obeying, all bending of the knee, and all calling people "Master." I myself gave you the names "Turning Point of Need" and "Destiny."

Oh my soul, I gave you new names and colorful toys. I called you "Destiny" and "Circle of All Circles" and "Umbilical Cord of Time" and "Sky-Blue Bell."

Oh my soul, I gave your soil all wisdom to drink: all the new wines, and also all the strong wines of wisdom that are older than anyone can remember.

Oh my soul, I poured every sun onto you, and every night, every silence and every longing. And so you grew up for me like a grapevine.

Oh my soul, now you stand there overly rich and heavy, a grapevine with swelling udders and tightly packed bunches of brown-gold grapes:

pressed and weighed down by your own happiness, waiting because you are so overflowing, and still a little shy about the fact that you are waiting.

Oh my soul, there is no soul anywhere now that is more loving, more embracing, or bigger than you! Where else would the future and the past be closer together than in you?

Oh my soul, I gave you everything, and my hands have all become empty from giving to you. And now! Now you smile at me, full of sadness, and say: "Which one of us should be thanking the other?

Shouldn't the giver be thankful that the one receiving was willing to take? Isn't giving a need? Isn't taking really an act of mercy?"

Oh my soul, I understand the smile of your sadness. Your own too-much-richness is now reaching out its hands in longing!

Your fullness looks out over roaring seas, searching and waiting. The longing of being overfull looks out from the smiling sky of your eyes!

And truly, oh my soul! Who could see your smile and not melt into tears? The angels themselves melt into tears because your smile is so overly kind.

It is your kindness, your more-than-kindness, that doesn't want to complain or cry. And yet, oh my soul, your smile longs for tears, and your trembling mouth longs to sob.

"Isn't all crying a kind of complaining? And isn't all complaining a kind of accusing someone?" That is what you say to yourself. And that is why, oh my soul, you would rather smile than pour out your pain.

You would rather smile than pour out in streaming tears all your pain about your fullness, and about how badly the grapevine longs for the grape-picker and his harvesting knife!

But if you won't cry, if you won't cry out your deep purple sadness, then you will have to sing, oh my soul! Look, I am smiling myself as I tell you this ahead of time:

you will have to sing, with a roaring song, until all the seas go quiet so they can listen to your longing,

until a little boat floats over the quiet, longing seas, that golden wonder, with all kinds of good, bad and strange things leaping around its gold,

and also many animals, big and small, and everything that has light, strange feet, so that it can run along violet-blue paths,

all heading toward that golden wonder, the little boat that comes on its own, and toward its master. And that master is the grape-picker, who waits with a diamond harvesting knife,

your great rescuer who sets you free, oh my soul, the one without a name, whose name only songs of the future will find! And truly, your breath already smells of songs that are still to come,

you are already glowing and dreaming, already drinking thirstily from all the deep, ringing wells of comfort, and your sadness is already resting in the happiness of songs that are still to come!

Oh my soul, now I have given you everything, even the last thing I had, and my hands have all become empty from giving to you. Telling you to sing, look, that was the last thing I had to give!

I told you to sing. So now speak, tell me: which one of us should be thanking the other now? But even better: sing for me, sing, oh my soul! And let me be the one who says thank you!

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The Second Dance Song

### 1.

"Not long ago I looked into your eyes, oh Life. I saw gold shining in your dark, night-like eyes, and my heart stood still with the pleasure of it.

I saw a golden boat shining on deep, powerful waters. It was a golden rocking boat that sank down, drank in the water, and then rose up and waved to me again!

You glanced at my foot, which was wild to dance. It was a laughing, questioning, melting look that rocked back and forth like that boat.

You only shook your rattle twice with your small hands, and already my foot was swinging, crazy to dance.

My heels lifted up, and my toes listened hard to understand you. After all, a dancer keeps his ears in his toes!

I jumped toward you, and you pulled back away from my jump. As you ran and flew away, your hair flicked out at me like a snake's tongue!

I jumped away from you and from your snake-like hair. And there you were already, half turned toward me, your eyes full of longing.

With your sly, sideways looks you teach me to take twisting paths. And on twisting paths my foot learns tricks!

I'm afraid of you when you're near, and I love you when you're far away. When you run away, it draws me in. When you come looking for me, it stops me cold. I suffer, but what would I not gladly suffer for you!

You are the one whose coldness sets me on fire, whose hate tempts me, whose running away ties me to you, and whose mocking moves my heart.

Who would not hate you, you great one who ties people up, who wraps around them, who tempts them, who searches and who finds! And who would not love you, you innocent, impatient sinner, quick as the wind, with the eyes of a child!

Where are you pulling me now, you wonder, you wild thing that can't be tamed? And now you're running away from me again, you sweet little wild one, you ungrateful one!

I dance after you. I follow you even when your trail is faint. Where are you? Give me your hand! Or just one finger!

There are caves and thick bushes here. We're going to get lost! Stop! Stand still! Don't you see the owls and bats flying around?

You owl! You bat! Are you trying to make a fool of me? Where are we? You learned this howling and yapping from the dogs.

You bare your little white teeth at me in a sweet way, and your naughty eyes leap out at me from under your curly little mane of hair!

This is a dance over sticks and stones, over rough ground. I'm the hunter. Do you want to be my dog, or the wild mountain goat I'm chasing?

Now come beside me! And quickly, you wicked little jumper! Now up! And over! Oh no! I fell down myself while jumping!

Oh, look at me lying here, you wild, cheeky thing, begging you for mercy! I would gladly walk with you on gentler paths!

I mean the paths of love, through quiet, colorful bushes! Or over there, along the lake, where goldfish swim and dance!

Are you tired now? Over there are sheep and the red glow of the evening sky. Isn't it lovely to fall asleep while shepherds play their flutes?

Are you that tired? I'll carry you there, just let your arms hang down! And if you're thirsty, I might have something for you, but your mouth doesn't want to drink it!

Oh, this cursed, quick, bendy snake, this slippery witch! Where did you go? But I can feel on my face two marks and red blotches from your hand, where you slapped me!

I'm really tired of always being your shepherd, as meek as a sheep! You witch, up to now I have sung for you. Now you will scream for me!

You will dance and scream to the beat of my whip! I didn't forget the whip, did I? No!"

**2.**

Then Life answered me like this, holding her delicate ears shut as she spoke:

"Oh Zarathustra! Don't crack your whip so terribly loud! You know very well that noise kills thoughts, and right now such tender thoughts are coming to me.

We are both real good-for-nothings, and also do-no-harms. Beyond good and evil we found our island and our green meadow, just the two of us alone! That's why we have to be kind to each other!

And even if we don't love each other from the bottom of our hearts, do people have to be angry at each other just because they don't love each other completely?

And you know that I'm fond of you, often too fond. The reason is that I'm jealous of your wisdom. Ah, that crazy old fool of a woman, Wisdom!

If your wisdom ever ran away from you, oh, then my love would quickly run away from you too."

After that, Life looked thoughtfully behind her and all around her, and said quietly: "Oh Zarathustra, you are not faithful enough to me!

You don't love me nearly as much as you say you do. I know you are thinking about leaving me soon.

There is an old, heavy, heavy bell that booms and hums. At night its sound carries all the way up to your cave.

When you hear this bell strike the hour at midnight, then between the first stroke and the twelfth you think about it.

You think about it, oh Zarathustra, I know you do: that you want to leave me soon!"

"Yes," I answered, hesitating, "but you know this too." And I whispered something in her ear, right in among her tangled, yellow, silly locks of hair.

"You know that, oh Zarathustra?" she said. "Nobody knows that."

And we looked at each other, and we looked out at the green meadow, where the cool evening was just then running across, and we cried together. But at that moment, Life was dearer to me than all my wisdom had ever been.

That is what Zarathustra said.

3.
One!
Oh human! Pay attention!

Two!
What is the deep midnight saying?
Three!
"I was asleep, I was asleep,"
Four!
"I have woken up from a deep dream:"
Five!
"The world is deep,"
Six!
"And deeper than the day ever thought."
Seven!
"Deep is its pain,"
Eight!
"Joy is deeper still than heartache:"
Nine!
"Pain says: Go away and end!"
Ten!
"But all joy wants forever,"
Eleven!
"wants deep, deep forever!"
Twelve!

## The Seven Seals

*(Or: The Song of Yes and Amen)*

**1.**

Suppose I am a fortune-teller, full of that fortune-telling spirit that walks along a high mountain ridge between two seas,—

that drifts like a heavy cloud between the past and the future,—an enemy of muggy, low-lying swamps, and an enemy of everything that is tired and can neither die nor live.—

Suppose that spirit is ready for lightning in its dark chest, ready for the ray of light that sets things free. Suppose it is pregnant with lightning bolts that say Yes! and laugh Yes!, pregnant with lightning that tells the future:—

—and whoever is pregnant like that is blessed and happy! And truly, whoever is one day meant to light the light of the future must first hang for a long time on the mountain like a heavy storm!—

Oh, how could I not burn with desire for eternity, and for the wedding ring of all rings,—the ring of everything coming back forever!

I have never yet found the woman I wanted to have children with, except this woman whom I love: because I love you, oh eternity!

Because I love you, oh eternity!

**2.**

Suppose my anger ever broke open graves, moved the stones that mark borders, and smashed old tablets of rules and rolled them down into steep depths:

Suppose my mockery ever blew rotten words away, and I came like a broom to the cross spiders, and like a sweeping wind into old, stuffy burial chambers:

Suppose I ever sat cheering where old gods lie buried, blessing the world and loving the world, right next to the monuments of those who used to slander the world:—

—because I even love churches and the graves of God, once the sky looks in with clear eyes through their broken roofs. I like to sit on ruined churches, the way grass and red poppies grow on them—

Oh, how could I not burn with desire for eternity, and for the wedding ring of all rings,—the ring of everything coming back forever!

I have never yet found the woman I wanted to have children with, except this woman whom I love: because I love you, oh eternity!

Because I love you, oh eternity!

**3.**

Suppose a breath ever reached me from the creative breath, and from that heavenly need that forces even pure chance to dance in a ring like the stars:

Suppose I ever laughed with the laugh of the creative lightning, which is followed by the long thunder of action, grumbling but obedient:

Suppose I ever played dice with gods at the gods' table, which is the earth, so that the earth shook and cracked and snorted up rivers of fire:—

—because the earth is a table for gods, trembling with new creative words and with the dice that gods throw:—

Oh, how could I not burn with desire for eternity, and for the wedding ring of all rings,—the ring of everything coming back forever!

I have never yet found the woman I wanted to have children with, except this woman whom I love: because I love you, oh eternity!

Because I love you, oh eternity!

4.

Suppose I ever took a full gulp from that foaming jug of spices and mixtures, in which all things are well mixed together:

Suppose my hand ever poured the farthest things into the nearest, and fire into mind, and joy into pain, and the very worst into the very kindest:

Suppose I myself am a grain of that freeing salt that makes all things in the mixing jug blend well together:—

—because there is a salt that binds good together with evil. And even the most evil thing is good enough to be used as spice, and to make the drink foam over at the end:—

Oh, how could I not burn with desire for eternity, and for the wedding ring of all rings,—the ring of everything coming back forever!

I have never yet found the woman I wanted to have children with, except this woman whom I love: because I love you, oh eternity!

Because I love you, oh eternity!

5.

Suppose I am fond of the sea, and of everything that is like the sea, and fondest of all when it angrily argues back at me:

Suppose I carry inside me that searching joy that drives the sails toward places no one has discovered yet, suppose there is a sailor's joy inside my joy:

Suppose my cheering ever called out: "The coast has disappeared,—now the last chain has fallen off me—

—the endless roars all around me, far out there space and time are shining for me. Come on! Let's go! old heart!"—

Oh, how could I not burn with desire for eternity, and for the wedding ring of all rings,—the ring of everything coming back forever!

I have never yet found the woman I wanted to have children with, except this woman whom I love: because I love you, oh eternity!

Because I love you, oh eternity!

**6.**

Suppose my virtue is a dancer's virtue, and I have often leaped with both feet into a delight of gold and emerald green:

Suppose my wickedness is a laughing wickedness, at home among slopes of roses and hedges of lilies:

—because in laughter all evil things come together, but they are made holy and set free by their own happiness:—

And suppose this is my beginning and my end, my A to Z: that everything heavy becomes light, every body becomes a dancer, every mind becomes a bird. And truly, that is my beginning and my end!—

Oh, how could I not burn with desire for eternity, and for the wedding ring of all rings,—the ring of everything coming back forever!

I have never yet found the woman I wanted to have children with, except this woman whom I love: because I love you, oh eternity!

Because I love you, oh eternity!

**7.**

Suppose I ever spread out quiet skies above me, and flew with my own wings into skies of my own:

Suppose I swam playfully in deep, faraway stretches of light, and the bird-wisdom of my freedom came to me:—

—and this is what bird-wisdom says: "Look, there is no up and no down! Throw yourself around, outward, backward, you light one! Sing! Don't talk anymore!

—aren't all words made for the heavy ones? Don't all words lie to someone who is light? Sing! Don't talk anymore!"—

Oh, how could I not burn with desire for eternity, and for the wedding ring of all rings,—the ring of everything coming back forever!

I have never yet found the woman I wanted to have children with, except this woman whom I love: because I love you, oh eternity!

Because I love you, oh eternity!

# Part Four, the Last Part

Oh, where in the world have bigger foolish things been done than by people full of pity? And what in the world has caused more suffering than the foolish things done by people full of pity?
How sad for all those who love, if they do not also have some higher place that stands above their pity!
This is what the devil once said to me: "Even God has his hell: it is his love for humans."
And just recently I heard him say this: "God is dead. God died of his pity for humans."

Zarathustra, from the speech "On People Full of Pity"

## The Honey Offering

And again months and years passed over Zarathustra's soul, and he paid no attention to them. But his hair turned white. One day he was sitting on a stone in front of his cave, quietly looking out. From there you look out over the sea and far across winding, deep chasms. His animals walked around him, deep in thought, and finally they came and stood in front of him.

"Oh Zarathustra," they said, "are you looking out for your happiness?" "What does happiness matter!" he answered. "I stopped chasing happiness a long time ago. What I am after is my work." "Oh Zarathustra," the animals said again, "you say that like someone who has more than enough good things. Aren't you lying in a sky-blue lake of happiness?" "You cheeky jokers," Zarathustra answered, smiling, "how well you picked that picture! But you also know that my happiness is heavy. It is not like a light, flowing wave of water. It presses on me, it won't let go of me, and it behaves like melted tar."

Then the animals walked around him again, deep in thought, and once more they came and stood in front of him. "Oh Zarathustra," they said, "is that why you yourself keep getting more yellow and darker, even though your hair is trying to look white and pale like flax? Look, you are sitting in your tar!" "What are you saying, my animals?" said Zarathustra, and he laughed as he said it. "Honestly, I was speaking badly of it when I talked about tar. What is happening to me happens to every fruit that gets ripe. It is the honey in my veins that makes my blood thicker and my soul quieter." "That must be it, oh Zarathustra," the animals answered, and they pressed up close to him. "But wouldn't you like to climb a high mountain today? The air is clear, and today you can see more of the world than ever." "Yes, my

animals," he answered, "that is excellent advice, and just what my heart wants. Today I will climb a high mountain! But make sure there is honey ready for me up there: yellow, white, good, ice-fresh, golden honey straight from the comb. Because you should know, up there I want to make the honey offering."

But when Zarathustra was up at the top, he sent home the animals who had come with him, and he found that now he was alone. Then he laughed with his whole heart, looked around, and said this:

When I talked about offerings, about honey offerings, that was only a trick in how I spoke, and honestly, a useful bit of foolishness! Up here I can speak more freely than in front of a hermit's cave and a hermit's pets.

What do you mean, offer! I throw away freely whatever is given to me. I am a big spender with a thousand hands. How could I still call that an offering!

And when I asked for honey, all I really wanted was bait: sweet, sticky, gooey stuff, the kind that even grumpy bears and strange, sulky, nasty birds lick their tongues for.

I wanted the best bait, the kind hunters and fishermen need. Because if the world is like a dark forest full of animals, a playground for every wild hunter, then to me it seems even more, and I like it better this way, like a rich, bottomless sea.

A sea full of colorful fish and crabs, so tempting that even gods might want to become fishermen there and cast out their nets. That is how rich the world is in strange things, big and small!

Especially the world of people, the sea of people. That is where I now cast out my golden fishing rod, and I say: open up, you deep pit of humanity!

Open up and throw me your fish and your glittering crabs! Today, with my best bait, I will lure in the strangest human fish for myself!

I am throwing my happiness itself out into every wide and distant place, between sunrise, midday and sunset, to see whether many human fish will learn to tug and wriggle on my happiness.

Until they bite on my sharp, hidden hooks and have to come up to my height: the most colorful little fish from the deep, pulled up to the most mischievous of all fishers of people.

Because that is what I am, from the very bottom and from the very beginning: someone who pulls, pulls in, pulls up, brings up. I am a puller, a breeder, a trainer who raises people. It was not for nothing that I once told myself: "Become who you are!"

So let people come up to me now. Because I am still waiting for the signs that it is time for my going down. I am not yet going down myself among people, the way I must.

That is why I wait here, sly and mocking, on high mountains. I am not impatient, and I am not patient either. Rather, I am someone who has even forgotten how to be patient, because he no longer "puts up with" anything.

You see, my fate is giving me time. Maybe it forgot about me? Or is it sitting behind a big stone in the shade, catching flies?

And honestly, I am grateful to it for this, to my eternal fate, that it does not rush me or push me, and that it leaves me time for jokes and mischief. That is why today I climbed this high mountain to go fishing.

Has anyone ever caught fish on high mountains? And even if what I want and do up here is foolish, it is still better than this: getting all solemn down there from waiting, and turning green and yellow.

Better than becoming a puffed-up, snorting angry man from waiting, a holy howling storm coming down from the mountains, an impatient man who shouts down into the valleys: "Listen, or I will whip you with the whip of God!"

Not that I hold a grudge against such angry people for it. To me they are good enough for a laugh! Of course they have to be impatient, these big noisy drums, who get to speak either today or never!

But I and my fate, we do not speak to Today, and we do not speak to Never either. For speaking, we have patience and time, more than enough time. Because one day he really must come, and he will not be allowed to pass by.

Who must come one day and not be allowed to pass by? Our great Hazar, that is, our great, distant kingdom of humans, the thousand-year kingdom of Zarathustra.

How far away might such a "far away" be? What does it matter to me! But it is no less certain to me for that. I stand firmly with both feet on this ground,

on eternal ground, on hard, ancient rock, on these highest, hardest, oldest mountains, where all the winds come as if to the place where the weather divides, asking: Where? Where from? Where to?

Laugh here, laugh, my bright and healthy mischief! From high mountains, throw down your glittering, mocking laughter! With your glitter, lure in the most beautiful human fish for me!

And whatever belongs to me in all the seas, the part of everything that is truly mine, fish that out for me, bring that up here to me. That is what I am waiting for, I, the most mischievous of all fishermen.

Out, out, my fishing line! In and down, bait of my happiness! Drip your sweetest dew, honey of my heart! Bite, my hook, into the belly of all black sadness!

Out, out, my eye! Oh, how many seas all around me, what dawning futures for humanity! And above me, what rose-red stillness! What silence, clear of every cloud!

## The Cry for Help

The next day Zarathustra was sitting on his stone in front of his cave again. Meanwhile his animals were roaming around out in the world to bring home new food, and new honey too, because Zarathustra had used up and wasted the old honey down to the very last drop. As he sat there like that, holding a stick, tracing the outline of his own shadow on the ground, deep in thought, and truly not thinking about himself or his shadow, he suddenly got a fright and jumped. Next to his shadow he saw another shadow. He quickly looked around and stood up, and there, right beside him, stood the fortune-teller. It was the same man he had once fed and given drink to at his table, the one who preached the great tiredness, who taught: "Everything is the same, nothing is worth it, the world has no meaning, knowing things only chokes you." But his face had changed since then. And when Zarathustra looked into his eyes, his heart got a fright once more: so many bad warnings and ash-grey flashes of lightning were running across that face.

The fortune-teller noticed what was going on inside Zarathustra. He wiped his hand across his face, as if he wanted to wipe it away. Zarathustra did the same. And when both of them had silently pulled themselves together and found their strength again like this, they shook hands, as a sign that they wanted to recognize each other again.

"Welcome," said Zarathustra, "you fortune-teller of the great tiredness. It shall not have been for nothing that you were once my guest and friend at my table. Eat and drink with me today as well, and forgive me that a cheerful old man is sitting at the table with you!" "A cheerful old man?" the fortune-teller answered, shaking his head. "But whoever you are, or want to be, oh Zarathustra, you have been up

here far too long. Soon your little boat won't be sitting on dry land anymore!" "Am I sitting on dry land, then?" Zarathustra asked, laughing. "The waves around your mountain," answered the fortune-teller, "are rising and rising, the waves of great need and misery. Soon they will lift your boat too and carry you away." At this Zarathustra said nothing and wondered. "Don't you hear anything yet?" the fortune-teller went on. "Isn't there a rushing and roaring coming up from the depths?" Again Zarathustra said nothing and listened. Then he heard a long, long scream. The deep chasms threw it to one another and passed it on, because none of them wanted to keep it, it sounded so evil.

"You bringer of bad news," Zarathustra finally said, "that is a cry for help, and the cry of a human being. It may well be coming out of a black sea. But what do I care about human need! My last sin, the one I still have left, do you know what it is called?"

"Pity!" answered the fortune-teller, from an overflowing heart, and he raised both his hands. "Oh Zarathustra, I have come to tempt you into your last sin!"

Hardly had these words been spoken when the scream rang out again, longer and more frightened than before, and already much closer. "Do you hear? Do you hear, oh Zarathustra?" cried the fortune-teller. "The scream is meant for you, it is calling you: come, come, come, it is time, it is high time!"

At this Zarathustra said nothing, confused and shaken. Finally he asked, like someone who is hesitating inside himself: "And who is that, calling me over there?"

"But you know already," the fortune-teller answered fiercely. "Why are you hiding? It is the higher human who is screaming for you!"

"The higher human?" Zarathustra screamed, gripped by horror. "What does he want? What does he want? The higher human! What does he want here?" And his skin was covered in sweat.

But the fortune-teller did not answer Zarathustra's fear. Instead he listened and listened toward the depths. But when it stayed quiet down there for a long time, he turned his eyes back and saw Zarathustra standing there, trembling.

"Oh Zarathustra," he began in a sad voice, "you are not standing there like someone whose happiness makes him dizzy. You will have to dance so that you don't fall over in front of me!

But even if you wanted to dance in front of me and do all your little side-jumps, nobody would be allowed to say to me: 'Look, here dances the last happy human!'

Anyone who came up to this height looking for him would come for nothing. He would surely find caves, and caves behind caves, hiding places for people in hiding, but no mineshafts of happiness, no treasure rooms, no new gold veins of happiness.

Happiness! How could anyone find happiness among such buried people and hermits! Do I still have to search for the last happiness on happy islands, far away between forgotten seas?

But everything is the same, nothing is worth it, searching does no good, and there are no more happy islands either!"

That is how the fortune-teller sighed. But at his last sigh Zarathustra became bright and sure again, like someone coming out of a deep pit into the light. "No! No! Three times no!" he cried in a strong voice, stroking his beard. "I know better than that! There are still happy islands! Be quiet about that, you sighing sack of sadness!

Stop splashing on about it, you rain cloud in the morning! Am I not already standing here, wet from your gloom and soaked like a dog?

Now I'll shake myself off and run away from you so I can get dry again. You shouldn't be surprised at that! Do I seem rude to you? But this is my home, and here I make the rules.

But as for your higher human: very well! I'll go look for him in those woods right away. That's where his scream came from. Maybe some wild animal is attacking him there.

He is on my land, and here he shall come to no harm! And truly, there are many wild animals around me."

With these words Zarathustra turned to leave. Then the fortune-teller said: "Oh Zarathustra, you're a sly one!

I know it already: you want to get rid of me! You would rather run into the woods and hunt wild animals!

But what good will it do you? In the evening you'll have me back anyway. I'll be sitting in your own cave, patient and heavy as a log, waiting for you!"

"So be it!" Zarathustra called back as he walked away. "And whatever is mine in my cave belongs to you too, my guest and friend!

And if you still find some honey in there, go ahead! Lick it all up, you grumpy bear, and sweeten your soul! Because in the evening we both want to be in a good mood,

in a good mood and glad that this day is over! And you yourself shall dance to my songs, as my dancing bear.

You don't believe it? You're shaking your head? Come on! Let's go! Old bear! But I too am a fortune-teller."

That is what Zarathustra said.

## Talking with the Kings

### 1.

Zarathustra had not been walking through his mountains and forests for even an hour when, all of a sudden, he saw a strange procession. Right on the path he wanted to take down, two kings were coming along. They were decked out with crowns and purple belts, and they were as colorful as flamingos. They were driving a loaded donkey in front of them. "What do these kings want in my kingdom?" Zarathustra said to his heart in surprise, and he quickly hid behind a bush. But when the kings came right up to him, he said in a low voice, like someone talking only to himself: "Strange! Strange! How does this fit together? I see two kings, and only one donkey!"

At that, the two kings stopped, smiled, and looked toward the spot the voice had come from. Then they looked each other in the face. "People like us probably think that kind of thing too," said the king on the right, "but we don't say it out loud."

But the king on the left shrugged his shoulders and answered: "That's probably a goatherd. Or a hermit who has lived too long among rocks and trees. You see, having no company at all also ruins good manners."

"Good manners?" the other king replied, annoyed and bitter. "Who is it we are running away from? Isn't it 'good manners'? Our 'good society'?

Honestly, I would rather live among hermits and goatherds than with our gold-plated, fake, painted-over mob, even if it calls itself 'good society',

even if it calls itself 'nobility'. But everything there is fake and rotten, starting with the blood, thanks to old, nasty diseases and even nastier doctors.

The best and dearest kind of person for me today is still a healthy farmer: rough, cunning, stubborn, and tough enough to last. That is the noblest kind of person today.

The farmer is the best today, and the farmer's kind should be in charge! But this is the kingdom of the mob. I won't let anyone fool me anymore. And mob means: a mishmash.

A mob mishmash: in it, everything is jumbled up with everything else, saint and scoundrel, country lord and Jew, and every kind of animal from Noah's Ark.

Good manners! Everything with us is fake and rotten. Nobody knows how to truly honor anything anymore, and that is exactly what we are running away from. They are sugary, pushy dogs; they cover palm leaves in gold, making fake glory out of everything.

This disgust is choking me: that we kings ourselves have become fake, draped and disguised in old, yellowed showiness from our grandfathers' days, like medals made for show for the stupidest and the slyest, and for anyone today who haggles and trades with power!

We are not the first, and yet we have to act as if we were. We have finally had enough of this cheating; we are sick and disgusted with it.

We went out of the way of the scum: all these loudmouths and writing blowflies, the stink of shopkeepers, the twitching of ambition, the bad breath. Yuck, to live among the scum,

yuck, to have to count as the first among the scum! Oh, disgust! Disgust! Disgust! What do we kings even matter anymore!"

"Your old illness is attacking you," the king on the left said at this point. "Disgust is attacking you, my poor brother. But you do know that someone is listening to us."

Right away Zarathustra, who had been listening to these speeches with his ears and eyes wide open, got up from his hiding place, walked up to the kings, and began:

"The one who is listening to you, the one who is glad to listen to you, you kings, is called Zarathustra.

I am Zarathustra, who once said: 'What do kings even matter anymore!' Forgive me, I was pleased when you said to each other: 'What do we kings matter!'

But this is my kingdom and where I rule. What might you be looking for in my kingdom? But maybe along the way you found what I am looking for: that is, the higher human."

When the kings heard this, they beat their chests and said with one voice: "We have been seen through!

With the sword of this word you cut through the thickest darkness of our hearts. You have discovered our need, because look! We are on our way to find the higher human,

the human who is higher than we are, even though we are kings. We are bringing this donkey to him. Because the highest human should also be the highest lord on earth.

There is no harder misfortune in all of human fate than when the powerful people of the earth are not also the finest people. Then everything becomes fake and crooked and monstrous.

And when they are even the lowest, more animal than human, then the mob rises and rises in value, and in the end the mob's idea of virtue even says: 'Look, I alone am virtue!'"

"What did I just hear?" Zarathustra answered. "What wisdom from kings! I am delighted, and honestly, I already feel like making a rhyme about it,

even if it turns out to be a rhyme that is not fit for everyone's ears. I stopped caring about long ears, the ears of donkeys, a long time ago. Come on! Let's go!"

(But at this point it happened that the donkey also got a word in: it said, clearly and with bad intentions, 'Hee-haw.')

Once upon a time, in the year One of salvation, I believe,

The prophetess, drunk without any wine, said:

"Oh no, now it's all going wrong!

Decay! Decay! The world has never sunk so low!

Rome sank into a whore and a whorehouse,

Rome's Caesar sank into an animal, and God himself became a Jew!"

**2.**

The kings enjoyed these rhymes of Zarathustra's very much. But the king on the right said: "Oh Zarathustra, how right we were to set out to see you!

You see, your enemies showed us your picture in their mirror. There you looked like a devil with a twisted face, laughing scornfully, so that we were afraid of you.

But what good did that do! Again and again you stung us in our ears and hearts with your sayings. So at last we said: what does it matter what he looks like!

We have to hear him, the one who teaches: 'You should love peace as a way to get to new wars, and a short peace more than a long one!'

Nobody ever spoke such warlike words: 'What is good? Being brave is good. It is the good war that makes every cause holy.'

Oh Zarathustra, the blood of our fathers stirred in our bodies at words like that. It was like spring speaking to old wine barrels, waking up what was sleeping inside.

When swords crossed and clashed like red-spotted snakes, that was when our fathers came to love life. The sunshine of any peace seemed weak and lukewarm to them, and a long peace made them ashamed.

How our fathers sighed when they saw shiny, dried-out swords hanging on the wall! Like those swords, they were thirsty for war. Because a sword wants to drink blood, and it sparkles with craving."

While the kings talked and chattered so eagerly about their fathers' happiness, Zarathustra felt no small urge to make fun of their eagerness. It was obvious that the kings in front of him were very peaceful kings, the kind with old and refined faces. But he held himself back. "Well then!" he said. "The path leads over there; that is where Zarathustra's cave is. And this day shall have a long evening! But right now a cry for help is calling me away from you in a hurry.

It is an honor for my cave if kings want to sit in it and wait. But of course, you will have to wait a long time!

Oh well! What does it matter! Where do people learn to wait better today than at royal courts? And the whole virtue kings have left, isn't it called, these days: being able to wait?"

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The Leech

Zarathustra walked on, deep in thought, going further and deeper, through forests and past swampy low ground. But, as happens to anyone who thinks about heavy things, he stepped on a person without noticing. And look: all at once a cry of pain, two curses and twenty nasty insults splashed into his face. He was so startled that he raised his stick and hit the man he had stepped on as well. But right after that he came to his senses, and his heart laughed at the foolish thing he had just done.

"Forgive me," he said to the man he had stepped on, who had angrily got up and sat down. "Forgive me, and first of all listen to a comparison.

Think of a traveler who is dreaming about faraway things. On a lonely road he bumps, without noticing, into a sleeping dog, a dog lying in the sun.

Think how they both jump up and snap at each other like deadly enemies, these two who were scared half to death. That is what happened to us.

And yet! And yet, how little it would have taken for them to pet and cuddle each other, this dog and this lonely man! After all, they are both lonely ones!"

"Whoever you may be," said the man who had been stepped on, still angry, "you are stepping on my toes with your comparison too, and not just with your foot!

Look here, am I a dog, then?" And as he said this, the sitting man stood up and pulled his bare arm out of the swamp. You see, at first

he had been lying stretched out on the ground, hidden and impossible to recognize, like people who lie in wait for swamp animals.

"But what on earth are you doing!" cried Zarathustra, alarmed, because he saw that a lot of blood was running down the bare arm. "What happened to you? Did a nasty animal bite you, you poor wretch?"

The bleeding man laughed, still angry. "What business is it of yours!" he said, and he wanted to walk on. "Here I am at home, in my own territory. Let anyone ask me who wants to. But I will hardly answer a clumsy oaf."

"You are wrong," said Zarathustra, feeling sorry for him, and he held him back. "You are wrong. Here you are not in your own place, but in my kingdom, and in it I will not let anyone come to harm.

But call me whatever you like. I am who I have to be. I myself call myself Zarathustra.

Come on! Up that way is the path to Zarathustra's cave. It is not far. Won't you come and look after your wounds at my place?

Things have gone badly for you in this life, you poor wretch. First the animal bit you, and then the human stepped on you!"

But when the man who had been stepped on heard the name Zarathustra, he changed completely. "What is happening to me!" he cried out. "Who do I still care about in this life, except this one human, namely Zarathustra, and that one animal that lives on blood, the leech?

It was for the leech's sake that I was lying here by this swamp like a fisherman. My arm, hung out like bait, had already been bitten ten times. And now an even finer leech bites after my blood: Zarathustra himself!

Oh, what luck! Oh, what a miracle! Praised be this day that lured me into this swamp! Praised be the best and liveliest bloodsucker alive today, the best healer that draws out blood! Praised be Zarathustra, the great leech of the conscience!"

That is what the man who had been stepped on said. And Zarathustra was pleased by his words and their fine, respectful manner. "Who are you?" he asked, and he held out his hand to him. "There is a lot between us still to clear up and to brighten up. But it seems to me it is already turning into a pure, bright day."

"I am the one who is strict in conscience about the mind," answered the man. "And in matters of the mind, hardly anyone is stricter, narrower and harder than I am, except the one I learned it from, Zarathustra himself.

Better to know nothing than to half-know a lot! Better to be a fool on my own terms than a wise man by other people's opinion! I get to the bottom of things.

What does it matter whether that bottom is big or small? Whether it is called swamp or sky? A hand's width of ground is enough for me, as long as it is really solid ground under my feet!

A hand's width of ground: you can stand on that. In real, honest knowledge, knowledge done with a clear conscience, there is nothing big and nothing small."

"So maybe you are the one who studies the leech?" asked Zarathustra. "And you follow the leech all the way down to its deepest reasons, you strict and careful man?"

"Oh Zarathustra," answered the man who had been stepped on, "that would be something enormous. How could I dare to take that on!

But what I am the master and expert of is the leech's brain. That is my world!

And it is a world too! But forgive me for letting my pride speak here, because in this field I have no equal. That is why I said, 'Here I am at home.'

For how long I have been chasing this one thing, the leech's brain, so that the slippery truth can no longer slip away from me here! Here is my kingdom!

For its sake I threw everything else away. For its sake everything else stopped mattering to me. And right next to my knowledge lies my black ignorance.

My conscience about the mind demands this of me: that I know one thing and know nothing at all about everything else. I am disgusted by all the half-hearted people of the mind, all the foggy, floating, dreamy ones.

Where my honesty ends, I am blind, and I want to be blind too. But where I want to know, I also want to be honest, which means hard, strict, narrow, cruel and merciless.

You once said, oh Zarathustra: 'The mind is life that cuts into life itself.' That is what led me, and lured me, to your teaching. And truly, with my own blood I added to my own knowledge!"

"As anyone can plainly see," Zarathustra broke in, because blood was still running down the bare arm of the strict, careful man. You see, ten leeches had bitten into it.

"Oh, you strange fellow, how much this plain sight teaches me, I mean you yourself! And maybe I shouldn't pour all of it into your strict ears!

Come on! So let us part here! But I would like to find you again. Up that way leads the path to my cave. Tonight you shall be my dear guest there!

I would also like to make it up to your body that Zarathustra kicked you with his feet. I am thinking about how. But right now a cry for help is calling me away from you in a hurry."

That is what Zarathustra said.

# The Magician

## 1.

But as Zarathustra came around a rock, he saw a person not far below him on the same path. The man was throwing his arms and legs around like someone gone wild with rage, and finally he fell flat on his stomach to the ground. "Stop!" Zarathustra said to his heart. "That man there must be the higher human. That terrible cry for help came from him. I want to see if I can help." But when he ran over to the spot where the man lay on the ground, he found a trembling old man with staring eyes. No matter how hard Zarathustra tried to lift him up and set him back on his feet, it was no use. The poor man didn't even seem to notice that anyone was near him. Instead, he kept looking around with pitiful gestures, like someone abandoned and left alone by the whole world. But at last, after a lot of trembling, twitching and curling up into a ball, he began to wail like this:

Who will warm me, who still loves me?

Give me hot hands!

Give me hearts that glow like coal fires!

Stretched out, shivering,

Like someone half dead whose feet are being warmed —

Shaken, oh! by fevers no one knows,

Trembling from sharp, icy arrows of frost,

Hunted by you, thought!

You that can't be named! You hidden one! You horrible one!

You hunter behind the clouds!

Struck down by your lightning,

You mocking eye that stares at me out of the dark:

— that's how I lie here,

Bending, twisting, tortured

By every torment that lasts forever,

Hit

By you, cruelest hunter,

You unknown — God!

Strike deeper,

Strike one more time!

Stab this heart, break it to pieces!

Why this torture

With blunt arrows, dull as worn-down teeth?

Why are you staring again,

Never tired of human suffering,

With gloating godly eyes that flash like lightning?

You don't want to kill,

Only torture, torture?

Why — torture me,

You gloating unknown God? —

Haha! You're creeping closer?

At a midnight like this,

What do you want? Speak!

You crowd me, you press on me —

Ha! Already much too close!

Go away! Go away!

You hear me breathing,

You eavesdrop on my heart,

You jealous one —

But jealous of what?

Go away! Go away! What's the ladder for?

Do you want to get inside,

Into my heart,

Climb in, climb into my most secret

Thoughts?

Shameless one! Unknown — thief!

What do you want to steal for yourself,

What do you want to overhear,

What do you want to get out of me by torture,

You torturer!

You — executioner God!

Or should I, like a dog,

Roll around in front of you?

Giving myself up, thrilled out of my mind,

Wagging my tail at you — in love?

No use!

Keep stabbing,

Cruelest sting! No,

I'm no dog — I'm only your prey, the animal you hunt,

Cruelest hunter!

Your proudest prisoner,

You robber behind the clouds...

Speak at last,

What do you want from me, you highway robber?

You who hide in lightning! Unknown one! Speak,

What do you want, unknown God? —

What?

Ransom?

How much ransom do you want?

Ask for a lot — that's what my pride advises!

And keep it short — that's what my other pride advises!

Haha!

Me — you want me? Me?

Me — all of me?

Haha!

And you torture me, fool that you are,

You torture my pride to pieces?

Give me love — who will still warm me?

Who still loves me? — give me hot hands,

Give me hearts that glow like coal fires,

Give to me, the loneliest of all,

Whom ice, oh! ice seven times over,

Teaches to long even for enemies,

To ache with longing for enemies,

Give, yes, give yourself up,

Cruelest enemy,

To me — give me you!...

Gone!

There he ran off himself,

My last and only companion,

My great enemy,

My unknown one,

My executioner God!...

— No!

Come back,

With all your tortures!

To the last of all lonely people,

Oh, come back!

All my streams of tears

Run their course to you!

And my heart's last flame —

It blazes up for you!

Oh, come back,

My unknown God! My pain!

My last happiness!

**2.**

— But at this point Zarathustra couldn't hold himself back any longer. He took his walking stick and hit the wailing man with all his strength. "Stop it!" he shouted at him, laughing in fury. "Stop it, you actor! You counterfeiter! You liar through and through! I know exactly who you are!

I'll warm up your legs for you, all right, you wicked magician. I'm good at making things hot for people like you!"

— "Stop," said the old man, jumping up from the ground. "Don't hit me anymore, oh Zarathustra! I was only doing it as a game!

That kind of thing is part of my art. I wanted to test you yourself when I put on this show for you! And truly, you saw right through me!

But you also gave me no small sample of yourself: you are hard, you wise Zarathustra! You strike hard with your 'truths.' Your club has beaten this truth out of me!"

— "Don't flatter me," answered Zarathustra, still worked up and scowling darkly. "You actor through and through! You are false. What are you doing talking about truth!

You peacock of peacocks, you ocean of vanity, what were you acting out in front of me, you wicked magician? Who was I supposed to believe in when you were wailing in that shape?"

"The Penitent of the Mind," said the old man, "that's who I was playing — someone who punishes himself with his own mind. You yourself invented that phrase once —

— the poet and magician who finally turns his mind against himself, the changed man who freezes to death from his own wicked knowledge and his own guilty conscience.

And just admit it: it took you a long time, oh Zarathustra, to see through my art and my lie! You believed I was really suffering when you held my head in both your hands —

— I heard you moaning, 'He was loved too little, loved too little!' Deep inside, my wickedness cheered that I had fooled you that far."

"You may have fooled people sharper than me," said Zarathustra harshly. "I don't stay on guard against cheaters. I have to live without caution. That is my fate.

But you — you have to cheat. I know you that well! You always have to mean two, three, four and five things at once! Even what you just confessed was, for me, nowhere near true enough and nowhere near false enough!

You wicked counterfeiter, how could you be any different! You would even put makeup on your sickness if you showed yourself naked to your doctor.

That's exactly how you just put makeup on your lie in front of me when you said, 'I was only doing it as a game!' There was something serious in it too. You are something of a Penitent of the Mind!

I can guess what you are: you became the one who casts a spell on everyone, but you have no lies or tricks left to use on yourself. You yourself have lost the spell — you no longer fool yourself!

Disgust is what you harvested, as your one truth. Not a single word of yours is real anymore — except your mouth: that is, the disgust that sticks to your mouth." —

— "Who do you think you are!" the old magician shouted at this, in a defiant voice. "Who dares to talk like this to me, the greatest man alive today?" And a green flash shot from his eye toward Zarathustra. But right after that he changed and said sadly:

"Oh Zarathustra, I'm tired of it. My own tricks disgust me. I'm not great — why am I pretending? But you know it well — I was searching for greatness!

I wanted to act the part of a great man, and I convinced many people. But this lie was more than my strength could carry. It is breaking me.

Oh Zarathustra, everything about me is a lie. But that I am breaking — this breaking of mine is real!" —

"It does you credit," said Zarathustra gloomily, looking down to one side, "it does you credit that you searched for greatness. But it also gives you away. You are not great.

You wicked old magician, the best and most honest thing about you, the thing I respect in you, is that you got tired of yourself and said it out loud: 'I am not great.'

In that I respect you as a Penitent of the Mind. And even if it was only for a breath, a flicker, for this one Moment you were — real."

"But tell me, what are you looking for here in my forests and rocks? And when you threw yourself down in my path, what test did you want to put me through?"

"What were you trying me with?"

That is what Zarathustra said, and his eyes were flashing. The old magician was silent for a while. Then he said: "Was I trying you? I am only—trying to find."

"Oh Zarathustra, I am looking for someone real, someone right, someone simple and clear, a person who is honest through and through, a container full of wisdom, a saint of knowledge, a great human being!"

"Don't you know it, oh Zarathustra? I am looking for Zarathustra."

And here a long silence fell between the two of them. Zarathustra sank so deep into himself that he closed his eyes. But then he came back to the man he was talking with, took the magician's hand, and spoke, full of politeness and full of sly cunning:

"Come on! The path leads up there, and that is where Zarathustra's cave is. In it you may look for whoever you want to find."

"And ask my animals for advice, my eagle and my snake. They will help you look. And my cave is big."

"I myself, of course—I have never yet seen a great human being. When it comes to what is great, even the sharpest eyes today are clumsy and dull. This is the kingdom of the mob."

"I have already found quite a few people who stretched themselves and puffed themselves up, and the crowd shouted: 'Look there, a great human being!' But what good are all those bellows? In the end the air rushes out."

"In the end a frog that puffed itself up for too long bursts, and the air rushes out. Poking a hole in the belly of someone all swollen up—that is what I call good, decent fun. Listen to that, you boys!"

"This today belongs to the mob. Who still knows what is great and what is small? Who could go looking for greatness and have any luck? Only a fool. Fools are the lucky ones."

"You are looking for great human beings, you strange fool? Who taught you that? Is today the right time for it? Oh you wicked seeker, why are you—trying me?"

That is what Zarathustra said, his heart comforted, and he went on his way, laughing greedily.

## Out of Work

Not long after Zarathustra had freed himself from the magician, he again saw someone sitting by the road. It was a tall man dressed in black, with a thin, pale face, and the sight of him annoyed Zarathustra enormously. "Oh no," he said to his heart, "there sits gloom in disguise. He looks to me like the priestly type. What do people like that want in my kingdom?

What! I've only just escaped from that magician, and now another dealer in dark magic has to cross my path,—

—some sorcerer who heals by laying on hands, some gloomy miracle-worker who claims God gave him the power, some holy, oil-anointed man who speaks badly of the whole world. May the devil take him!

But the devil is never where he's needed. He always comes too late, that cursed dwarf with the clubfoot!"—

That is how Zarathustra cursed impatiently in his heart. He planned to slip past the man in black while looking the other way. But look, things turned out differently. At that very moment the sitting man had already spotted him. And a bit like someone who has had an unexpected stroke of luck, he jumped up and came straight toward Zarathustra.

"Whoever you are, traveler," he said, "help someone who is lost, someone who is searching, an old man who could easily get hurt out here!

This world here is strange and far away from what I know. I also heard wild animals howling. And the one who could have protected me no longer exists himself.

I was looking for the last religious person, a saint and hermit who lived alone in his forest and who still hadn't heard what the whole world knows today."

"What does the whole world know today?" Zarathustra asked. "Maybe this: that the old God, the one the whole world once believed in, is no longer alive?"

"You said it," the old man answered sadly. "And I served that old God right up to his last hour.

But now I'm out of work. I have no master, and yet I'm not free. And I'm never cheerful anymore, not for a single hour, except when I'm remembering.

That's why I climbed up into these mountains: so that at last I could hold a celebration again, the kind that suits an old pope and Father of the Church. Because you should know, I am the last pope! I wanted a celebration of holy memories and worship.

But now he himself is dead, the most religious of people, that saint in the forest who kept praising his God with singing and humming.

When I found his hut, I didn't find him anymore. But I did find two wolves inside, howling over his death, because all the animals loved him. So I ran away.

Had I come to these forests and mountains for nothing? Then my heart made up its mind that I should look for someone else, the most religious of all those who don't believe in God. I decided to look for Zarathustra!"

That is what the old man said, and he looked sharply at the one standing in front of him. But Zarathustra took the old pope's hand and studied it for a long time, full of admiration.

"Look at that, honored sir," he then said, "what a beautiful, long hand! This is the hand of someone who has always given out blessings. But now it is holding on to the one you're looking for: me, Zarathustra.

It's me speaking, Zarathustra the godless one. Who is more godless than I am, so that I could enjoy learning from him?"—

That is what Zarathustra said, and with his gaze he pierced right through the old pope's thoughts, and through the hidden thoughts behind them too. At last the old man began:

"Whoever loved him most and had him most is also the one who has now lost him most—

—look, maybe of the two of us I am now the more godless one? But who could be happy about that!"—

After a deep silence, Zarathustra asked thoughtfully, "You served him to the end. Do you know how he died? Is it true what people say, that pity strangled him,

—that he saw the man hanging on the cross, and he couldn't bear it, that his love for humans became his hell and finally his death?"—

But the old pope didn't answer. He looked away shyly, with a pained and gloomy expression.

"Let him go," Zarathustra said after thinking for a long time, still looking the old man straight in the eye.

"Let him go, he's gone. And even though it does you credit that you only say good things about this dead one, you know as well as I do who he was, and that he went down strange paths."

"Just between the three eyes here," said the old pope, cheering up, because he was blind in one eye, "when it comes to God, I know more than Zarathustra himself, and I have every right to.

My love served him for many long years, and my will followed his will in everything. But a good servant knows everything, including quite a few things his master hides even from himself.

He was a hidden God, full of secrets. Honestly, he couldn't even get himself a son except by sneaking around. Right at the doorway of his faith stands adultery.

Whoever praises him as a God of love doesn't think highly enough of love itself. Didn't this God also want to be a judge? But someone who truly loves loves beyond reward and payback.

When he was young, this God from the East, he was harsh and hungry for revenge, and he built himself a hell to entertain his favorites.

But in the end he grew old and soft and crumbly and full of pity. He was more like a grandfather than a father, and most of all like a wobbly old grandmother.

There he sat, all withered, in his corner by the stove, worrying about his weak legs, tired of the world, tired of wanting anything. And one day he choked on his far too great pity."—

"You old pope," Zarathustra broke in here, "did you see that with your own eyes? It may well have happened that way: that way, and other ways too. When gods die, they always die many kinds of death.

But all right! One way or another, this way and that way, he's gone! He offended the taste of my ears and eyes. I wouldn't want to say anything worse about him than that.

I love everything that looks at you clearly and speaks honestly. But he —you know it yourself, you old priest, there was something of your kind in him, the priestly kind—he could mean many different things at once.

He was also unclear. How angry he got with us, this snorting, furious one, because we misunderstood him! But why didn't he speak more clearly?

And if the problem was our ears, why did he give us ears that heard him badly? If there was mud in our ears, well then, who put it there?

Too much went wrong for him, this potter who never finished learning his trade! But that he took revenge on his pots and creatures because they turned out badly—that was a sin against good taste.

There is good taste in religion too. And in the end it said: 'Away with a God like that! Better no God at all, better to make your own fate with your own hands, better to be a fool, better to be God yourself!'"

—"What am I hearing!" said the old pope here, pricking up his ears. "Oh Zarathustra, you are more religious than you think, with a disbelief like that! Some god inside you converted you to your godlessness.

Isn't it your very faithfulness that won't let you believe in a god anymore? And your enormous honesty will carry you even beyond good and evil!

But look, what has been saved up for you? You have eyes and hands and a mouth that were meant for blessing since the beginning of time. You don't bless with your hand alone.

Near you, even though you want to be the most godless of all, I can smell a secret scent, like holy incense, from long blessings. It makes me feel good and it hurts at the same time.

"Let me be your guest, oh Zarathustra, just for one night! Nowhere on earth would I feel better right now than with you!"

"Amen! So be it!" said Zarathustra, very surprised. "The path goes up there, and that is where Zarathustra's cave is.

I would truly be glad to take you there myself, you honorable old man, because I love all religious people. But right now a cry for help is calling me away from you, and I have to hurry.

In my territory, nobody is going to come to harm. My cave is a safe harbor. And more than anything, I would like to put every sad person back on solid ground and steady legs.

But who could lift your sadness off your shoulders? I am too weak for that. Truly, we could wait a long time before someone wakes your God up again.

Because this old God is not alive anymore: he is completely dead."

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The Ugliest Person

—And once more Zarathustra's feet carried him through mountains and forests, and his eyes searched and searched. But nowhere could he see the one he wanted to find: the one in great distress, who had let out the cry for help. Yet the whole way, he was cheering inside his heart, and he felt thankful. "What good things this day has given me," he said, "to make up for starting off so badly! What strange people I found to talk with!"

"I want to chew on their words for a long time now, as if they were good grains. My teeth will grind them and crush them small, until they flow into my soul like milk!"—

But when the path bent around a rock again, the landscape suddenly changed, and Zarathustra stepped into a kingdom of death. Black and red cliffs stuck up stiffly here. There was no grass, no tree, not one bird's voice. You see, this was a valley that all animals stayed away from, even the beasts of prey. The only exception was a kind of ugly, fat, green snake: when these snakes got old, they came here to die. That is why the shepherds called this valley Snake-Death.

Zarathustra sank into a dark memory, because he felt as if he had stood in this valley once before. Many heavy things pressed down on his mind, so that he walked slowly, and then more and more slowly, and finally stood still. But then, when he opened his eyes, he saw something sitting by the path. It was shaped like a human, and yet hardly like a human. It was something you could not put into words. And all at once Zarathustra was overcome by great shame that he had looked at such a thing with his eyes. He blushed right up to his white hair, turned his eyes away, and lifted his foot to leave this terrible place. But then the dead wasteland became loud. Up from the ground

came a gurgling and rattling sound, the way water gurgles and rattles at night through clogged water pipes. And in the end this sound turned into a human voice and human speech. This is what it said:

"Zarathustra! Zarathustra! Solve my riddle! Speak, speak! What is the revenge on the witness?

I am luring you back, and here is slippery ice! Watch out, watch out that your pride doesn't break its legs here!

You think you are wise, proud Zarathustra! Then solve the riddle, you tough cracker of hard nuts—the riddle that I am! Go on, speak—who am I?"

—Now when Zarathustra had heard these words—what do you think happened in his soul? Pity attacked him. And all at once he sank to the ground, like an oak tree that has held out for a long time against many woodcutters—heavily, suddenly, so that it frightened even the people who wanted to cut it down. But he was already getting up from the ground again, and his face turned hard.

"I know very well who you are," he said in a voice like bronze. "You are the murderer of God! Let me go.

You could not stand the one who saw you—who always saw you, right through and through, you ugliest person! You took revenge on this witness!"

That is what Zarathustra said, and he wanted to leave. But the one beyond words grabbed the corner of his robe and began again to gurgle and search for words. "Stay!" he finally said—

—"Stay! Don't walk past! I guessed which axe knocked you to the ground. Good for you, oh Zarathustra, that you are standing again!

You guessed, I know it well, how the one who killed him feels—the murderer of God. Stay! Sit down here with me. It won't be for nothing.

Who else would I have come to, if not to you? Stay, sit down! But don't look at me! That is how you can respect—my ugliness!

They are hunting me. Now you are my last place of safety. They are not hunting me with their hate, or with their police—oh, I would laugh at that kind of hunting, and I would be proud and happy!

Hasn't every success so far gone to those who were hunted well? And whoever is good at hunting easily learns to follow—after all, he is already behind! No, it is their pity—

—it is their pity that I am running away from, and running to you for shelter. Oh Zarathustra, protect me, you who are my last place of safety, the only one who figured me out:

—you guessed how the one who killed him feels. Stay! And if you want to go, you impatient man, don't take the path I came by. That path is bad.

Are you angry with me because I have already been babbling and mangling my words for too long? Because I am already giving you advice? But know this: it is me, the ugliest person,

—who also has the biggest, heaviest feet. Wherever I have walked, the path is bad. I trample every path to death and ruin it.

But that you walked past me in silence, and that you blushed—I saw it clearly—that is how I knew you were Zarathustra.

Anyone else would have tossed me his handout, his pity, with his looks and his words. But I am not enough of a beggar for that. You guessed it—

—I am too rich for that, rich in great things, in terrible things, in the ugliest things, in the things most impossible to put into words! Your shame, oh Zarathustra, honored me!

With great difficulty I got out of the crowd of pitying people, so that I could find the only one who teaches today that "pity is pushy"—you, oh Zarathustra!

—whether it is a god's pity or people's pity: pity goes against shame. And not wanting to help can be nobler than that kind of virtue that jumps in right away.

But today, among all small-minded people, that is what they call virtue itself: pity. They have no deep respect for great misfortune, for great ugliness, for great failure.

I look right over all of them, the way a dog looks over the backs of crowded, milling flocks of sheep. They are small, kind-hearted, well-meaning, gray people.

The way a heron looks over shallow ponds with disgust, with its head tilted back: that is how I look over the swarm of gray little waves and wishes and souls.

For too long people have told these small people they are right. And so in the end they were also given power. Now they teach: "Only what small people call good is good."

And today "truth" means whatever was said by the preacher who came from among them himself, that strange saint and speaker for the small people, who said about himself: "I—am the truth."

For a long time now this immodest man has made the small people puff up with pride, like a rooster raising its comb—he, who taught no small mistake when he taught "I—am the truth."

Was an immodest man ever answered more politely? But you, oh Zarathustra, walked past him and said: "No! No! Three times no!"

You warned about his mistake. You were the first to warn against pity —not warning everyone, and not warning no one, but warning yourself and your kind.

You feel ashamed at the shame of the one who suffers greatly. And truly, when you say, "A great cloud is coming from pity, watch out, you humans!"

—when you teach, "All creators are hard; all great love is above its pity": oh Zarathustra, how well trained you seem to me in reading the signs of the weather!

But you yourself—warn yourself, too, against your own pity! Because many people are on their way to you: many who are suffering, doubting, despairing, drowning, freezing—

I am warning you about me too. You guessed my best and worst riddle: me myself, and what I did. I know the axe that cuts you down.

But he—had to die. He saw with eyes that saw everything. He saw the depths and the very bottom of humans, all their hidden disgrace and ugliness.

His pity knew no shame. He crawled into my dirtiest corners. This most nosy, far-too-pushy, far-too-pitying one had to die.

He was always watching me. I wanted to get revenge on a witness like that, or else stop living myself.

The God who saw everything, who saw humans too: this God had to die! Humans cannot stand it that such a witness is alive."

That is what the ugliest person said. But Zarathustra stood up and got ready to leave, because he felt a chill that went all the way down into his gut.

"You, whom no words can describe," Zarathustra said, "you warned me against taking your path. To thank you for that, I will recommend my own path to you. Look, up there is Zarathustra's cave.

My cave is big and deep and has many corners. Even the one who hides best of all will find a hiding place there. And right next to it are a hundred holes and secret paths for creatures that crawl, flutter and jump.

You outcast, you who threw yourself out, you don't want to live among humans and human pity? Come on, then, do as I do! That way you will also learn from me. Only the one who acts really learns.

And first of all, before anything else, talk with my animals! The proudest animal and the wisest animal: they might well be the right advisers for both of us!"

That is what Zarathustra said, and he went on his way, even more thoughtful and slower than before. He was asking himself many things, and he could not easily find the answers.

"How poor humans really are!" he thought in his heart. "How ugly, how wheezing and gasping, how full of hidden shame!

People tell me that humans love themselves. Oh, how huge this self-love must be! How much contempt it has working against it!

This one back there also loved himself just as much as he despised himself. To me, he is a great lover and a great despiser.

I have never yet found anyone who despised himself more deeply. That, too, is a kind of height. Oh no, was he perhaps the higher human whose cry I heard?

I love those who despise greatly. But humans are something that must be outgrown."

## The Beggar by Choice

After Zarathustra had left the ugliest person, he felt cold and lonely. Many cold and lonely thoughts were passing through his mind, so much so that his arms and legs grew colder too. But as he climbed on and on, up and down, sometimes past green meadows, and sometimes over wild, stony ground where an impatient stream had probably once lain down to sleep, he suddenly felt warmer again, and his heart felt friendlier.

"What has happened to me?" he asked himself. "Something warm and alive is cheering me up. It must be somewhere near me.

Already I am less alone. Companions and brothers I don't know about are wandering around me, and their warm breath touches my soul."

But when he looked around for whatever was comforting him in his loneliness, he saw that it was cows, standing together on a little hill. Being close to them, and their smell, had warmed his heart. These cows seemed to be listening eagerly to someone talking, and they paid no attention to the man coming toward them. When Zarathustra got right up close, he clearly heard a human voice speaking from the middle of the herd. And plainly all the cows had turned their heads toward the speaker.

So Zarathustra eagerly jumped up the hill and pushed the animals apart, because he was afraid that someone here had been hurt, and the pity of cows could hardly help such a person. But he was wrong about that. For look: there sat a man on the ground, and he seemed to be telling the animals not to be afraid of him. He was a peaceful man, a preacher on the mountain, and kindness itself seemed to preach

from his eyes. "What are you looking for here?" Zarathustra called out in surprise.

"What am I looking for here?" the man answered. "The same thing you are looking for, you troublemaker! Namely, happiness on earth.

And to find it, I want to learn from these cows. Because, you know, I have been talking to them for half the morning already, and they were just about to give me an answer. So why are you disturbing them?

Unless we turn around and become like the cows, we will not get into the kingdom of heaven. You see, there is one thing we should learn from them: chewing the cud, chewing things over again and again.

And truly, even if a person won the whole world but did not learn this one thing, chewing the cud, what good would it do him? He would not get rid of his misery,

his great misery, which today is called disgust. Who today doesn't have a heart, mouth and eyes full of disgust? You too! You too! But just look at these cows!"

That is what the mountain preacher said. Then he turned his own eyes toward Zarathustra, because until now he had been gazing lovingly at the cows. But then he changed completely. "Who is this I'm talking to?" he cried out in fright, and jumped up from the ground.

"This is the man without disgust! This is Zarathustra himself, the one who got past the great disgust! These are the eyes, this is the mouth, this is the heart of Zarathustra himself!"

And as he said this, he kissed the hands of the man he was talking to, with tears pouring from his eyes. He acted just like someone who has suddenly had a precious gift, a jewel, fall into his lap from the sky. The cows watched all of this and were amazed.

"Don't talk about me, you strange man, you lovely man!" said Zarathustra, holding back the man's affection. "Tell me about yourself first! Aren't you the beggar by choice, who once threw away a great fortune,

who was ashamed of his wealth and of the rich, and ran away to the very poorest people to give them his plenty and his heart? But they did not accept him."

"But they did not accept me," said the beggar by choice. "You already know that. So in the end I went to the animals, and to these cows."

"There you learned," Zarathustra said, interrupting him, "that it is harder to give properly than to take properly, and that giving well is an art, the final, cleverest, master art of kindness."

"Especially nowadays," answered the beggar by choice. "Today, that is, when everything low has become rebellious and shy, and proud in its own way: the way of the mob.

Because, as you know, the hour has come for the great, nasty, long, slow uprising of the mob and the slaves. And it grows and grows!

Now every kind deed and every little gift makes the low people angry. And the extremely rich had better watch out!

Whoever today is like a fat-bellied bottle that only lets out a few drops through a neck that is far too narrow: people today are happy to break the necks of bottles like that.

Greedy lust, bitter envy, sulking revenge, mob pride: all of that jumped right into my face. It is no longer true that the poor are blessed. But the kingdom of heaven is with the cows."

"And why isn't it with the rich?" Zarathustra asked, testing him, while he pushed back the cows, which were trustingly snorting their warm breath at the peaceful man.

"Why are you testing me?" the man answered. "You know it even better than I do. What drove me to the poorest people, oh Zarathustra? Wasn't it disgust with our richest people?

Disgust with the prisoners of wealth, who pick out some profit for themselves from every pile of garbage, with cold eyes and dirty thoughts; with this scum whose stink rises up to heaven;

with this gold-plated, fake mob, whose fathers were pickpockets, or vultures, or rag-collectors, with wives who were willing, lustful and forgetful. For none of them are far from being a whore.

Mob at the top, mob at the bottom! What do 'poor' and 'rich' even mean today? I forgot how to tell the difference. So I ran away, further and further, until I came to these cows."

That is what the peaceful man said, and as he spoke he snorted and sweated himself, so that the cows were amazed all over again. But Zarathustra kept looking him in the face with a smile while he spoke so harshly, and silently shook his head.

"You are forcing yourself, you mountain preacher, when you use such harsh words. Your mouth was not made for such harshness, and neither were your eyes.

Nor, it seems to me, was your stomach. All this anger and hatred and boiling over doesn't agree with it. Your stomach wants gentler things. You are no butcher.

No, you seem to me more like someone who lives on plants and roots. Maybe you grind grain with your teeth. But you surely don't care for the pleasures of meat, and you love honey."

"You have guessed me well," answered the beggar by choice, his heart relieved. "I love honey, and I grind grain too, because I looked for things that taste sweet and make your breath clean,

and also things that take a long time to eat, a whole day's work for the jaws of gentle idlers and lazybones.

But of course these cows have gone furthest of all. They invented chewing the cud and lying in the sun. They also keep away from all heavy thoughts that make the heart swell up."

"Well then!" said Zarathustra. "You should see my animals too, my eagle and my snake. There is nothing like them on earth today.

Look, that way is the path to my cave. Be its guest tonight. And talk with my animals about the happiness of animals,

until I come home myself. Because right now a cry for help is calling me quickly away from you. You will also find fresh honey at my place, ice-cold golden honey still in the comb. Eat it!

But now quickly say goodbye to your cows, you strange man, you lovely man, even though it may be hard for you. For they are your warmest friends and teachers!"

"Except for one, whom I love even more," answered the beggar by choice. "You yourself are good, and even better than a cow, oh Zarathustra!"

"Go away, get away from me, you shameless flatterer!" Zarathustra shouted, with a wicked edge in his voice. "Why are you spoiling me with praise like that, with all this sweet, sticky flattery?"

"Go away, get away from me!" he shouted one more time, and he swung his walking stick at the tender-hearted beggar. But the beggar ran off quickly.

## The Shadow

But the voluntary beggar had barely run off, and Zarathustra was alone with himself again, when he heard a new voice behind him. It called out: "Stop! Zarathustra! Wait for me! It's me, oh Zarathustra, me, your shadow!" But Zarathustra did not wait, because a sudden annoyance came over him at how many people were crowding and pushing into his mountains. "Where has my being alone gone?" he said.

"Honestly, this is getting too much for me. These mountains are swarming with people. My kingdom is no longer of this world. I need new mountains.

My shadow is calling me? What does my shadow matter! Let him run after me! I will just run away from him."

That is what Zarathustra said to his heart, and he ran away. But the one behind him followed him. So soon there were three runners, one behind the other: first the voluntary beggar, then Zarathustra, and third and last, his shadow. They had not been running like this for long when Zarathustra came to his senses and saw how foolish he was being. With one jerk he shook off all his annoyance and all his weariness.

"What!" he said. "Haven't the most ridiculous things always happened to us old hermits and holy men?

Really, my foolishness has grown tall up here in the mountains! Now I hear six old fools' legs clattering along one after another!

But should Zarathustra really be afraid of a shadow? Besides, when it comes down to it, I think he has longer legs than I do."

That is what Zarathustra said, laughing with his eyes and with his whole gut. He stopped and spun around quickly. And look: he almost knocked his follower and shadow to the ground, because the shadow was following so close on his heels, and he was so weak, too. When Zarathustra looked him over carefully, he got a fright, as if he had suddenly seen a ghost. This follower looked so thin, so dark, so hollow, and so worn out, like someone who had outlived himself.

"Who are you?" Zarathustra asked sharply. "What are you doing here? And why do you call yourself my shadow? I don't like you."

"Forgive me," the shadow answered, "for being who I am. And if you don't like me, well then, oh Zarathustra, I praise you for that, and I praise your good taste.

I am a wanderer who has already walked a long way behind your heels. I am always on the road, but without a goal, and without a home either. So really I am not far from being the Wandering Jew of the old legend, except that I don't live forever, and I am not a Jew.

What? Must I always be on the road? Spun around by every wind, restless, driven on and on? Oh earth, you have become too round for me! There's no end to the walking.

I have already sat on every surface. Like tired dust, I have fallen asleep on mirrors and windowpanes. Everything takes from me, nothing gives. I am getting thin. I almost look like a shadow.

But it was you, oh Zarathustra, that I flew and travelled after the longest. And even when I hid from you, I was still your best shadow: wherever you sat, I sat too.

With you I have wandered through the farthest, coldest worlds, like a ghost that chooses to run over winter rooftops and snow.

With you I reached for everything forbidden, everything worst, everything farthest away. And if there is anything good, any virtue, in me, it is that I was not afraid of any rule against things.

With you I smashed whatever my heart had ever honoured. I knocked over all the boundary stones and all the holy images. I ran after the most dangerous wishes. Really, at one time or another I ran right over every kind of crime.

With you I unlearned believing in words and values and big famous names. When the devil sheds his skin, doesn't his name fall off too? After all, a name is also just skin. Maybe the devil himself is nothing but skin.

'Nothing is true, everything is allowed': that is what I told myself. I threw myself into the coldest waters, head and heart first. Oh, how often I ended up standing there naked because of it, red as a boiled crab!

Oh, where did all my goodness go, and all my sense of shame, and all my faith in good people! Oh, where is that lying innocence I used to have, the innocence of the good people and their noble lies!

Too often, really, I followed the truth right on its heels, and then it kicked me in the head. Sometimes I thought I was lying, and look! only then did I hit upon the truth.

Too much has become clear to me, and now none of it matters to me anymore. Nothing that I love is alive anymore. So how could I still love myself?

'Live the way I feel like living, or don't live at all': that's how I want it, and that's how even the holiest person wants it. But, oh no! how could I still feel like anything at all?

Do I still have a goal? A harbour that my sail is heading toward?

A good wind? Oh, only someone who knows where he is sailing also knows which wind is good, which wind will carry him there.

What is left for me? A heart that is tired and cheeky. A restless will. Fluttering wings. A broken backbone.

This searching for my home: oh Zarathustra, do you know, this searching has been my curse, a plague sent down on me. It is eating me up.

'Where is my home?' That is what I ask and search for, and have searched for, and I have not found it. Oh, forever everywhere, oh, forever nowhere, oh, forever for nothing!"

That is what the shadow said, and Zarathustra's face grew long as he listened. "You are my shadow!" he said at last, sadly.

"You are in no small danger, you free spirit and wanderer! You have had a bad day. Make sure an even worse evening doesn't come for you!

In the end, restless people like you even find a prison a blessing. Have you ever seen how captured criminals sleep? They sleep peacefully. They enjoy their new safety.

Watch out that in the end some narrow belief doesn't capture you, some hard, strict delusion! Because now anything that is narrow and solid will tempt you and lure you in.

You have lost your goal. Oh dear, how will you shrug off this loss and get over the pain of it? Because with your goal, you have also lost your way!

You poor wanderer, you dreamy drifter, you tired butterfly! Do you want a place to rest and a home for tonight? Then go up to my cave!

That way is the path to my cave. And now I want to run away from you again, quickly. Already something is lying on me like a shadow.

I want to run alone, so that it gets bright around me again. For that I still have to be on my feet, cheerfully, for a long time. But in the evening, at my place, there will be dancing!"

That is what Zarathustra said.

## At Midday

And Zarathustra walked and walked, and he met no one else anymore. He was alone, and again and again he found himself. He enjoyed his loneliness, sipping it slowly like a drink, and he thought about good things, for hours. But around midday, when the sun stood straight above Zarathustra's head, he passed an old tree, bent and full of knots. A grapevine had wrapped its arms all around it with such rich love that the tree was hidden even from itself. From the vine, yellow grapes hung down in plenty, reaching toward the traveler. Then he felt like quenching a small thirst and breaking off a bunch of grapes. But just as he was reaching out his arm to do it, he felt like doing something else even more: lying down next to the tree, at the hour of perfect midday, and going to sleep.

That is what Zarathustra did. As soon as he lay on the ground, in the quiet and secret shelter of the colorful grass, he had already forgotten his small thirst, and he fell asleep. For, as Zarathustra's saying goes: one thing is more necessary than another. Only his eyes stayed open: they could not get enough of looking at the tree and the love of the vine, and praising them. But as he was falling asleep, Zarathustra spoke like this to his heart:

Quiet! Quiet! Didn't the world just become perfect? What is happening to me?

Like a delicate wind that dances, unseen, on a sea as smooth as a polished wooden floor, light, light as a feather: that is how sleep dances on me.

It doesn't close my eyes. It leaves my soul awake. It is light, truly! Light as a feather.

It talks me into it, I don't know how. It dabs at me on the inside with a gentle, flattering hand. It forces me. Yes, it forces my soul to stretch out:

how long and tired it grows, my strange soul! Did the evening of a seventh day, a day of rest, come to it right at midday? Has it been wandering too long, happy, among good and ripe things?

It stretches out long, long, longer! It lies still, my strange soul. It has already tasted too many good things. A golden sadness weighs on it, and it twists its mouth.

Like a ship that has sailed into its quietest bay: now it leans against the land, tired of long journeys and of uncertain seas. Isn't the land more faithful?

When a ship like that lies up against the land and nestles close to it, it is enough for a spider to spin its thread from the shore to the ship. No stronger ropes are needed then.

Like a tired ship in the quietest bay, I too now rest close to the earth: faithful, trusting, waiting, tied to it by the faintest threads.

Oh happiness! Oh happiness! Do you want to sing, oh my soul? You are lying in the grass. But this is the secret, solemn hour when no shepherd plays his flute.

Be careful! Hot midday is sleeping on the fields. Don't sing! Quiet! The world is perfect.

Don't sing, you little bird of the grass, oh my soul! Don't even whisper! Look, quiet! Old midday is sleeping, and he moves his mouth. Isn't he drinking a drop of happiness right now,

an old brown drop of golden happiness, of golden wine? Something flits across his face, his happiness is laughing. That is how a god laughs. Quiet!

"For happiness, how little it takes to be happy!" That is what I once said, and I thought I was clever. But it was an insult to happiness, a kind of blasphemy: I have learned that now. Clever fools speak better.

It is exactly the smallest thing, the quietest, the lightest: a lizard rustling, a breath, a flicker, a blink of an eye. It takes very little to make the best kind of happiness. Quiet!

What happened to me? Listen! Did time fly away? Am I falling? Didn't I fall, listen!, into the well of eternity?

What is happening to me? Quiet! Something is stabbing me, oh no, in the heart? In the heart! Oh break, break, heart, after such happiness, after such a stab!

What? Didn't the world just become perfect? Round and ripe? Oh, that golden round ring, where is it flying off to? Let me run after it! Quick!

Quiet... (And here Zarathustra stretched and felt that he was asleep.)

"Get up!" he said to himself. "You sleeper! You midday napper! Come on! Let's go, you old legs! It's time, and past time. You still have a good stretch of road left to go.

Now you have slept your fill, but for how long? Half an eternity! Come on! Let's go now, my old heart! After a sleep like that, how long will it take you to wake up fully?"

(But by then he had already fallen asleep again, and his soul argued against him, fought back, and lay down again.) "Leave me alone! Quiet! Didn't the world just become perfect? Oh, that golden round ball!"

"Get up," said Zarathustra, "you little thief, you thief of the day, you lazybones! What? Still stretching, yawning, sighing, falling down into deep wells?

Who are you anyway? Oh my soul!" (And here he was startled, because a ray of sunlight fell down from the sky onto his face.)

"Oh sky above me," he said with a sigh, and sat up straight, "are you watching me? Are you listening to my strange soul?

When will you drink this drop of dew that has fallen onto all the things of the earth? When will you drink this strange soul,

when, well of eternity, you cheerful and frightening bottomless pit of midday, when will you drink my soul back into yourself?"

That is what Zarathustra said, and he got up from where he had been lying by the tree, as if waking from a strange kind of drunkenness. And look: the sun was still standing straight above his head. From this, someone could rightly conclude that Zarathustra had not slept very long.

## The Welcome

It was not until late in the afternoon that Zarathustra came home to his cave again, after searching and wandering around for a long time with no luck. But when he stood facing the cave, less than twenty steps away from it, something happened that he expected least of all right then: once again he heard the great cry for help. And, amazingly, this time it came from his own cave. It was a long, strange cry with many sides to it, and Zarathustra could clearly tell that it was made up of many voices, even though from far away it might have sounded like a cry from a single mouth.

Then Zarathustra rushed toward his cave, and look! What a sight was waiting for him after that sound! For there they all sat together, all the ones he had walked past during the day: the king on the right and the king on the left, the old magician, the pope, the beggar who chose to be poor, the shadow, the man with the scrupulous mind, the sad fortune-teller, and the donkey. The ugliest person, though, had put a crown on his head and wrapped two purple sashes around himself, because, like all ugly people, he loved to dress up and act beautiful. In the middle of this gloomy group stood Zarathustra's eagle, with his feathers ruffled and restless, because he was supposed to answer too many things that his pride had no answer for. And the clever snake hung around his neck.

Zarathustra looked at all this with great amazement. Then he studied each of his guests one by one with friendly curiosity, read their souls, and was amazed all over again. Meanwhile the people gathered there had stood up from their seats and were waiting respectfully for Zarathustra to speak. And Zarathustra spoke like this:

"You people in despair! You strange ones! So it was your cry for help that I heard? And now I also know where to look for the one I searched for today with no luck: the higher human—

—he is sitting in my own cave, the higher human! But why am I surprised? Didn't I lure him here myself, with offerings of honey and with the clever calls of my happiness, like bait?

Still, it seems to me that you are poor company for each other. You make each other's hearts grumpy, you who cry for help, when you sit here together, don't you? First someone has to come along,

—someone who makes you laugh again, a good, cheerful clown, a dancer, a gust of wind, a wild child, some old fool. What do you think?

Please forgive me, you people in despair, for speaking to you with such small, light words, which are truly not worthy of guests like you! But you can't guess what makes my heart so playful and cheeky:

—it is you yourselves who do it, the sight of you. Forgive me for saying so! Because anyone who watches a person in despair becomes brave. Anyone feels strong enough to talk comfort to someone in despair.

You gave this strength to me myself. That is a good gift, my noble guests! A proper guest's present! Well then, don't be angry that I now offer you something of mine as well.

This here is my kingdom and my realm. But what is mine shall be yours for this evening and this night. My animals shall serve you. Let my cave be your resting place!

Here in my home, no one shall despair. In my territory I protect everyone from his own wild beasts. And that is the first thing I offer you: safety!

The second thing is my little finger. And once you have that, go ahead and take the whole hand too! And the heart along with it! Welcome here, welcome, my guests and friends!"

That is what Zarathustra said, and he laughed out of love and out of mischief. After this welcome his guests bowed once more and stayed respectfully silent. But the king on the right answered him on behalf of all of them.

"From the way you offered us your hand and your greeting, oh Zarathustra, we recognize you as Zarathustra. You made yourself small in front of us. You almost hurt our respect for you—

—but who else could make himself small with such pride as you do? That lifts us up ourselves. It is a refreshment for our eyes and our hearts.

Just to see this alone, we would gladly climb higher mountains than this one. For we came here as sightseers. We wanted to see what makes dull, sad eyes bright.

And look, all our crying for help is already over. Our minds and hearts are already open and delighted. Only a little more, and our courage will turn playful and daring.

Nothing more joyful grows on earth, oh Zarathustra, than a lofty, strong will. That is the earth's most beautiful plant. A whole landscape is refreshed by one single tree like that.

Whoever grows up the way you do, oh Zarathustra, I compare to a pine tree: tall, silent, tough, alone, made of the best and most flexible wood, magnificent—

—but in the end reaching out with strong green branches to claim its own realm, asking strong questions of the winds and storms and of whatever else is at home up on the heights,

—and answering even more strongly, as one who gives orders, as one who wins. Oh, who wouldn't climb high mountains to see trees like that?

Here, oh Zarathustra, even the gloomy and the failed are refreshed by your tree. At the sight of you, even the restless and unsteady become sure of themselves and their hearts heal.

And truly, many eyes are turned toward your mountain and your tree today. A great longing has set out on its way, and some people have learned to ask: who is Zarathustra?

And everyone whose ear you ever dripped your song and your honey into, all the hidden ones, the hermits who live alone and those who live in pairs, all at once said to their hearts:

'Is Zarathustra still alive? Life isn't worth living anymore, everything is the same, everything is pointless. Or else—we have to live with Zarathustra!'

'Why doesn't he come, when he announced himself for so long?' That is what many people ask. 'Did loneliness swallow him up? Or should we perhaps go to him?'

Now it is happening that loneliness itself is wearing thin and breaking apart, like a grave that cracks open and can no longer hold its dead. Everywhere you see people risen from the dead.

Now the waves are rising and rising around your mountain, oh Zarathustra. And however high up you are, many people have to come up to you. Your little boat won't sit on dry land much longer.

And the fact that we, people in despair, have now come into your cave and are already no longer in despair is only a sign and an omen that better people are on their way to you—

—for he himself is on his way to you, the last trace of God among humans. That means: all the people of great longing, of great disgust, of great weariness with everything,

—all those who do not want to live unless they learn to hope again, unless they learn the great hope from you, oh Zarathustra!"

That is what the king on the right said, and he took Zarathustra's hand to kiss it. But Zarathustra refused his worship and stepped back in alarm, silent and sudden, as if he were fleeing into faraway distances. After a short while, though, he was back with his guests again, looked at them with bright, searching eyes, and said:

"My guests, you higher humans, I want to talk to you in plain German, clearly and directly. It was not you I was waiting for here in these mountains."

("Plain German, clear and direct? God have mercy!" said the king on the left at this point, quietly to the side. "You can tell he doesn't know our dear Germans, this wise man from the East!

But what he means is 'German and rude.' Well then! These days that is not the worst taste there is!")

"You may truly all be higher humans," Zarathustra went on, "but for me, you are not high enough or strong enough.

For me, that means: for the merciless thing inside me that keeps silent, but will not always keep silent. And even if you belong with me, you still don't belong as my right arm.

You see, anyone who stands on sick and fragile legs, like you do, wants one thing above all, whether he knows it or hides it from himself: he wants to be spared and treated gently.

But I do not spare my arms and my legs, and I do not spare my warriors. So how could you be any use in my war?

With you at my side, I would ruin every victory I won. And some of you would already fall over just from hearing the loud boom of my drums.

Also, you are not beautiful enough for me, and not well-born enough. I need clean, smooth mirrors for my teachings. On your surface, even my own picture gets twisted out of shape.

Many burdens weigh down your shoulders, and many memories too. Many a nasty dwarf squats in the corners inside you. There is a hidden mob inside you as well.

And even though you are high and of a higher kind, a lot about you is crooked and badly formed. There is no blacksmith in the world who could hammer you straight and into the right shape for me.

You are only bridges. Let those who are higher walk across you to the other side! You are steps on a staircase. So do not be angry with the one who climbs over you up to his own height!

Someday, from your seed, a true son and a perfect heir may grow for me too. But that is far away. You yourselves are not the ones who will receive what I leave behind and carry my name.

It is not you I am waiting for here in these mountains. It is not with you that I may go down for the last time. You came to me only as a sign, a warning that higher people are already on their way to me,

and they are not the people of great longing, of great disgust, of great weariness, and not what you called the leftover bit of God.

No! No! Three times no! I am waiting here in these mountains for others, and I will not lift my foot to leave this place without them,

I am waiting for those who are higher, stronger, more victorious, more cheerful, people who are built square and solid in body and soul. Laughing lions must come!

Oh, my guests and friends, you strange people, have you still heard nothing about my children? And that they are on their way to me?

Talk to me about my gardens, about my Happy Islands, about my new and beautiful kind of people. Why do you not talk to me about that?

This is the gift I ask of you, out of your love for me: that you talk to me about my children. This is why I am rich, and this is why I became poor. What have I not given away,

what would I not give away, just to have this one thing: these children, this living garden I have planted, these trees of life that grow from my will and my highest hope!"

That is what Zarathustra said, and suddenly he stopped in the middle of his speech. His longing had come over him, and he closed his eyes and his mouth because his heart was so stirred. And all his guests were silent too, and stood still and shaken. Only the old fortune-teller made signs with his hands and gestures.

## The Last Supper

You see, at this point the fortune-teller interrupted Zarathustra and his guests as they were greeting each other. He pushed his way to the front, like someone who has no time to lose, grabbed Zarathustra's hand and shouted: "But Zarathustra!

One thing matters more than the others, you say so yourself. Well then, right now one thing matters more to me than everything else.

Here's a word at the right moment: didn't you invite me to a meal? And there are many people here who have traveled a long way. Surely you don't plan to feed us nothing but speeches?

Besides, all of you have already talked far too much for my taste about freezing to death, drowning, choking, and other dangers to the body. But nobody has thought about my danger, which is starving to death —"

(That is what the fortune-teller said. But when Zarathustra's animals heard these words, they ran away in fright. Because they saw that whatever food they had brought home that day would not be enough to fill up even this one fortune-teller.)

"And that includes dying of thirst," the fortune-teller went on. "And even though I can hear water splashing here, just like the speeches of wisdom, meaning plenty of it and never stopping: I—want wine!

Not everyone is a born water-drinker like Zarathustra. Besides, water is no good for people who are tired and worn out. What we deserve is wine. Only wine gives you a sudden recovery and instant good health!"

Now, while the fortune-teller was demanding wine, it happened that the king on the left, the quiet one, also got a chance to speak for once. "We've taken care of the wine," he said, "me and my brother, the king on the right. We have plenty of wine, a whole donkey-load of it. So the only thing missing is bread."

"Bread?" Zarathustra answered, and he laughed as he said it. "Bread is exactly the one thing hermits don't have. But people don't live on bread alone. They also live on the meat of good lambs, and I have two of those.

Let's slaughter them quickly and cook them with lots of flavor, with sage. That's how I like it. And there's no shortage of roots and fruits either, good enough even for picky eaters and food lovers. Nor is there any shortage of nuts and other riddles to crack.

So we'll soon put together a good meal. But whoever wants to eat has to help with the work too, even the kings. Because at Zarathustra's place, even a king is allowed to be a cook."

Everyone loved this suggestion. Only the beggar who had chosen to be poor objected to the meat and the wine and the spices.

"Just listen to this glutton Zarathustra!" he said, joking. "Is this why people go into caves and high mountains, to have meals like this?

Now of course I understand what he once taught us: 'Praise be to being a little bit poor!' And why he wants to get rid of beggars."

"Be cheerful, like I am," Zarathustra answered him. "Stick to your habits, my excellent friend. Grind your grains, drink your water, praise your cooking, as long as it makes you happy!

I am a law only for my own people. I am not a law for everyone. But whoever belongs to me must have strong bones, and light feet as well —

—happy to go to wars and to parties, not a gloomy type, not a day-dreamer, ready for the hardest things as if they were a party, healthy and whole.

The best belongs to my people and to me. And if no one gives it to us, we take it: the best food, the clearest sky, the strongest thoughts, the most beautiful women!"—

That is what Zarathustra said. But the king on the right replied: "Strange! Has anyone ever heard such smart, practical things come out of the mouth of a wise man?

And honestly, that's the strangest thing about a wise man: when on top of everything else he's also sensible and not a donkey."

That is what the king on the right said, and he was amazed. But the donkey answered his speech with a nasty "Hee-haw." And this was the start of that long meal which the history books call "the Last Supper." And during that meal, people talked about nothing except the higher human.

## On the Higher Human

### 1.

The first time I came to people, I made the hermit's foolish mistake, the big foolish mistake: I went and stood in the marketplace.

And when I spoke to everyone, I spoke to no one. But in the evening my companions were tightrope walkers and dead bodies, and I myself was almost a dead body.

But with the new morning a new truth came to me. Then I learned to say: "What do I care about the marketplace and the mob, and the mob's noise, and the mob's long donkey ears!"

You higher humans, learn this from me: in the marketplace nobody believes in higher humans. And if you want to speak there, fine, go ahead! But the mob just blinks at you and says, "We are all equal."

"You higher humans," the mob says with a blink, "there are no higher humans. We are all equal. A human is a human. In God's eyes, we are all equal!"

In God's eyes! But now this God has died. And in the mob's eyes we do not want to be equal. You higher humans, get away from the marketplace!

### 2.

In God's eyes! But now this God has died! You higher humans, this God was your greatest danger.

Only since he has been lying in his grave have you risen up again. Only now does the great midday come. Only now does the higher human become master!

Did you understand what I said, oh my brothers? You are frightened. Are your hearts getting dizzy? Does a bottomless pit open up in front of you here? Does the hound of hell bark at you here?

Come on! Let's go! You higher humans! Only now is the mountain of humanity's future in labor, about to give birth. God died: now we want the Superhuman to live.

**3.**

The most worried people today ask, "How can humans be kept going?" But Zarathustra is the only one, and the first, to ask: "How can humans be gotten past?"

The Superhuman is what my heart cares about. He is my first and only concern, and not the human: not my neighbor, not the poorest, not the one who suffers most, not the best—

Oh my brothers, what I can love about humans is that they are a passing over and a going down. And there is a lot in you, too, that makes me love and hope.

That you despised things, you higher humans, gives me hope. Because the people who despise greatly are the people who honor greatly.

That you fell into despair deserves a lot of respect. Because you never learned how to give in. You never learned the small clever tricks.

You see, today the little people have become the masters. They all preach giving in, settling for less, being sensible, working hard, being considerate, and the long "and so on" of the little virtues.

Whatever is womanish, whatever comes from the nature of servants, and especially the mixed-up mash of the mob: that now wants to become master of all human fate. Oh disgust! Disgust! Disgust!

That kind keeps asking and asking and never gets tired: "How can humans keep themselves going best, longest, most comfortably?" And with that, they are the masters of today.

Get past these masters of today for me, oh my brothers, these little people: they are the Superhuman's greatest danger!

Get past them for me, you higher humans: the little virtues, the small clever tricks, the grain-of-sand worries about others, the busy crawling of ants, the miserable comfort, the "happiness of the majority"!

And it is better to despair than to give in. And truly, I love you because you do not know how to live today, you higher humans! Because that way you live best of all!

### 4.

Do you have courage, oh my brothers? Are you brave at heart? Not courage in front of witnesses, but the courage of a hermit and an eagle, which not even a God is watching anymore?

Cold souls, stubborn mules, blind people, drunk people: I do not call them brave. A person has heart who knows fear but forces it down; who sees the bottomless pit, but with pride.

Whoever sees the bottomless pit, but with an eagle's eyes, whoever grips the pit with an eagle's claws: that person has courage.

### 5.

"Humans are evil": that is what all the wisest people told me, to comfort me. Oh, if only that were still true today! Because evil is a human's best strength.

"Humans must become better and more evil": that is what I teach. The most evil things are needed for the Superhuman's best.

It may have been good for that preacher of the little people to suffer and carry the weight of human sin. But I take joy in great sin as my great comfort.

But things like this are not said for long donkey ears. Not every word belongs in every mouth. These are delicate, faraway things: sheep's hooves should not grab at them!

**6.**

You higher humans, do you think I am here to fix what you did badly?

Or that from now on I want to make softer beds for you who suffer? Or show you restless ones, you who have lost your way or climbed wrong, new and easier paths?

No! No! Three times no! More and more of your kind, and better and better ones, must be destroyed, because you must have it worse and harder all the time. Only that way—

—only that way does a human grow up high, to where lightning strikes him and breaks him: high enough for the lightning!

My mind and my longing reach for the few things, the long-lasting things, the faraway things. What would I care about your small, many, short-lived miseries!

You do not suffer enough for me yet! Because you suffer from yourselves; you have not yet suffered from humanity. You would be lying if you said otherwise! None of you suffer from what I suffered from.

**7.**

It is not enough for me that lightning no longer does harm. I do not want to lead it away safely: it should learn to work for me.

My wisdom has been gathering for a long time like a cloud. It is getting quieter and darker. That is what every wisdom does that will someday give birth to lightning.

I do not want to be a light for these people of today, or be called a light. I want to blind them. Lightning of my wisdom! Poke out their eyes!

8.

Do not want anything beyond what you are able to do. There is a nasty kind of falseness in people who want more than they are able to do.

Especially when they want great things! Because these slick fakers, these money forgers and actors, make people distrust great things—

—until in the end they are false even to themselves. They become cross-eyed, like worm-eaten wood painted over, covered up with strong words, with show-off virtues, with shiny fake works.

Be really careful about this, you higher humans! Because today nothing seems more precious and more rare to me than honesty.

Doesn't this present day belong to the mob? But the mob does not know what is great, what is small, what is straight and honest. The mob is crooked without even meaning to be; it always lies.

8.

Today, have a healthy distrust, you higher humans, you brave-hearted ones! You open-hearted ones! And keep your reasons secret! Because this present day belongs to the mob.

Something the mob once learned to believe without reasons: who could knock that down with reasons?

And in the marketplace, you convince people with gestures. But reasons make the mob suspicious.

And if truth ever won there, then ask yourselves with healthy distrust: "What strong mistake fought on its side?"

Watch out for scholars, too! They hate you, because they cannot create anything! They have cold, dried-up eyes. In front of them, every bird lies plucked of its feathers.

People like that brag that they do not lie. But being unable to lie is far from being a love of truth. Watch out!

Being free of fever is far from being real understanding! I do not trust minds that have gone cold. Whoever cannot lie does not know what truth is.

**10.**

If you want to get up high, use your own legs! Do not let yourselves be carried up. Do not sit on other people's backs and heads!

But you got on a horse? Now you ride quickly up to your goal? All right, my friend! But your lame foot is riding on the horse too!

When you reach your goal, when you jump down from your horse, right there at your highest point, you higher human, you will stumble!

**11.**

You creators, you higher humans! A person is only ever pregnant with their own child.

Don't let anyone talk you into things or put ideas in your head! Who is your neighbor anyway? And even if you do things "for your neighbor," you still don't create for him!

Unlearn this "for," you creators, I beg you. Your very virtue wants you to do nothing "for" something, or "in order to," or "because." You should stop up your ears against these small, false words.

This "for your neighbor" is the virtue of small people only. With them it's all "like for like" and "you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours." They have neither the right nor the strength for your kind of selfishness!

In your selfishness, you creators, there is the care and foresight of a pregnant woman! The fruit, the thing no one has yet seen with their eyes: that is what all your love shields, protects and feeds.

Where all your love is, with your child, there all your virtue is too! Your work, your will, is your "neighbor." Don't let anyone talk you into false values!

**12.**

You creators, you higher humans! Whoever has to give birth is sick. But whoever has given birth is unclean.

Ask the women: nobody gives birth because it's fun. Pain is what makes hens and poets cackle.

You creators, there is a lot that is unclean about you. That's because you had to be mothers.

A new child: oh, how much new dirt came into the world along with it! Step aside! And whoever has given birth should wash their soul clean!

**13.**

Don't try to be more virtuous than your strength allows! And don't demand anything of yourselves that goes against what is likely!

Walk in the footprints where your fathers' virtue already walked! How could you climb high if your fathers' will does not climb with you?

But whoever wants to be the first of his line should be careful not to become the last of it too! And where your fathers had their vices, you should not try to pass yourselves off as saints!

Take someone whose fathers spent their time with women, strong wines and wild boar hunts: what would it mean if a man like that demanded to live without sex?

It would be foolishness! Honestly, I think it's already a lot for someone like that if he is the husband of one, or two, or three women.

And even if he founded monasteries and wrote above the door, "The way to holiness," I would still say: what's the point? It's just a new kind of foolishness!

He would have built himself a house of discipline and a place to run away to, a kind of prison. Good luck with that! But I don't believe in it.

In loneliness, whatever a person brings into it grows, and that includes the beast inside him. That is why loneliness is a bad idea for many people.

Has there ever been anything dirtier on earth than the holy men of the desert? Around them it wasn't only that all hell broke loose, it was that the pig broke loose too.

**14.**

Shy, ashamed, clumsy, like a tiger whose leap has failed: that is how, you higher humans, I have often seen you slink off to the side. One of your throws of the dice went wrong.

But, you dice players, what does it matter! You never learned to play and to mock the way a person has to play and mock! Aren't we always sitting at a great table of games and mockery?

And if something great failed for you, does that mean you yourselves are failures? And if you yourselves failed, does that mean humanity failed? But if humanity failed: Come on! Let's go!

**15.**

The higher the kind of thing, the more rarely it turns out well. You higher humans here, haven't you all turned out badly?

Cheer up, what does it matter! So much is still possible! Learn to laugh at yourselves the way a person has to laugh!

And is it any wonder that you failed or only half succeeded, you half-broken people? Isn't the future of humanity pushing and shoving inside you?

Humanity's farthest, deepest, star-high parts, its enormous power: doesn't all that foam and boil against itself inside your pot?

Is it any wonder that many a pot cracks! Learn to laugh at yourselves the way a person has to laugh! You higher humans, oh, how much is still possible!

And honestly, how much has already turned out well! How rich this earth is in small, good, perfect things, in things that have come out right!

Put small, good, perfect things around you, you higher humans! Their golden ripeness heals the heart. Perfect things teach you to hope.

## 16.

What has been the greatest sin here on earth so far? Wasn't it the words of the one who said: "Woe to those who laugh here!"

Couldn't he find any reasons to laugh on earth itself? Then he just didn't look hard enough. Even a child finds reasons here.

He didn't love enough. Otherwise he would have loved us too, the ones who laugh! But he hated us and sneered at us. He promised us weeping and the grinding of teeth.

Do you have to start cursing right away wherever you don't love? That seems to me like bad taste. But that's what he did, this man who saw everything in absolutes. He came from the mob.

And he himself just didn't love enough. Otherwise he would have been less angry that people didn't love him. All great love doesn't want love in return: it wants more.

Stay out of the way of all such people who see everything in absolutes! They are a poor, sick kind, a mob kind. They look at this life with ill will; they give this earth the evil eye.

Stay out of the way of all such people who see everything in absolutes! They have heavy feet and stuffy, sultry hearts: they don't know how to dance. How could the earth ever feel light to people like that!

## 17.

All good things come close to their goal in a crooked way. Like cats, they arch their backs. They purr inside at the happiness that is near. All good things laugh.

The way someone walks gives away whether he is already on his own path: so watch me walk! But whoever comes close to his goal dances.

And honestly, I have not become a statue. I don't stand there stiff, dull and stony, like a pillar. I love running fast.

And even if there are swamps and thick gloom on earth, whoever has light feet runs right over the mud and dances as if on swept ice.

Lift up your hearts, my brothers, high! Higher! And don't forget your legs either! Lift up your legs too, you good dancers, and even better: stand on your heads!

**18.**

This crown of the one who laughs, this crown of roses: I put this crown on myself. I myself declared my laughter holy. Today I found no one else strong enough to do it.

Zarathustra the dancer, Zarathustra the light one, who waves with his wings, ready to fly, waving to all the birds, ready and prepared, blissfully light and carefree:

Zarathustra the fortune-teller, Zarathustra the true laugher, not impatient, not someone who sees everything in absolutes, someone who loves leaps and leaps to the side: I put this crown on myself!

**19.**

Lift up your hearts, my brothers, high! Higher! And don't forget your legs either! Lift up your legs too, you good dancers, and even better: stand on your heads!

Even in happiness there are heavy beasts; there are clumsy-footed creatures from the very start. They struggle in a strange way, like an elephant struggling to stand on its head.

But it's still better to be silly with happiness than silly with unhappiness. It's better to dance clumsily than to walk with a limp. So learn this wisdom from me: even the worst thing has two good sides,

even the worst thing has good legs for dancing. So learn, you higher humans, to stand on your own two right legs!

So unlearn all your moping and all the sadness of the mob! Oh, how sad even the mob's jesters seem to me today! But this today belongs to the mob.

**20.**

Be like the wind when it rushes out of its mountain caves: it wants to dance to its own tune, and the seas tremble and leap under its footsteps.

The one who gives wings to donkeys and milks lionesses: praise be to this good, untamable mind, which comes like a storm wind to everything of today and to all the mob,

—this spirit that is the enemy of thistle-heads and nitpicking brains, and of all withered leaves and weeds: praise be to this wild, good, free storm-spirit, who dances on swamps and on sadness as if they were meadows!

This spirit hates the mob's sickly, wasting-away dogs and all the badly-turned-out, gloomy breed. Praise be to this spirit of all free spirits, the laughing storm, who blows dust into the eyes of everyone who only sees the dark side and everyone who wallows in festering misery!

You higher humans, the worst thing about you is this: none of you learned to dance the way you have to dance. You have to dance right over yourselves, leaving yourselves behind! So what if you turned out badly!

So much is still possible! So learn to laugh past yourselves! Lift up your hearts, you good dancers, high! Higher! And please, don't forget good laughter either!

This crown of the one who laughs, this crown woven of roses: to you, my brothers, I throw this crown! I have declared laughter holy. You higher humans, please learn this for me: learn to laugh!

## The Song of Sadness

### 1.

While Zarathustra was giving these speeches, he was standing near the entrance of his cave. But as he spoke the last words, he slipped away from his guests and escaped outside for a short while.

"Oh, the clean smells around me!" he cried out. "Oh, the happy quiet around me! But where are my animals? Come here, come here, my eagle and my snake!

Tell me, my animals: all these higher humans, all of them together, maybe they don't smell good? Oh, the clean smells around me! Only now do I really know and feel how much I love you, my animals."

And Zarathustra said once more: "I love you, my animals!" As he said these words, the eagle and the snake pressed up close to him and looked up at him. So the three of them stood quietly together, sniffing and sipping the good air with each other. For the air out here was better than the air among the higher humans.

### 2.

But Zarathustra had hardly left his cave when the old magician got up, looked around slyly, and said: "He's gone out!

And already, you higher humans... let me tickle you with that flattering, praising name, just as he does... already my nasty spirit of tricks and magic is attacking me, my gloomy devil,

the one who is Zarathustra's enemy from the ground up. Forgive him for it! Now he wants to work his magic in front of you. This is exactly his hour. It's no use my wrestling with this evil spirit.

All of you, whatever honorable names you like to give yourselves with words, whether you call yourselves "the free spirits," or "the truthful ones," or "the ones doing penance of the mind," or "the unchained ones," or "the ones full of great longing"...

all of you who suffer from the great disgust, like me, you whose old God has died while no new God is lying in a cradle and diapers yet... my evil spirit and magic devil is fond of all of you.

I know you, you higher humans. I know him. I also know this monster whom I love against my will, this Zarathustra. To me he often seems like a beautiful mask of a saint,

like a strange new costume party that my evil spirit, the gloomy devil, enjoys. I love Zarathustra, it often seems to me, because of my evil spirit.

But already he is attacking me and forcing me, this spirit of sadness, this devil of the evening twilight. And truly, you higher humans, he has a craving...

just open your eyes! He has a craving to come naked. Whether as a man or as a woman, I don't know yet. But he is coming, he is forcing me, oh no! Open up your senses!

The day is fading. Evening is now coming to all things, even the best things. Now listen and look, you higher humans, and see what kind of devil, whether man or woman, this spirit of evening sadness is!"

That is what the old magician said. He looked around slyly, and then he reached for his harp.

**3.**

When the air has gone clear and pale,

When the comfort of the dew

Is already seeping down onto the earth,

Unseen, and unheard too,

For the dew, that comforter, wears soft shoes,

Like everyone who comforts gently,

Do you remember then, do you remember, hot heart,

How you were thirsty once,

Thirsty for tears from heaven and drops of dew,

Thirsty, scorched and tired,

While on paths of yellow grass

The spiteful glances of the evening sun

Ran around you through the black trees,

Blinding, burning glances of the sun, glad to see you suffer.

"You, a lover who courts the truth? You?" That is how they mocked you.

"No! Only a poet!

An animal, a sly one, a thieving one, a creeping one,

That has to lie,

That has to lie on purpose, knowing what it does,

Greedy for prey,

Hidden behind colorful masks,

A mask to itself,

Its own prey,

That, a lover of the truth? No!

Only a fool! Only a poet!

Only saying colorful things,

Shouting colorfully out from behind fool's masks,

Climbing around on lying bridges made of words,

On colorful rainbows,

Between fake heavens

And fake earths,

Wandering around, floating around,

Only a fool! Only a poet!...

That, a lover of the truth?

Not quiet, stiff, smooth, cold,

Turned into a statue,

Into a pillar for a god,

Not set up in front of temples

As a god's doorkeeper:

No! An enemy of such statues of truth,

More at home in any wilderness than in front of temples,

Full of a cat's playful mischief,

Jumping through every window,

Whoosh! into every chance happening,

Sniffing toward every wild jungle,

Sniffing with craving and longing,

So that in wild jungles,

Among spotted beasts of prey,

You might run around sinfully healthy, colorful and beautiful,

With greedy, drooling lips,

Happily mocking, happily hellish, happily bloodthirsty,

Running around stealing, creeping, lying...

Or like the eagle that stares for a long,

Long time, stiffly, down into deep chasms,

Into its own chasms...

Oh, how they twist and coil down here,

Downward, inward,

Into deeper and deeper depths!

Then,

Suddenly,

In a straight line,

Flying like a drawn blade,

Swooping down on lambs,

Plunging down fast, starving,

Greedy for lambs,

Hating all lamb-like souls,

Fiercely hating everything that looks

Like a sheep, with lamb's eyes and curly wool,

Gray, full of the kindly goodwill of lambs and sheep!

That is how

Like eagles, like panthers,

The poet's longings are,

That is how your longings are, behind a thousand masks,

You fool! You poet!

You who saw human beings

As both god and sheep:

To tear apart the god inside the human

As well as the sheep inside the human,

And to laugh while tearing,

That, that is your bliss! The bliss of a panther and an eagle! The bliss of a poet and a fool!"

When the air has gone clear and pale,

When the sickle of the moon

Already creeps along, green among the purple-red glow of sunset,

Creeping along jealously:

An enemy of the day,

With every step secretly

Slicing like a sickle at the hammocks of roses,

Cutting them until they fall,

Until they sink down pale toward the night:

That is how I myself once sank

Out of my madness for truth,

Out of my longings for the day,

Tired of the day, sick from the light,

I sank downward, toward evening, toward the shadows:

Burned and thirsty

From one single truth:

Do you still remember, do you remember, hot heart,

How thirsty you were then?

That I should be banished

From all truth,

Only a fool! Only a poet!

## About Science

That is how the magician sang. And everyone who was gathered there walked, like birds, without noticing, into the net of his sly and gloomy pleasure. Only the one who was strict and careful with his mind was not caught. He quickly took the harp away from the magician and shouted: "Air! Let some good air in! Let Zarathustra in! You are making this cave stuffy and poisonous, you nasty old magician!"

"You fake, you smooth one, you lead people astray, toward strange cravings and wild places. And it is a bad day when people like you make a big fuss and a lot of talk about the truth!"

"Pity all the free spirits who don't watch out for magicians like you! Their freedom is finished. You teach them and lure them back into prisons,—"

"—you old gloomy devil. Out of your sad complaining comes the sound of a bird whistle, the kind hunters use to lure birds. You are like the people who praise purity out loud, but secretly invite others to give in to their lusts!"

That is what the careful one said. But the old magician looked around, enjoyed his victory, and because of it swallowed the annoyance the careful one had caused him. "Be quiet!" he said in a modest voice. "Good songs need to echo well. After good songs, people should stay silent for a long time."

"That is what all these others are doing, these higher humans. But you probably understood very little of my song? There is not much of a magic spirit in you."

"You praise me," answered the careful one, "by separating me from yourself. Fine! But you others, what do I see? You are all still sitting there with greedy, longing eyes—:"

"You free souls, where has your freedom gone? It almost seems to me that you look like people who have spent a long time watching naughty naked girls dance: your own souls are dancing now!"

"In you, you higher humans, there must be more of what the magician calls his evil spirit of magic and trickery. We must really be different."

"And truly, we talked and thought together long enough, before Zarathustra came home to his cave, for me to know this: we are different."

"Even up here, you and I are looking for different things. I am looking for more safety. That is why I came to Zarathustra. Because he is still the firmest tower and the firmest will—"

"—today, when everything is shaking, when the whole earth is trembling. But you, when I see the look in your eyes, it almost seems to me that you are looking for more unsafety,"

"—more shivers, more danger, more earthquakes. It almost seems to me, and forgive me for being so bold, you higher humans, that you crave—"

"—that you crave the worst and most dangerous life, the kind that scares me the most: the life of wild animals, of forests, caves, steep mountains and deep, confusing gorges."

"And the ones you like best are not the guides who lead you out of danger, but the ones who lead you away from every path: the tempters. But even if such a craving is really in you, it still seems impossible to me."

"Because fear—that is the feeling humans inherited, the feeling at their very base. Everything can be explained by fear, both the sin we are born with and the virtue we are born with. My own virtue also grew out of fear, and its name is: science."

"Because fear of wild animals—that is what was bred into humans for the longest time. That includes the animal a human hides inside himself and is afraid of. Zarathustra calls it 'the beast within.'"

"This long, old fear, which has finally become refined, spiritual, a thing of the mind—today, it seems to me, it is called: science."—

That is what the careful one said. But Zarathustra, who had just come back into his cave and had heard the last speech and guessed what it meant, threw a handful of roses at the careful one and laughed at his "truths." "What!" he shouted. "What did I just hear? Truly, it seems to me that either you are a fool or I am. And I will turn your 'truth' upside down, right here and now."

"Because fear—is the exception for us. But courage, and adventure, and joy in the uncertain, in what no one has dared yet—courage seems to me to be the whole early history of humans."

"Humans envied the wildest, bravest animals for all their strengths and stole those strengths from them. Only that way did they become —human."

"This courage, which has finally become refined, spiritual, a thing of the mind, this human courage with an eagle's wings and a snake's cleverness: that, it seems to me, is called today—"

"Zarathustra!" shouted everyone sitting there together, as if with one voice, and they all burst into loud laughter. And it was as if a heavy cloud lifted off them. The magician laughed too, and said cleverly: "Well then! It's gone, my evil spirit!"

"And didn't I warn you about it myself, when I said that it is a cheat, a spirit of lies and tricks?"

"Especially when it shows itself naked. But how can I help its nasty tricks? Did I create it and the world?"

"Well then! Let's be friends again and cheerful! And even though Zarathustra is looking angry—just look at him! he's annoyed with me —:"

"—before night comes, he will learn to love me and praise me again. He can't live long without doing foolish things like that."

"He—loves his enemies. He understands that skill better than anyone I have ever seen. But he takes revenge for it—on his friends!"

That is what the old magician said, and the higher humans clapped for him. So Zarathustra went around and shook his friends' hands, with both mischief and love, as if he were someone who had something to make up for with each of them and needed to ask their forgiveness. But when, while doing this, he reached the door of his cave, look, he was already longing again for the good air outside and for his animals,—and he wanted to slip out.

## Among the Daughters of the Desert

### 1.

"Don't go away!" said the wanderer, the one who called himself Zarathustra's shadow. "Stay with us, or else the old heavy gloom might attack us again.

That old magician has already treated us to the worst he has, and look: the good, pious pope over there has tears in his eyes and has set sail again, all the way out onto the sea of sadness.

These kings may still put on a brave face in front of us: after all, that is the thing they learned best from all of us today! But if nobody were watching them, I bet the nasty game would start up again for them too—

—the nasty game of drifting clouds, of damp sadness, of covered-over skies, of stolen suns, of howling autumn winds,

—the nasty game of our howling and our cries for help. Stay with us, oh Zarathustra! There is a lot of hidden misery here that wants to talk, a lot of evening, a lot of cloud, a lot of stuffy air!

You fed us strong food fit for men, and powerful sayings: don't let the soft, womanish moods attack us again for dessert!

You alone make the air around you strong and clear! Have I ever found air on earth as good as here with you in your cave?

I have seen many countries, after all, and my nose has learned to test and judge all kinds of air: but here with you, my nostrils taste their greatest pleasure!

Unless—unless—oh, forgive an old memory! Forgive me an old after-dinner song that I once made up among the daughters of the desert:—

—because with them there was air just as good, bright, clear Eastern air; there I was farthest away from cloudy, damp, gloomy old Europe!

Back then I loved that kind of Eastern girl, and other blue heavens like that, with no clouds and no thoughts hanging over them.

You wouldn't believe how sweetly and nicely they sat there when they weren't dancing: deep, but without thoughts, like little secrets, like riddles tied up with ribbons, like nuts served for dessert—

colorful and strange, truly! but without clouds: riddles that can be solved. For the sake of girls like that, I made up an after-dinner psalm back then."

That is what the wanderer and shadow said. And before anyone could answer him, he had already grabbed the old magician's harp, crossed his legs, and was looking around calmly and wisely:—but with his nostrils he slowly and curiously breathed in the air, like someone tasting new, strange air in new countries. Then he started to sing with a kind of roar.

**2.**

The desert is growing: pity anyone who hides deserts inside!

—Ha! How solemn!

Truly solemn!

A worthy beginning!

Solemn in an African way!

Fit for a lion,

Or for a moral howler monkey—

—but nothing for you,

You dearest, sweetest girlfriends,

At whose feet I,

For the very first time,

A European, under palm trees,

Am allowed to sit. Selah.

Truly wonderful!

Here I sit now,

Near the desert, and yet already

So far away from the desert again,

And not turned into a wasteland in any way:

Because I've been swallowed down

By this tiniest oasis—:

—it was just yawning and opening wide

Its lovely mouth.

The sweetest-smelling of all little mouths:

So I fell into it,

Down, right through—and landed among you,

You dearest girlfriends! Selah.

Hail, hail to that whale,

If it treated its guest

As well as this!—do you get

My clever, bookish hint?

Hail to its belly,

If it was

Such a lovely oasis-belly

As this one: but I have my doubts about that,

—after all, I come from Europe,

Which is more full of doubt than any

Elderly little wife.

May God make it better!

Amen!

Here I sit now,

In this tiniest oasis,

Like a date,

Brown, sweet all the way through, oozing gold, longing

For a girl's round mouth,

But even more for girlish,

Ice-cold, snow-white, sharp

Biting teeth: because it's these

That the heart of every hot date longs for. Selah.

Like the southern fruits

I just mentioned, all too much like them,

I lie here, with little

Winged beetles

Dancing and playing all around me,

And likewise with even smaller,
Sillier, naughtier
Wishes and ideas,
Surrounded by you,
You silent girls, full of secret hunches,
You girl-cats,
Dudu and Suleika,
—sphinxed in on every side, if I may cram
A lot of feelings into one made-up word:
(May God forgive me
This sin against language!)
—I sit here, sniffing the best air,
Truly the air of paradise,
Bright, light air, striped with gold,
Air as good as any that ever
Fell down from the moon—
Whether it happened by chance,
Or out of playful mischief?
As the old poets tell it.
But I, a doubter, have my
Doubts about it, since I come
From Europe,
Which is more full of doubt than any

Elderly little wife.

May God make it better!

Amen!

Drinking in this most beautiful air,

With my nostrils swelled up like cups, without a future, without memories,

This is how I sit here, you

Dearest girlfriends,

And watch the palm tree,

How, like a dancer,

It bends and sways and rocks its hips,

—you start doing it too if you watch for long!

Like a dancer who, it seems to me,

Has stood too long already, dangerously long,

Always, always on just one leg?

—and so, it seems to me, she forgot about

Her other little leg?

At least, I searched in vain

For the missing twin treasure

—that is, the other leg—

In the holy area close to

Her sweetest, daintiest

Fanning, fluttering, glittering little skirt.

Yes, if you, my beautiful girlfriends,

Will believe me completely:

She has lost it!

It's gone!

Gone forever!

The other leg!

Oh, what a shame about that lovely other leg!

Where—might it be staying now, abandoned and grieving?

That lonely leg?

Afraid, maybe, of a

Fierce, yellow, blond-curled

Lion-monster? Or even already

Gnawed off, nibbled away—

Pitifully, oh no! oh no! nibbled away! Selah.

Oh, don't cry for me,

Soft hearts!

Don't cry for me, you

Date-hearts! Milk-breasts!

You little licorice heart-

pouches!

Don't cry anymore,

Pale Dudu!

Be a man, Suleika! Courage! Courage!

—Or maybe

Something strengthening, something to strengthen the heart,

Would be right for this moment?

A holy, preachy saying?

A solemn pep talk?—

Ha! Rise up, dignity!

The dignity of virtue! European dignity!

Blow, blow again,

You bellows of virtue!

Ha!

Roar one more time,

Roar morally!

As a moral lion,

Roar in front of the daughters of the desert!

—Because the howling of virtue,

You dearest girls,

Is, more than anything else,

European passion, European ravenous hunger!

And here I stand already,

As a European,

I can't do anything else, God help me!

Amen!

The desert is growing: pity anyone who hides deserts inside!

## The Waking Up

### 1.

After the song of the wanderer and shadow, the cave was suddenly full of noise and laughter. All the gathered guests were talking at once, and even the donkey, encouraged by all this, would not stay quiet anymore. So Zarathustra felt a little annoyed with his visitors and wanted to make fun of them, even though he was glad they were cheerful. To him, their cheerfulness seemed a sign that they were getting better. So he slipped outside into the open air and spoke to his animals.

"Where has their misery gone now?" he said, and he was already breathing more easily after his little bit of annoyance. "Here with me, it seems, they have forgotten how to make their cry for help!

Though, sadly, they have not yet forgotten how to shout." And Zarathustra covered his ears, because just then the donkey's "Hee-haw" was mixing strangely with the joyful racket of these higher humans.

"They are having fun," he began again, "and who knows? Maybe at the expense of their host. And if they learned to laugh from me, it is still not my kind of laughter that they learned.

But what does it matter! They are old people. They get better in their own way, they laugh in their own way. My ears have put up with worse things and did not get grumpy.

This day is a victory. The spirit of heaviness, my old worst enemy, is already giving way, it is running off! How well this day is going to end, after it started so badly and so heavily!

And it does want to end. Evening is already coming. It rides in over the sea, that good rider! Look how it sways, happy and on its way home, in its purple saddles!

The sky looks on, clear, and the world lies deep below. Oh, all you odd people who came to me, it really is worth it to live here with me!"

That is what Zarathustra said. And again the shouting and laughter of the higher humans came out of the cave, and so he started speaking again.

"They are taking the bait, my bait is working. Their enemy, the spirit of heaviness, is backing away from them too. They are already learning to laugh at themselves. Am I hearing that right?

My strong food for real men is working, my words full of juice and power. And truly, I did not feed them vegetables that just puff you up with gas! No, I fed them warrior food, conqueror food. I woke up new desires in them.

There are new hopes in their arms and legs, and their hearts are stretching out wide. They are finding new words, and soon their minds will breathe out playful mischief.

Of course, this kind of food may not be for children, or for longing little women, old or young. Their stomachs have to be won over in a different way. I am not their doctor or their teacher.

The disgust is leaving these higher humans. Good! That is my victory. In my kingdom they are becoming sure of themselves. All their silly shame runs away, and they pour themselves out.

They pour out their hearts, good times are coming back to them, they celebrate and chew things over again, like cows chewing their food a second time. They are becoming grateful.

I take that as the best sign: they are becoming grateful. Before long they will be making up festivals and putting up memorial stones for their old joys.

They are people who are getting better!" That is what Zarathustra said happily to his heart, and he looked out into the distance. His animals pressed close to him and honored his happiness and his silence.

**2.**

But suddenly Zarathustra's ears were startled. The cave, which until then had been full of noise and laughter, all at once went as quiet as death. And his nose smelled a sweet-smelling smoke and incense, like burning pine cones.

"What is happening? What are they up to?" he asked himself, and he crept up to the entrance so he could watch his guests without being noticed. But wonder of wonders! What did he have to see there with his own eyes!

"They have all become religious again, they are praying, they are crazy!" he said, and he was amazed beyond measure. And it was true! All these higher humans, the two kings, the retired pope, the wicked magician, the man who chose to be a beggar, the wanderer and shadow, the old fortune-teller, the man who was strict with his mind, and the ugliest person, were all down on their knees like children and devout little old women, worshiping the donkey. And just then the ugliest person began to gurgle and snort, as if something that could not be put into words wanted to come out of him. But when he actually managed to get it into words, look, it was a strange, pious chant of prayers praising the donkey, which they were worshiping and covering with incense smoke. And this chant went like this:

"Amen! And praise and honor and wisdom and thanks and glory and strength be to our God, forever and ever!"

And the donkey cried out, "Hee-haw."

"He carries our load, he took on the form of a servant, he is patient in his heart and never says No. And whoever loves his God beats him."

And the donkey cried out, "Hee-haw."

"He does not speak, except that he always says Yes to the world he made. That is how he praises his world. It is his cleverness that keeps him from talking. That way he is rarely proven wrong."

And the donkey cried out, "Hee-haw."

"He goes through the world without being noticed. Gray is the color of the body he wraps his goodness in. If he has a mind, he hides it. But everyone believes in his long ears."

And the donkey cried out, "Hee-haw."

"What hidden wisdom it is that he has long ears and only says Yes and never No! Didn't he create the world in his own image, that is, as stupid as possible?"

And the donkey cried out, "Hee-haw."

"You walk straight paths and crooked paths. You hardly care what we humans think is straight or crooked. Your kingdom is beyond good and evil. Your innocence is that you do not know what innocence is."

And the donkey cried out, "Hee-haw."

"Just look how you push no one away, not the beggars and not the kings. You let the little children come to you, and when the naughty boys try to tempt you, you simply say, 'Hee-haw.'"

And the donkey cried out, "Hee-haw."

"You love lady donkeys and fresh figs, you are not picky about food. A thistle tickles your heart when you happen to be hungry. In that lies the wisdom of a god."

And the donkey cried out, "Hee-haw."

## The Donkey Festival

### 1.

But at this point in the chanted prayer, Zarathustra could not hold himself back any longer. He shouted "Hee-haw!" himself, even louder than the donkey, and jumped right into the middle of his guests, who had gone wild.

"What on earth are you doing, you children of humankind?" he cried, pulling the people who were praying up off the floor. "Too bad for you if anyone other than Zarathustra were watching you!

Anyone would decide that, with this new faith of yours, you were either the worst insulters of God or the silliest of all little old women!

And you yourself, you old Pope, how does it fit with who you are, that you are worshipping a donkey here as God like this?"

"Oh Zarathustra," the Pope answered, "forgive me, but when it comes to God, I am even more enlightened than you are. And that is only fair.

Better to worship God in this shape than in no shape at all! Think about that saying, my noble friend. You will quickly guess that there is wisdom hidden in it.

The one who said, 'God is a spirit,' took the biggest step and leap toward unbelief that anyone on earth has taken so far. A statement like that is not easy to undo on earth!

My old heart jumps and skips because there is still something on earth to worship. Forgive that, oh Zarathustra, in the old, faithful heart of a Pope!"

"And you," Zarathustra said to the wanderer, the one called the shadow, "you call yourself a free spirit and believe you are one? And yet here you are, taking part in this kind of idol-worship and priest stuff?

Honestly, you are behaving even worse here than you did with your naughty brown-skinned girls, you naughty new believer!"

"It's bad enough," answered the wanderer and shadow, "you're right. But how is it my fault? The old God is alive again, oh Zarathustra, no matter what you say.

The ugliest person is to blame for all of it. He brought God back to life. And even if he says he once killed him: with gods, death is always just a prejudice, an assumption people make."

"And you," said Zarathustra, "you wicked old magician, what have you done! In these free times, who is supposed to believe in you from now on, if you believe in this kind of donkey-god nonsense?

What you did was stupid. How could you, a clever man, do something so stupid!"

"Oh Zarathustra," answered the clever magician, "you're right, it was stupid. And it was hard enough for me, too."

"And you, of all people," Zarathustra said to the one who was strict and honest in his thinking, "think about it, put your finger on your nose and consider! Doesn't anything here go against your conscience? Isn't your mind too clean for this praying and for the stale air of these prayer-buddies?"

"There is something to it," answered the strict thinker, and he put his finger on his nose. "There is something about this show that actually feels good to my conscience.

Maybe I'm not allowed to believe in God. But one thing is sure: God seems most believable to me in this shape.

God is supposed to be eternal, according to what the most faithful people say. Someone who has that much time takes his time. As slow and as stupid as possible: that way, someone like that can still get very far.

And someone who has too much mind might well fall in love with stupidity and foolishness themselves. Think about yourself, oh Zarathustra!

You yourself, really! You too could easily turn into a donkey, out of having too much wisdom, more than you can hold.

Doesn't a perfectly wise person like to take the most crooked paths? What we can see proves it, oh Zarathustra: what we can see in you!"

"And finally you," said Zarathustra, turning to the ugliest person, who was still lying on the floor, lifting his arm up to the donkey. He was giving it wine to drink. "Speak, you who can't be put into words, what have you done here!

You seem changed to me. Your eyes are glowing. A cloak of greatness is wrapped around your ugliness. What did you do?

Is it really true, what those others say, that you brought him back to life? And what for? Wasn't there a good reason he was killed off and done away with?

You yourself seem woken up to me. What did you do? What did you turn around? Why did you convert? Speak, you who can't be put into words!"

"Oh Zarathustra," answered the ugliest person, "you're a trickster!

Whether he is still alive, or alive again, or completely dead: which of us two knows that best? I'm asking you.

But I do know one thing. I learned it from you once, oh Zarathustra: whoever wants to kill most completely, laughs.

'You don't kill with anger, you kill with laughter.' That's what you said once. Oh Zarathustra, you hidden one, you destroyer without anger, you dangerous saint, you're a trickster!"

**2.**

Then it happened that Zarathustra, amazed by all these trickster answers, jumped back to the door of his cave, turned to face all his guests, and shouted in a strong voice:

"Oh, you joking fools, all of you, you clowns! Why are you pretending and hiding from me?

How every one of your hearts was wriggling with joy and mischief, because at last you had become like little children again, that is, religious,

because at last you were doing again what children do, that is, praying, folding your hands, and saying 'dear God'!

But now leave this nursery for me, my own cave, where all childishness is at home today. Come out here and cool off your hot, childish high spirits and the noise in your hearts!

Of course, unless you become like little children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven." And Zarathustra pointed upward with his hands.

"But we don't want to go into the kingdom of heaven at all. We have become grown men, and so we want the kingdom of the earth."

## 3.

And Zarathustra began to speak once more. "Oh my new friends," he said, "you strange people, you higher humans, how much I like you now,

now that you have become cheerful again! Truly, you have all blossomed. It seems to me that flowers like you need new festivals,

a little brave nonsense, some kind of church service and donkey festival, some old, cheerful Zarathustra-fool, a rushing wind that blows your souls clear and bright.

Don't forget this night and this donkey festival, you higher humans! You invented it at my place, and I take that as a good sign. Only people who are getting well invent things like this!

And if you celebrate it again, this donkey festival, do it out of love for yourselves, and do it out of love for me too! And in memory of me!"

That is what Zarathustra said.

## The Sleepwalker's Song

### 1.

Meanwhile, one after another, they had all stepped outside, into the open air and into the cool, thoughtful night. Zarathustra himself led the ugliest person by the hand, so that he could show him his night-world, the big round moon, and the silver waterfalls near his cave. There at last they all stood quietly together, all of them old people, but with comforted, brave hearts, and amazed inside themselves that they felt so good here on earth. And the secret feeling of the night came closer and closer to their hearts. And once again Zarathustra thought to himself: "Oh, how much I like them now, these higher humans!" But he did not say it out loud, because he respected their happiness and their silence.

But then the most amazing thing of that whole amazing, long day happened. The ugliest person began once more, and for the last time, to gurgle and snort. And when he finally managed to get words out, look, a question jumped out of his mouth, round and clean: a good, deep, clear question, which moved the heart of everyone who heard it.

"All my friends," said the ugliest person, "what do you think? Because of this day, for the first time I am glad that I have lived my whole life.

And saying that much is still not enough for me. It is worth living on this earth. One day, one party with Zarathustra, has taught me to love the earth.

"Was that what life is? Then come on, once more!" That is what I want to say to death.

My friends, what do you think? Don't you want to say to death, just like me: Was that what life is? Then for Zarathustra's sake, come on, once more!"

That is what the ugliest person said. And it was not long before midnight. And what do you think happened then? As soon as the higher humans heard his question, they suddenly all realized how they had been changed and healed, and who had given them this. So they rushed toward Zarathustra, thanking him, honoring him, hugging him, kissing his hands, each in his own way, so that some laughed and some cried. The old fortune-teller even danced with joy. And even if, as some storytellers say, he was full of sweet wine at the time, he was certainly even fuller of sweet life, and he had said goodbye to all his tiredness. There are even some who say that the donkey danced that night too, since the ugliest person had not given it wine to drink earlier for nothing. Maybe it happened that way, or maybe not. And if the donkey really did not dance that evening, then greater and stranger wonders still happened that night than a dancing donkey would be. In short, as Zarathustra's saying goes: "What does it matter!"

**2.**

But while all this was happening with the ugliest person, Zarathustra stood there like a drunk man. The light went out of his eyes, his tongue stumbled over words, his feet swayed. And who could guess what thoughts were running through Zarathustra's soul just then? But it was clear that his mind had drawn back and fled ahead, and was far, far away, as if, as it is written, "on a high mountain ridge between two seas,

wandering like a heavy cloud between the past and the future." Slowly, though, while the higher humans held him in their arms, he

came back to himself a little, and waved away with his hands the crowd of people honoring him and worrying about him. But he did not speak. Then, all of a sudden, he turned his head quickly, because he seemed to hear something. He put his finger to his lips and said: "Come!"

And right away everything around them became quiet and secret. And from down below, the sound of a bell slowly rose up. Zarathustra listened to it, and so did the higher humans. Then he put his finger to his lips a second time and said again: "Come! Come! It is getting near midnight!" And his voice had changed. But still he did not move from the spot. Then it became even quieter and more secret, and everything listened: the donkey too, and Zarathustra's honored animals, the eagle and the snake, and also Zarathustra's cave, and the big cool moon, and the night itself. And Zarathustra put his hand to his mouth for the third time and said:

Come! Come! Come! Let us walk now! The hour has come: let us walk into the night!

### 3.

You higher humans, it is getting near midnight. So I want to whisper something into your ears, the way that old bell whispers it into my ear,

as secretly, as frighteningly, as warmly as that midnight bell speaks it to me, the bell that has lived through more than any one human has:

the bell that already counted the painful heartbeats of your fathers. Oh! Oh! How it sighs! How it laughs in its dreams, the old, deep, deep midnight!

Quiet! Quiet! Now you can hear many things that are not allowed to be said out loud during the day. But now, in the cool air, when even all the noise of your hearts has gone quiet,

now it speaks, now it can be heard, now it creeps into souls that lie wide awake at night. Oh! Oh! How it sighs! How it laughs in its dreams!

Don't you hear how secretly, frighteningly, warmly it speaks to you, the old, deep, deep midnight? Oh human, pay attention!

**4.**

Poor me! Where has the time gone? Didn't I sink down into deep wells? The world is asleep.

Oh! Oh! The dog howls, the moon shines. I would rather die, die, than tell you what my midnight heart is thinking right now.

Now I have already died. It is gone. Spider, what are you spinning around me? Do you want blood? Oh! Oh! The dew is falling, the hour is coming,

the hour when I shiver and freeze, the hour that asks and asks and asks: "Who has heart enough for this?

Who should be master of the earth? Who will say: this is how you must run, you big and small rivers!"

The hour is coming near. Oh human, you higher human, pay attention! These words are for sharp ears, for your ears. What does the deep midnight say?

**5.**

Something is carrying me away; my soul is dancing. The day's work! The day's work! Who should be master of the earth?

The moon is cool, the wind is silent. Oh! Oh! Have you already flown high enough? You danced, but a leg is still not a wing.

You good dancers, now all the joy is over. The wine has turned to dregs, every cup has gone brittle, the graves are stammering.

You did not fly high enough. Now the graves stammer: "Set the dead free! Why is the night so long? Isn't the moon making us drunk?"

You higher humans, set the graves free, wake up the corpses! Oh, what is the worm still digging for? The hour is coming, it is coming near,

the bell is humming, the heart is still rattling, the woodworm is still digging, the worm that eats at the heart. Oh! Oh! The world is deep!

**6.**

Sweet lyre! Sweet lyre! I love your sound, your drunken sound like a croaking toad! From how long ago, from how far away your sound comes to me, from far off, from the ponds of love!

You old bell, you sweet lyre! Every pain has torn into your heart: a father's pain, the pain of fathers, the pain of the oldest ancestors. Your speech has grown ripe,

ripe like a golden autumn and afternoon, like my lonely hermit's heart. Now you speak: the world itself has become ripe, the grape is turning brown,

now it wants to die, to die from happiness. You higher humans, can't you smell it? A scent is secretly rising up,

—a scent and smell of forever, a rosy, blissful, brown, golden-wine smell of old happiness,

a smell of the drunken happiness of dying at midnight, a happiness that sings: the world is deep, and deeper than the day ever thought!

**7.**

Leave me alone! Leave me alone! I am too pure for you. Don't touch me! Didn't my world just become perfect?

My skin is too pure for your hands. Leave me alone, you stupid, clumsy, dull day! Isn't midnight brighter?

The purest should be the masters of the earth: the least known, the strongest, the midnight souls, who are brighter and deeper than any day.

Oh day, are you groping around for me? Are you feeling around for my happiness? Do I look rich to you, and alone, like a treasure pit, a room full of gold?

Oh world, do you want me? Do I seem worldly to you? Do I seem spiritual to you? Do I seem godlike to you? But day and world, you are too clumsy,—

—get yourselves cleverer hands, reach for deeper happiness, for deeper unhappiness, reach for some god or other, but don't reach for me:

—my unhappiness and my happiness are deep, you strange day, but still I am no god, and no god's hell: deep is the world's pain.

**8.**

God's pain is deeper, you strange world! Reach for God's pain, not for me! What am I? A drunken, sweet lyre, a little harp,—

a midnight lyre, a bell that croaks like a toad, which nobody understands, but which has to speak, even to deaf people, you higher humans! Because you don't understand me!

Gone! Gone! Oh youth! Oh midday! Oh afternoon! Now evening has come, and night, and midnight,—the dog howls, the wind howls:

—isn't the wind a dog? It whimpers, it yaps, it howls. Oh! Oh! How she sighs! How she laughs, how she rattles and gasps for breath, the midnight!

How soberly she is speaking right now, this drunken poet! Did she go beyond her drunkenness? Did she become too wide awake? Is she chewing things over again, like a cow chewing its cud?

—what she chews over again, in her dream, is her pain, the old deep midnight, and even more her joy. Because joy, even if pain is deep: joy is deeper still than heartache.

### 8.

You grapevine! Why are you praising me? After all, I cut you! I am cruel, and you are bleeding—: what does your praise want with my drunken cruelty?

"Whatever has become perfect, everything that is ripe—wants to die!" That is what you say. Blessed, blessed be the grape-picker's knife! But everything unripe wants to live: how painful!

Pain says: "Pass away! Go away, you pain!" But everything that suffers wants to live, so that it can become ripe, and joyful, and full of longing,

—longing for what is farther away, higher, brighter. "I want heirs," that is what everything that suffers says, "I want children, I don't want myself,"—

But joy doesn't want heirs, or children,—joy wants itself, wants forever, wants things to come back, wants everything to stay the same forever.

Pain says: "Break, heart, and bleed! Walk, legs! Wings, fly! Onward! Upward! Pain!" Come on! Let's go! Oh my old heart: pain says, "Pass away!"

**10.**

You higher humans, what do you think? Am I a fortune-teller? A dreamer? A drunk? Someone who explains dreams? A midnight bell?

A drop of dew? A mist and scent of forever? Don't you hear it? Don't you smell it? My world has just become perfect; midnight is also midday,—

pain is also a joy, a curse is also a blessing, the night is also a sun,—go away, or you will learn this: a wise person is also a fool.

Did you ever say yes to one single joy? Oh, my friends, then you also said yes to all pain. All things are chained together, threaded together, in love with each other,—

—if you ever wanted one time to happen twice, if you ever said, "I like you, happiness! Whoosh! Moment!", then you wanted everything back!

—everything all over again, everything forever, everything chained together, threaded together, in love with each other, oh, that is how you loved the world,—

—you eternal ones, you love it forever and for all time: and even to pain you say: pass away, but come back! Because all joy wants—forever!

**11.**

All joy wants all things to last forever; it wants honey, it wants the dregs at the bottom, it wants drunken midnight, it wants graves, it

wants the comfort of tears shed at graves, it wants the golden red glow of the evening sky—

—what doesn't joy want! It is thirstier, warmer-hearted, hungrier, more terrible, more secret than all pain; it wants itself, it bites into itself, the will of the ring, the circle where everything comes back, wrestles inside it,—

—it wants love, it wants hate, it is far too rich, it gives things away, throws things away, begs for someone to take it, thanks the one who takes, it would gladly be hated,—

—joy is so rich that it thirsts for pain, for hell, for hate, for shame, for the crippled, for the world,—because this world, oh, you know it well!

You higher humans, joy longs for you, wild, blissful joy,—it longs for your pain, you failures! All eternal joy longs for what has failed.

Because all joy wants itself, and that is why it also wants heartache! Oh happiness, oh pain! Oh break, heart! You higher humans, learn it at last: joy wants forever,

—joy wants all things to last forever, wants deep, deep forever!

**12.**

Have you learned my song now? Have you guessed what it wants? Come on! Let's go! You higher humans, now sing my round song for me!

Now sing the song for me yourselves, the song whose name is "Once More" and whose meaning is "For all eternity!"—sing, you higher humans, Zarathustra's round song!

Oh human! Pay attention!

What does deep midnight say?

"I slept, I slept—,

I have woken up from a deep dream:—

The world is deep,

And deeper than the day has thought.

Deep is its pain—,

Joy—deeper still than heartache:

Pain says: Pass away!

But all joy wants forever,

wants deep, deep forever!"

## The Sign

But on the morning after this night, Zarathustra jumped up from his bed, got himself ready like someone tying on a belt for a journey, and came out of his cave. He was glowing and strong, like a morning sun rising out of dark mountains.

"You great star," he said, just as he had said once long ago, "you deep eye full of happiness, what would all your happiness be worth if you did not have the ones you shine for!

And if they stayed in their rooms while you were already awake, coming up and giving and handing out your light, how angry your proud sense of shame would be about that!

Well then! They are still asleep, these higher humans, while I am awake. They are not my true companions! They are not the ones I am waiting for here in my mountains.

I want to go to my work, to my day. But they do not understand the signs of my morning. My footsteps are not a wake-up call for them.

They are still asleep in my cave. Their dreams are still chewing over my midnights, like cows chewing their food again and again. The ear that listens for me, the ear that obeys, is missing from their bodies."

Zarathustra had said this to his own heart as the sun came up. Then he looked up, wondering, because he heard the sharp cry of his eagle above him. "Well then!" he called up to it. "This is how I like it, and this is how it should be. My animals are awake, because I am awake.

My eagle is awake, and like me he honors the sun. With his eagle's claws he reaches for the new light. You are my true animals. I love you.

But I still don't have my true humans!"

That is what Zarathustra said. But then, suddenly, he heard what sounded like countless birds swarming and fluttering all around him. The whirring of so many wings and the crowding around his head was so great that he closed his eyes. And truly, it came down on him like a cloud, like a cloud of arrows pouring down on a new enemy. But look, here it was a cloud of love, and it was pouring down on a new friend.

"What is happening to me?" Zarathustra thought in his amazed heart, and he slowly sat down on the big stone that lay beside the entrance of his cave. But as he reached around him, above him and below him with his hands, pushing away the loving birds, look, something even stranger happened to him. Without noticing, he grabbed right into a thick, warm, shaggy mass of hair. And at the same moment a roar rang out in front of him, a soft, long lion's roar.

"The sign is coming," said Zarathustra, and his heart was changed. And in truth, when he could see clearly again, a huge yellow beast was lying at his feet. It pressed its head against his knees and, out of love, would not leave him. It acted like a dog that finds its old master again. But the doves were no less eager with their love than the lion. And every time a dove flitted across the lion's nose, the lion shook its head, wondered at it, and laughed as well.

To all of this Zarathustra said only one thing: "My children are near, my children." Then he went completely silent. But his heart had loosened, and tears dripped from his eyes and fell onto his hands. He paid no attention to anything anymore. He sat there without moving, and he no longer pushed the animals away. Then the doves flew back and forth and landed on his shoulder and stroked his white hair, and they never got tired of showing their tenderness and joy. But the strong lion kept licking the tears that fell onto Zarathustra's hands,

and it roared and growled shyly as it did. That is how these animals carried on.

All this lasted a long time, or a short time. Because, to be honest, for things like this there is no time on earth. Meanwhile, though, the higher humans in Zarathustra's cave had woken up. They lined up together in a procession so they could go out to meet Zarathustra and wish him good morning, because when they woke up they had found that he was no longer with them. But when they reached the door of the cave, with the sound of their footsteps running ahead of them, the lion was hugely startled. All at once it turned away from Zarathustra and leapt at the cave, roaring wildly. And the higher humans, when they heard it roar, all screamed at once, as if with one mouth, and ran back, and in a flash they were gone.

But Zarathustra himself, dazed and feeling like a stranger to himself, got up from his seat. He looked around, stood there in amazement, asked his heart, thought it over, and found he was alone. "What was it I heard?" he finally said slowly. "What just happened to me?"

And already his memory came back, and in one glance he understood everything that had happened between yesterday and today. "Why, here is the stone," he said, stroking his beard. "I sat on it yesterday morning. And here is where the fortune-teller came up to me, and here is where I first heard the cry I just heard, the great cry for help.

Oh you higher humans, it was about your distress that the old fortune-teller made his prediction to me yesterday morning.

He wanted to lure me and tempt me toward your distress. 'Oh Zarathustra,' he said to me, 'I have come to lead you into your last sin.'

Into my last sin?" Zarathustra cried out, and he laughed angrily at his own words. "What was it that had been saved up for me as my last sin?"

And once more Zarathustra sank deep into himself, sat back down on the big stone, and thought hard. Suddenly he jumped up.

"Pity! Pity for the higher human!" he shouted, and his face turned hard as bronze. "Well then! That has had its time!

My suffering and my pity, what do they matter! Am I trying to be happy? I am trying to do my work!

Well then! The lion has come, my children are near, Zarathustra has grown ripe, my hour has come.

This is my morning, my day is beginning. Rise up now, rise up, you great midday!"

That is what Zarathustra said, and he left his cave, glowing and strong, like a morning sun rising out of dark mountains.

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