



Thus Spake Zarathustra

**Friedrich Wilhelm
Nietzsche**

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INTRODUCTION BY MRS FORSTER-NIETZSCHE.

HOW ZARATHUSTRA CAME INTO BEING.

“Zarathustra” is my brother’s most personal work; it is the history of his most individual experiences, of his friendships, ideals, raptures, bitterest disappointments and sorrows. Above it all, however, there soars, transfiguring it, the image of his greatest hopes and remotest aims. My brother had the figure of Zarathustra in his mind from his very earliest youth: he once told me that even as a child he had dreamt of him. At different periods in his life, he would call this haunter of his dreams by different names; “but in the end,” he declares in a note on the subject, “I had to do a PERSIAN the honour of identifying him with this creature of my fancy. Persians were the first to take a broad and comprehensive view of history. Every series of evolutions, according to them, was presided over by a prophet; and every prophet had his ‘Hazar,’—his dynasty of a thousand years.”

All Zarathustra’s views, as also his personality, were early conceptions of my brother’s mind. Whoever reads his posthumously published writings for the years 1869-82 with care, will constantly meet with passages suggestive of Zarathustra’s thoughts and doctrines. For instance, the ideal of the Superman is put forth quite clearly in all his writings during the years 1873-75; and in “We Philologists”, the following remarkable observations occur:—

“How can one praise and glorify a nation as a whole?—Even among the Greeks, it was the INDIVIDUALS that counted.”

“The Greeks are interesting and extremely important because they reared such a vast number of great individuals. How was this possible? The question is one which ought to be studied.

“I am interested only in the relations of a people to the rearing of the individual man, and among the Greeks the conditions were unusually favourable for the development of the individual; not by any means owing to the goodness of the people, but because of the struggles of their evil instincts.

“WITH THE HELP OF FAVOURABLE MEASURES GREAT INDIVIDUALS MIGHT BE REARED WHO WOULD BE BOTH DIFFERENT FROM AND HIGHER THAN THOSE WHO HERETOFORE HAVE OWED THEIR EXISTENCE TO MERE CHANCE. Here we may still be hopeful: in the rearing of exceptional men.”

The notion of rearing the Superman is only a new form of an ideal Nietzsche already had in his youth, that “THE OBJECT OF MANKIND SHOULD LIE IN ITS HIGHEST INDIVIDUALS” (or, as he writes in “Schopenhauer as Educator”: “Mankind ought constantly to be striving

to produce great men—this and nothing else is its duty.”) But the ideals he most revered in those days are no longer held to be the highest types of men. No, around this future ideal of a coming humanity—the Superman—the poet spread the veil of becoming. Who can tell to what glorious heights man can still ascend? That is why, after having tested the worth of our noblest ideal—that of the Saviour, in the light of the new valuations, the poet cries with passionate emphasis in “Zarathustra”:

“Never yet hath there been a Superman. Naked have I seen both of them, the greatest and the smallest man:—

All-too-similar are they still to each other. Verily even the greatest found I—all-too-human!”—

The phrase “the rearing of the Superman,” has very often been misunderstood. By the word “rearing,” in this case, is meant the act of modifying by means of new and higher values—values which, as laws and guides of conduct and opinion, are now to rule over mankind. In general the doctrine of the Superman can only be understood correctly in conjunction with other ideas of the author’s, such as:—the Order of Rank, the Will to Power, and the Transvaluation of all Values. He assumes that Christianity, as a product of the resentment of the botched and the weak, has put in ban all that is beautiful, strong, proud, and powerful, in fact all the qualities resulting from strength, and that, in consequence, all forces which tend to promote or elevate life have been seriously undermined. Now, however, a new table of valuations must be placed over mankind—namely, that of the strong, mighty, and magnificent man, overflowing with life and elevated to his zenith—the Superman, who is now put before us with overpowering passion as the aim of our life, hope, and will. And just as the old system of valuing, which only extolled the qualities favourable to the weak, the suffering, and the oppressed, has succeeded in producing a weak, suffering, and “modern” race, so this new and reversed system of valuing ought to rear a healthy, strong, lively, and courageous type, which would be a glory to life itself. Stated briefly, the leading principle of this new system of valuing would be: “All that proceeds from power is good, all that springs from weakness is bad.”

This type must not be regarded as a fanciful figure: it is not a nebulous hope which is to be realised at some indefinitely remote period, thousands of years hence; nor is it a new species (in the Darwinian sense) of which we can know nothing, and which it would therefore be somewhat absurd to strive after. But it is meant to be a possibility which men of the present could realise with all their spiritual and physical energies, provided they adopted the new values.

The author of “Zarathustra” never lost sight of that egregious example of a transvaluation of all values through Christianity, whereby the whole of the deified mode of life and thought of the Greeks, as well as strong

Romedom, was almost annihilated or transvalued in a comparatively short time. Could not a rejuvenated Graeco-Roman system of valuing (once it had been refined and made more profound by the schooling which two thousand years of Christianity had provided) effect another such revolution within a calculable period of time, until that glorious type of manhood shall finally appear which is to be our new faith and hope, and in the creation of which Zarathustra exhorts us to participate?

In his private notes on the subject the author uses the expression "Superman" (always in the singular, by-the-bye), as signifying "the most thoroughly well-constituted type," as opposed to "modern man"; above all, however, he designates Zarathustra himself as an example of the Superman. In "Ecco Homo" he is careful to enlighten us concerning the precursors and prerequisites to the advent of this highest type, in referring to a certain passage in the "Gay Science":—

"In order to understand this type, we must first be quite clear in regard to the leading physiological condition on which it depends: this condition is what I call GREAT HEALTHINESS. I know not how to express my meaning more plainly or more personally than I have done already in one of the last chapters (Aphorism 382) of the fifth book of the 'Gaya Scienza'."

"We, the new, the nameless, the hard-to-understand,"—it says there,—"we firstlings of a yet untried future—we require for a new end also a new means, namely, a new healthiness, stronger, sharper, tougher, bolder and merrier than all healthiness hitherto. He whose soul longeth to experience the whole range of hitherto recognised values and desirabilities, and to circumnavigate all the coasts of this ideal 'Mediterranean Sea', who, from the adventures of his most personal experience, wants to know how it feels to be a conqueror, and discoverer of the ideal—as likewise how it is with the artist, the saint, the legislator, the sage, the scholar, the devotee, the prophet, and the godly non-conformist of the old style:—requires one thing above all for that purpose, GREAT HEALTHINESS—such healthiness as one not only possesses, but also constantly acquires and must acquire, because one unceasingly sacrifices it again, and must sacrifice it!—And now, after having been long on the way in this fashion, we Argonauts of the ideal, more courageous perhaps than prudent, and often enough shipwrecked and brought to grief, nevertheless dangerously healthy, always healthy again,—it would seem as if, in recompense for it all, that we have a still undiscovered country before us, the boundaries of which no one has yet seen, a beyond to all countries and corners of the ideal known hitherto, a world so over-rich in the beautiful, the strange, the questionable, the frightful, and the divine, that our curiosity as well as our thirst for possession thereof, have got out of hand—alas! that nothing will now any longer satisfy us!—

“How could we still be content with THE MAN OF THE PRESENT DAY after such outlooks, and with such a craving in our conscience and consciousness? Sad enough; but it is unavoidable that we should look on the worthiest aims and hopes of the man of the present day with ill-concealed amusement, and perhaps should no longer look at them. Another ideal runs on before us, a strange, tempting ideal full of danger, to which we should not like to persuade any one, because we do not so readily acknowledge any one’s RIGHT THERETO: the ideal of a spirit who plays naively (that is to say involuntarily and from overflowing abundance and power) with everything that has hitherto been called holy, good, intangible, or divine; to whom the loftiest conception which the people have reasonably made their measure of value, would already practically imply danger, ruin, abasement, or at least relaxation, blindness, or temporary self-forgetfulness; the ideal of a humanly superhuman welfare and benevolence, which will often enough appear INHUMAN, for example, when put alongside of all past seriousness on earth, and alongside of all past solemnities in bearing, word, tone, look, morality, and pursuit, as their truest involuntary parody—and WITH which, nevertheless, perhaps THE GREAT SERIOUSNESS only commences, when the proper interrogative mark is set up, the fate of the soul changes, the hour-hand moves, and tragedy begins...”

Although the figure of Zarathustra and a large number of the leading thoughts in this work had appeared much earlier in the dreams and writings of the author, “Thus Spake Zarathustra” did not actually come into being until the month of August 1881 in Sils Maria; and it was the idea of the Eternal Recurrence of all things which finally induced my brother to set forth his new views in poetic language. In regard to his first conception of this idea, his autobiographical sketch, “Ecce Homo”, written in the autumn of 1888, contains the following passage:—

“The fundamental idea of my work—namely, the Eternal Recurrence of all things—this highest of all possible formulae of a Yea-saying philosophy, first occurred to me in August 1881. I made a note of the thought on a sheet of paper, with the postscript: 6,000 feet beyond men and time! That day I happened to be wandering through the woods alongside of the lake of Silvaplana, and I halted beside a huge, pyramidal and towering rock not far from Surlei. It was then that the thought struck me. Looking back now, I find that exactly two months previous to this inspiration, I had had an omen of its coming in the form of a sudden and decisive alteration in my tastes—more particularly in music. It would even be possible to consider all ‘Zarathustra’ as a musical composition. At all events, a very necessary condition in its production was a renaissance in myself of the art of hearing. In a small mountain resort (Recoaro) near Vicenza, where I spent the spring of 1881, I and my friend and Maestro, Peter Gast—also one who had been born again—

discovered that the phoenix music that hovered over us, wore lighter and brighter plumes than it had done theretofore.”

During the month of August 1881 my brother resolved to reveal the teaching of the Eternal Recurrence, in dithyrambic and psalmodic form, through the mouth of Zarathustra. Among the notes of this period, we found a page on which is written the first definite plan of “Thus Spake Zarathustra”:

“MIDDAY AND ETERNITY.” “GUIDE-POSTS TO A NEW WAY OF LIVING.”

Beneath this is written:—

“Zarathustra born on lake Urmi; left his home in his thirtieth year, went into the province of Aria, and, during ten years of solitude in the mountains, composed the Zend-Avesta.”

“The sun of knowledge stands once more at midday; and the serpent of eternity lies coiled in its light—: It is YOUR time, ye midday brethren.”

In that summer of 1881, my brother, after many years of steadily declining health, began at last to rally, and it is to this first gush of the recovery of his once splendid bodily condition that we owe not only “The Gay Science”, which in its mood may be regarded as a prelude to “Zarathustra”, but also “Zarathustra” itself. Just as he was beginning to recuperate his health, however, an unkind destiny brought him a number of most painful personal experiences. His friends caused him many disappointments, which were the more bitter to him, inasmuch as he regarded friendship as such a sacred institution; and for the first time in his life he realised the whole horror of that loneliness to which, perhaps, all greatness is condemned. But to be forsaken is something very different from deliberately choosing blessed loneliness. How he longed, in those days, for the ideal friend who would thoroughly understand him, to whom he would be able to say all, and whom he imagined he had found at various periods in his life from his earliest youth onwards. Now, however, that the way he had chosen grew ever more perilous and steep, he found nobody who could follow him: he therefore created a perfect friend for himself in the ideal form of a majestic philosopher, and made this creation the preacher of his gospel to the world.

Whether my brother would ever have written “Thus Spake Zarathustra” according to the first plan sketched in the summer of 1881, if he had not had the disappointments already referred to, is now an idle question; but perhaps where “Zarathustra” is concerned, we may also say with Master Eckhardt: “The fleetest beast to bear you to perfection is suffering.”

My brother writes as follows about the origin of the first part of “Zarathustra”:

—“In the winter of 1882-83, I was living on the charming little Gulf of Rapallo, not far from Genoa, and between Chiavari and Cape Porto Fino. My health was not very good; the winter was cold and exceptionally rainy; and the small inn in which I lived was so close to

the water that at night my sleep would be disturbed if the sea were high. These circumstances were surely the very reverse of favourable; and yet in spite of it all, and as if in demonstration of my belief that everything decisive comes to life in spite of every obstacle, it was precisely during this winter and in the midst of these unfavourable circumstances that my 'Zarathustra' originated. In the morning I used to start out in a southerly direction up the glorious road to Zoagli, which rises aloft through a forest of pines and gives one a view far out into the sea. In the afternoon, as often as my health permitted, I walked round the whole bay from Santa Margherita to beyond Porto Fino. This spot was all the more interesting to me, inasmuch as it was so dearly loved by the Emperor Frederick III. In the autumn of 1886 I chanced to be there again when he was revisiting this small, forgotten world of happiness for the last time. It was on these two roads that all 'Zarathustra' came to me, above all Zarathustra himself as a type;—I ought rather to say that it was on these walks that these ideas waylaid me."

The first part of "Zarathustra" was written in about ten days—that is to say, from the beginning to about the middle of February 1883. "The last lines were written precisely in the hallowed hour when Richard Wagner gave up the ghost in Venice."

With the exception of the ten days occupied in composing the first part of this book, my brother often referred to this winter as the hardest and sickliest he had ever experienced. He did not, however, mean thereby that his former disorders were troubling him, but that he was suffering from a severe attack of influenza which he had caught in Santa Margherita, and which tormented him for several weeks after his arrival in Genoa. As a matter of fact, however, what he complained of most was his spiritual condition—that indescribable forsakenness—to which he gives such heartrending expression in "Zarathustra". Even the reception which the first part met with at the hands of friends and acquaintances was extremely disheartening: for almost all those to whom he presented copies of the work misunderstood it. "I found no one ripe for many of my thoughts; the case of 'Zarathustra' proves that one can speak with the utmost clearness, and yet not be heard by any one." My brother was very much discouraged by the feebleness of the response he was given, and as he was striving just then to give up the practice of taking hydrate of chloral—a drug he had begun to take while ill with influenza,—the following spring, spent in Rome, was a somewhat gloomy one for him. He writes about it as follows:—"I spent a melancholy spring in Rome, where I only just managed to live,—and this was no easy matter. This city, which is absolutely unsuited to the poet-author of 'Zarathustra', and for the choice of which I was not responsible, made me inordinately miserable. I tried to leave it. I wanted to go to Aquila—the opposite of Rome in every respect, and actually founded in a spirit of enmity towards that city (just as I also shall found a city some day), as a

memento of an atheist and genuine enemy of the Church—a person very closely related to me,—the great Hohenstaufen, the Emperor Frederick II. But Fate lay behind it all: I had to return again to Rome. In the end I was obliged to be satisfied with the Piazza Barberini, after I had exerted myself in vain to find an anti-Christian quarter. I fear that on one occasion, to avoid bad smells as much as possible, I actually inquired at the Palazzo del Quirinale whether they could not provide a quiet room for a philosopher. In a chamber high above the Piazza just mentioned, from which one obtained a general view of Rome and could hear the fountains plashing far below, the loneliest of all songs was composed —‘The Night-Song’. About this time I was obsessed by an unspeakably sad melody, the refrain of which I recognised in the words, ‘dead through immortality.’”

We remained somewhat too long in Rome that spring, and what with the effect of the increasing heat and the discouraging circumstances already described, my brother resolved not to write any more, or in any case, not to proceed with “Zarathustra”, although I offered to relieve him of all trouble in connection with the proofs and the publisher. When, however, we returned to Switzerland towards the end of June, and he found himself once more in the familiar and exhilarating air of the mountains, all his joyous creative powers revived, and in a note to me announcing the dispatch of some manuscript, he wrote as follows: “I have engaged a place here for three months: forsooth, I am the greatest fool to allow my courage to be sapped from me by the climate of Italy. Now and again I am troubled by the thought: WHAT NEXT? My ‘future’ is the darkest thing in the world to me, but as there still remains a great deal for me to do, I suppose I ought rather to think of doing this than of my future, and leave the rest to THEE and the gods.”

The second part of “Zarathustra” was written between the 26th of June and the 6th July. “This summer, finding myself once more in the sacred place where the first thought of ‘Zarathustra’ flashed across my mind, I conceived the second part. Ten days sufficed. Neither for the second, the first, nor the third part, have I required a day longer.”

He often used to speak of the ecstatic mood in which he wrote “Zarathustra”; how in his walks over hill and dale the ideas would crowd into his mind, and how he would note them down hastily in a note-book from which he would transcribe them on his return, sometimes working till midnight. He says in a letter to me: “You can have no idea of the vehemence of such composition,” and in “Ecce Homo” (autumn 1888) he describes as follows with passionate enthusiasm the incomparable mood in which he created Zarathustra:—

“—Has any one at the end of the nineteenth century any distinct notion of what poets of a stronger age understood by the word inspiration? If not, I will describe it. If one had the smallest vestige of superstition in one, it would hardly be possible to set aside completely

the idea that one is the mere incarnation, mouthpiece or medium of an almighty power. The idea of revelation in the sense that something becomes suddenly visible and audible with indescribable certainty and accuracy, which profoundly convulses and upsets one—describes simply the matter of fact. One hears—one does not seek; one takes—one does not ask who gives: a thought suddenly flashes up like lightning, it comes with necessity, unhesitatingly—I have never had any choice in the matter. There is an ecstasy such that the immense strain of it is sometimes relaxed by a flood of tears, along with which one's steps either rush or involuntarily lag, alternately. There is the feeling that one is completely out of hand, with the very distinct consciousness of an endless number of fine thrills and quiverings to the very toes;—there is a depth of happiness in which the painfulest and gloomiest do not operate as antitheses, but as conditioned, as demanded in the sense of necessary shades of colour in such an overflow of light. There is an instinct for rhythmic relations which embraces wide areas of forms (length, the need of a wide-embracing rhythm, is almost the measure of the force of an inspiration, a sort of counterpart to its pressure and tension). Everything happens quite involuntarily, as if in a tempestuous outburst of freedom, of absoluteness, of power and divinity. The involuntariness of the figures and similes is the most remarkable thing; one loses all perception of what constitutes the figure and what constitutes the simile; everything seems to present itself as the readiest, the correctest and the simplest means of expression. It actually seems, to use one of Zarathustra's own phrases, as if all things came unto one, and would fain be similes: 'Here do all things come caressingly to thy talk and flatter thee, for they want to ride upon thy back. On every simile dost thou here ride to every truth. Here fly open unto thee all being's words and word-cabinets; here all being wanteth to become words, here all becoming wanteth to learn of thee how to talk.' This is MY experience of inspiration. I do not doubt but that one would have to go back thousands of years in order to find some one who could say to me: It is mine also!—"

In the autumn of 1883 my brother left the Engadine for Germany and stayed there a few weeks. In the following winter, after wandering somewhat erratically through Stresa, Genoa, and Spezia, he landed in Nice, where the climate so happily promoted his creative powers that he wrote the third part of "Zarathustra". "In the winter, beneath the halcyon sky of Nice, which then looked down upon me for the first time in my life, I found the third 'Zarathustra'—and came to the end of my task; the whole having occupied me scarcely a year. Many hidden corners and heights in the landscapes round about Nice are hallowed to me by unforgettable moments. That decisive chapter entitled 'Old and New Tables' was composed in the very difficult ascent from the station to Eza—that wonderful Moorish village in the rocks. My most creative

moments were always accompanied by unusual muscular activity. The body is inspired: let us waive the question of the 'soul.' I might often have been seen dancing in those days. Without a suggestion of fatigue I could then walk for seven or eight hours on end among the hills. I slept well and laughed well—I was perfectly robust and patient.”

As we have seen, each of the three parts of “Zarathustra” was written, after a more or less short period of preparation, in about ten days. The composition of the fourth part alone was broken by occasional interruptions. The first notes relating to this part were written while he and I were staying together in Zurich in September 1884. In the following November, while staying at Mentone, he began to elaborate these notes, and after a long pause, finished the manuscript at Nice between the end of January and the middle of February 1885. My brother then called this part the fourth and last; but even before, and shortly after it had been privately printed, he wrote to me saying that he still intended writing a fifth and sixth part, and notes relating to these parts are now in my possession. This fourth part (the original MS. of which contains this note: “Only for my friends, not for the public”) is written in a particularly personal spirit, and those few to whom he presented a copy of it, he pledged to the strictest secrecy concerning its contents. He often thought of making this fourth part public also, but doubted whether he would ever be able to do so without considerably altering certain portions of it. At all events he resolved to distribute this manuscript production, of which only forty copies were printed, only among those who had proved themselves worthy of it, and it speaks eloquently of his utter loneliness and need of sympathy in those days, that he had occasion to present only seven copies of his book according to this resolution.

Already at the beginning of this history I hinted at the reasons which led my brother to select a Persian as the incarnation of his ideal of the majestic philosopher. His reasons, however, for choosing Zarathustra of all others to be his mouthpiece, he gives us in the following words:—“People have never asked me, as they should have done, what the name Zarathustra precisely means in my mouth, in the mouth of the first Immoralist; for what distinguishes that philosopher from all others in the past is the very fact that he was exactly the reverse of an immoralist. Zarathustra was the first to see in the struggle between good and evil the essential wheel in the working of things. The translation of morality into the metaphysical, as force, cause, end in itself, was HIS work. But the very question suggests its own answer. Zarathustra CREATED the most portentous error, MORALITY, consequently he should also be the first to PERCEIVE that error, not only because he has had longer and greater experience of the subject than any other thinker—all history is the experimental refutation of the theory of the so-called moral order of things:—the more important point

is that Zarathustra was more truthful than any other thinker. In his teaching alone do we meet with truthfulness upheld as the highest virtue—i.e.: the reverse of the COWARDICE of the ‘idealist’ who flees from reality. Zarathustra had more courage in his body than any other thinker before or after him. To tell the truth and TO AIM STRAIGHT: that is the first Persian virtue. Am I understood?... The overcoming of morality through itself—through truthfulness, the overcoming of the moralist through his opposite—THROUGH ME—: that is what the name Zarathustra means in my mouth.”

ELIZABETH FORSTER-NIETZSCHE.

Nietzsche Archives,
Weimar, December 1905.

THUS SPAKE ZARATHUSTRA.

FIRST PART. ZARATHUSTRA'S DISCOURSES.

ZARATHUSTRA'S PROLOGUE.

1.

When Zarathustra was thirty years old, he left his home and the lake of his home, and went into the mountains. There he enjoyed his spirit and solitude, and for ten years did not weary of it. But at last his heart changed,—and rising one morning with the rosy dawn, he went before the sun, and spake thus unto it:

Thou great star! What would be thy happiness if thou hadst not those for whom thou shinest!

For ten years hast thou climbed hither unto my cave: thou wouldst have wearied of thy light and of the journey, had it not been for me, mine eagle, and my serpent.

But we awaited thee every morning, took from thee thine overflow and blessed thee for it.

Lo! I am weary of my wisdom, like the bee that hath gathered too much honey; I need hands outstretched to take it.

I would fain bestow and distribute, until the wise have once more become joyous in their folly, and the poor happy in their riches.

Therefore must I descend into the deep: as thou doest in the evening, when thou goest behind the sea, and givest light also to the nether-world, thou exuberant star!

Like thee must I GO DOWN, as men say, to whom I shall descend.

Bless me, then, thou tranquil eye, that canst behold even the greatest happiness without envy!

Bless the cup that is about to overflow, that the water may flow golden out of it, and carry everywhere the reflection of thy bliss!

Lo! This cup is again going to empty itself, and Zarathustra is again going to be a man.

Thus began Zarathustra's down-going.

2.

Zarathustra went down the mountain alone, no one meeting him. When he entered the forest, however, there suddenly stood before him an old man, who had left his holy cot to seek roots. And thus spake the old man to Zarathustra:

“No stranger to me is this wanderer: many years ago passed he by. Zarathustra he was called; but he hath altered.

Then thou carriedst thine ashes into the mountains: wilt thou now carry thy fire into the valleys? Fearest thou not the incendiary's doom?

Yea, I recognise Zarathustra. Pure is his eye, and no loathing lurketh about his mouth. Goeth he not along like a dancer?

Altered is Zarathustra; a child hath Zarathustra become; an awakened one is Zarathustra: what wilt thou do in the land of the sleepers?

As in the sea hast thou lived in solitude, and it hath borne thee up. Alas, wilt thou now go ashore? Alas, wilt thou again drag thy body thyself?"

Zarathustra answered: "I love mankind."

"Why," said the saint, "did I go into the forest and the desert? Was it not because I loved men far too well?"

Now I love God: men, I do not love. Man is a thing too imperfect for me. Love to man would be fatal to me."

Zarathustra answered: "What spake I of love! I am bringing gifts unto men."

"Give them nothing," said the saint. "Take rather part of their load, and carry it along with them—that will be most agreeable unto them: if only it be agreeable unto thee!"

If, however, thou wilt give unto them, give them no more than an alms, and let them also beg for it!"

"No," replied Zarathustra, "I give no alms. I am not poor enough for that."

The saint laughed at Zarathustra, and spake thus: "Then see to it that they accept thy treasures! They are distrustful of anchorites, and do not believe that we come with gifts.

The fall of our footsteps ringeth too hollow through their streets. And just as at night, when they are in bed and hear a man abroad long before sunrise, so they ask themselves concerning us: Where goeth the thief?

Go not to men, but stay in the forest! Go rather to the animals! Why not be like me—a bear amongst bears, a bird amongst birds?"

"And what doeth the saint in the forest?" asked Zarathustra.

The saint answered: "I make hymns and sing them; and in making hymns I laugh and weep and mumble: thus do I praise God.

With singing, weeping, laughing, and mumbling do I praise the God who is my God. But what dost thou bring us as a gift?"

When Zarathustra had heard these words, he bowed to the saint and said: "What should I have to give thee! Let me rather hurry hence lest I take aught away from thee!"—And thus they parted from one another, the old man and Zarathustra, laughing like schoolboys.

When Zarathustra was alone, however, he said to his heart: "Could it be possible! This old saint in the forest hath not yet heard of it, that GOD IS DEAD!"

3.

When Zarathustra arrived at the nearest town which adjoineth the forest, he found many people assembled in the market-place; for it had been announced that a rope-dancer would give a performance. And Zarathustra spake thus unto the people:

I TEACH YOU THE SUPERMAN. Man is something that is to be surpassed. What have ye done to surpass man?

All beings hitherto have created something beyond themselves: and ye want to be the ebb of that great tide, and would rather go back to the beast than surpass man?

What is the ape to man? A laughing-stock, a thing of shame. And just the same shall man be to the Superman: a laughing-stock, a thing of shame.

Ye have made your way from the worm to man, and much within you is still worm. Once were ye apes, and even yet man is more of an ape than any of the apes.

Even the wisest among you is only a disharmony and hybrid of plant and phantom. But do I bid you become phantoms or plants?

Lo, I teach you the Superman!

The Superman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: The Superman SHALL BE the meaning of the earth!

I conjure you, my brethren, REMAIN TRUE TO THE EARTH, and believe not those who speak unto you of superearthly hopes! Poisoners are they, whether they know it or not.

Despisers of life are they, decaying ones and poisoned ones themselves, of whom the earth is weary: so away with them!

Once blasphemy against God was the greatest blasphemy; but God died, and therewith also those blasphemers. To blaspheme the earth is now the dreadfulest sin, and to rate the heart of the unknowable higher than the meaning of the earth!

Once the soul looked contemptuously on the body, and then that contempt was the supreme thing:—the soul wished the body meagre, ghastly, and famished. Thus it thought to escape from the body and the earth.

Oh, that soul was itself meagre, ghastly, and famished; and cruelty was the delight of that soul!

But ye, also, my brethren, tell me: What doth your body say about your soul? Is your soul not poverty and pollution and wretched self-complacency?

Verily, a polluted stream is man. One must be a sea, to receive a polluted stream without becoming impure.

Lo, I teach you the Superman: he is that sea; in him can your great contempt be submerged.

What is the greatest thing ye can experience? It is the hour of great contempt. The hour in which even your happiness becometh loathsome unto you, and so also your reason and virtue.

The hour when ye say: “What good is my happiness! It is poverty and pollution and wretched self-complacency. But my happiness should justify existence itself!”

The hour when ye say: “What good is my reason! Doth it long for knowledge as the lion for his food? It is poverty and pollution and wretched self-complacency!”

The hour when ye say: "What good is my virtue! As yet it hath not made me passionate. How weary I am of my good and my bad! It is all poverty and pollution and wretched self-complacency!"

The hour when ye say: "What good is my justice! I do not see that I am fervour and fuel. The just, however, are fervour and fuel!"

The hour when ye say: "What good is my pity! Is not pity the cross on which he is nailed who loveth man? But my pity is not a crucifixion."

Have ye ever spoken thus? Have ye ever cried thus? Ah! would that I had heard you crying thus!

It is not your sin—it is your self-satisfaction that crieth unto heaven; your very sparingness in sin crieth unto heaven!

Where is the lightning to lick you with its tongue? Where is the frenzy with which ye should be inoculated?

Lo, I teach you the Superman: he is that lightning, he is that frenzy!—

When Zarathustra had thus spoken, one of the people called out: "We have now heard enough of the rope-dancer; it is time now for us to see him!" And all the people laughed at Zarathustra. But the rope-dancer, who thought the words applied to him, began his performance.

4.

Zarathustra, however, looked at the people and wondered. Then he spake thus:

Man is a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman—a rope over an abyss.

A dangerous crossing, a dangerous wayfaring, a dangerous looking-back, a dangerous trembling and halting.

What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal: what is lovable in man is that he is an OVER-GOING and a DOWN-GOING.

I love those that know not how to live except as down-goers, for they are the over-goers.

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

I love those who do not first seek a reason beyond the stars for going down and being sacrifices, but sacrifice themselves to the earth, that the earth of the Superman may hereafter arrive.

I love him who liveth in order to know, and seeketh to know in order that the Superman may hereafter live. Thus seeketh he his own down-going.

I love him who laboreth and inventeth, that he may build the house for the Superman, and prepare for him earth, animal, and plant: for thus seeketh he his own down-going.

I love him who loveth his virtue: for virtue is the will to down-going, and an arrow of longing.

I love him who reserveth no share of spirit for himself, but wanteth to be wholly the spirit of his virtue: thus walketh he as spirit over the bridge.

I love him who maketh his virtue his inclination and destiny: thus, for the sake of his virtue, he is willing to live on, or live no more.

I love him who desireth not too many virtues. One virtue is more of a virtue than two, because it is more of a knot for one's destiny to cling to.

I love him whose soul is lavish, who wanteth no thanks and doth not give back: for he always bestoweth, and desireth not to keep for himself.

I love him who is ashamed when the dice fall in his favour, and who then asketh: "Am I a dishonest player?"—for he is willing to succumb.

I love him who scattereth golden words in advance of his deeds, and always doeth more than he promiseth: for he seeketh his own down-going.

I love him who justifieth the future ones, and redeemeth the past ones: for he is willing to succumb through the present ones.

I love him who chasteneth his God, because he loveth his God: for he must succumb through the wrath of his God.

I love him whose soul is deep even in the wounding, and may succumb through a small matter: thus goeth he willingly over the bridge.

I love him whose soul is so overfull that he forgetteth himself, and all things are in him: thus all things become his down-going.

I love him who is of a free spirit and a free heart: thus is his head only the bowels of his heart; his heart, however, causeth his down-going.

I love all who are like heavy drops falling one by one out of the dark cloud that lowereth over man: they herald the coming of the lightning, and succumb as heralds.

Lo, I am a herald of the lightning, and a heavy drop out of the cloud: the lightning, however, is the SUPERMAN.—

5.

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

Must one first batter their ears, that they may learn to hear with their eyes? Must one clatter like kettledrums and penitential preachers? Or do they only believe the stammerer?

They have something whereof they are proud. What do they call it, that which maketh them proud? Culture, they call it; it distinguisheth them from the goatherds.

They dislike, therefore, to hear of 'contempt' of themselves. So I will appeal to their pride.

I will speak unto them of the most contemptible thing: that, however, is THE LAST MAN!"

And thus spake Zarathustra unto the people:

It is time for man to fix his goal. It is time for man to plant the germ of his highest hope.

Still is his soil rich enough for it. But that soil will one day be poor and exhausted, and no lofty tree will any longer be able to grow thereon.

Alas! there cometh the time when man will no longer launch the arrow of his longing beyond man—and the string of his bow will have unlearned to whizz!

I tell you: one must still have chaos in one, to give birth to a dancing star. I tell you: ye have still chaos in you.

Alas! There cometh the time when man will no longer give birth to any star. Alas! There cometh the time of the most despicable man, who can no longer despise himself.

Lo! I show you THE LAST MAN.

“What is love? What is creation? What is longing? What is a star?”—so asketh the last man and blinketh.

The earth hath then become small, and on it there hoppeth the last man who maketh everything small. His species is ineradicable like that of the ground-flea; the last man liveth longest.

“We have discovered happiness”—say the last men, and blink thereby.

They have left the regions where it is hard to live; for they need warmth. One still loveth one’s neighbour and rubbeth against him; for one needeth warmth.

Turning ill and being distrustful, they consider sinful: they walk warily. He is a fool who still stumbleth over stones or men!

A little poison now and then: that maketh pleasant dreams. And much poison at last for a pleasant death.

One still worketh, for work is a pastime. But one is careful lest the pastime should hurt one.

One no longer becometh poor or rich; both are too burdensome. Who still wanteth to rule? Who still wanteth to obey? Both are too burdensome.

No shepherd, and one herd! Every one wanteth the same; every one is equal: he who hath other sentiments goeth voluntarily into the madhouse.

“Formerly all the world was insane,”—say the subtlest of them, and blink thereby.

They are clever and know all that hath happened: so there is no end to their raillery. People still fall out, but are soon reconciled—otherwise it spoileth their stomachs.

They have their little pleasures for the day, and their little pleasures for the night, but they have a regard for health.

“We have discovered happiness,”—say the last men, and blink thereby.

And here ended the first discourse of Zarathustra, which is also called “The Prologue”: for at this point the shouting and mirth of the multitude interrupted him. “Give us this last man, O Zarathustra,”—they called out—“make us into these last men! Then will we make thee a present of the Superman!” And all the people exulted and smacked their lips. Zarathustra, however, turned sad, and said to his heart:

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

Too long, perhaps, have I lived in the mountains; too much have I hearkened unto the brooks and trees: now do I speak unto them as unto the goatherds.

Calm is my soul, and clear, like the mountains in the morning. But they think me cold, and a mocker with terrible jests.

And now do they look at me and laugh: and while they laugh they hate me too. There is ice in their laughter.”

6.

Then, however, something happened which made every mouth mute and every eye fixed. In the meantime, of course, the rope-dancer had commenced his performance: he had come out at a little door, and was going along the rope which was stretched between two towers, so that it hung above the market-place and the people. When he was just midway across, the little door opened once more, and a gaudily-dressed fellow like a buffoon sprang out, and went rapidly after the first one. “Go on, halt-foot,” cried his frightful voice, “go on, lazy-bones, interloper, sallow-face!—lest I tickle thee with my heel! What dost thou here between the towers? In the tower is the place for thee, thou shouldst be locked up; to one better than thyself thou blockest the way!”—And with every word he came nearer and nearer the first one. When, however, he was but a step behind, there happened the frightful thing which made every mouth mute and every eye fixed—he uttered a yell like a devil, and jumped over the other who was in his way. The latter, however, when he thus saw his rival triumph, lost at the same time his head and his footing on the rope; he threw his pole away, and shot downwards faster than it, like an eddy of arms and legs, into the depth. The market-place and the people were like the sea when the storm cometh on: they all flew apart and in disorder, especially where the body was about to fall.

Zarathustra, however, remained standing, and just beside him fell the body, badly injured and disfigured, but not yet dead. After a while consciousness returned to the shattered man, and he saw Zarathustra kneeling beside him. “What art thou doing there?” said he at last, “I knew long ago that the devil would trip me up. Now he draggeth me to hell: wilt thou prevent him?”

“On mine honour, my friend,” answered Zarathustra, “there is nothing of all that whereof thou speakest: there is no devil and no hell. Thy soul will be dead even sooner than thy body: fear, therefore, nothing any more!”

The man looked up distrustfully. “If thou speakest the truth,” said he, “I lose nothing when I lose my life. I am not much more than an animal which hath been taught to dance by blows and scanty fare.”

“Not at all,” said Zarathustra, “thou hast made danger thy calling; therein there is nothing contemptible. Now thou perishest by thy

calling: therefore will I bury thee with mine own hands.”

When Zarathustra had said this the dying one did not reply further; but he moved his hand as if he sought the hand of Zarathustra in gratitude.

7.

Meanwhile the evening came on, and the market-place veiled itself in gloom. Then the people dispersed, for even curiosity and terror become fatigued. Zarathustra, however, still sat beside the dead man on the ground, absorbed in thought: so he forgot the time. But at last it became night, and a cold wind blew upon the lonely one. Then arose Zarathustra and said to his heart:

Verily, a fine catch of fish hath Zarathustra made to-day! It is not a man he hath caught, but a corpse.

Sombre is human life, and as yet without meaning: a buffoon may be fateful to it.

I want to teach men the sense of their existence, which is the Superman, the lightning out of the dark cloud—man.

But still am I far from them, and my sense speaketh not unto their sense. To men I am still something between a fool and a corpse.

Gloomy is the night, gloomy are the ways of Zarathustra. Come, thou cold and stiff companion! I carry thee to the place where I shall bury thee with mine own hands.

8.

When Zarathustra had said this to his heart, he put the corpse upon his shoulders and set out on his way. Yet had he not gone a hundred steps, when there stole a man up to him and whispered in his ear—and lo! he that spake was the buffoon from the tower. “Leave this town, O Zarathustra,” said he, “there are too many here who hate thee. The good and just hate thee, and call thee their enemy and despiser; the believers in the orthodox belief hate thee, and call thee a danger to the multitude. It was thy good fortune to be laughed at: and verily thou spakest like a buffoon. It was thy good fortune to associate with the dead dog; by so humiliating thyself thou hast saved thy life to-day. Depart, however, from this town,—or tomorrow I shall jump over thee, a living man over a dead one.” And when he had said this, the buffoon vanished; Zarathustra, however, went on through the dark streets.

At the gate of the town the grave-diggers met him: they shone their torch on his face, and, recognising Zarathustra, they sorely derided him. “Zarathustra is carrying away the dead dog: a fine thing that Zarathustra hath turned a grave-digger! For our hands are too cleanly for that roast. Will Zarathustra steal the bite from the devil? Well then, good luck to the repast! If only the devil is not a better thief than Zarathustra!—he will steal them both, he will eat them both!” And they laughed among themselves, and put their heads together.

Zarathustra made no answer thereto, but went on his way. When he had gone on for two hours, past forests and swamps, he had heard too much of the hungry howling of the wolves, and he himself became a-hungry. So he halted at a lonely house in which a light was burning.

“Hunger attacketh me,” said Zarathustra, “like a robber. Among forests and swamps my hunger attacketh me, and late in the night.

“Strange humours hath my hunger. Often it cometh to me only after a repast, and all day it hath failed to come: where hath it been?”

And thereupon Zarathustra knocked at the door of the house. An old man appeared, who carried a light, and asked: “Who cometh unto me and my bad sleep?”

“A living man and a dead one,” said Zarathustra. “Give me something to eat and drink, I forgot it during the day. He that feedeth the hungry refresheth his own soul, saith wisdom.”

The old man withdrew, but came back immediately and offered Zarathustra bread and wine. “A bad country for the hungry,” said he; “that is why I live here. Animal and man come unto me, the anchorite. But bid thy companion eat and drink also, he is wearier than thou.” Zarathustra answered: “My companion is dead; I shall hardly be able to persuade him to eat.” “That doth not concern me,” said the old man sullenly; “he that knocketh at my door must take what I offer him. Eat, and fare ye well!”—

Thereafter Zarathustra again went on for two hours, trusting to the path and the light of the stars: for he was an experienced night-walker, and liked to look into the face of all that slept. When the morning dawned, however, Zarathustra found himself in a thick forest, and no path was any longer visible. He then put the dead man in a hollow tree at his head—for he wanted to protect him from the wolves—and laid himself down on the ground and moss. And immediately he fell asleep, tired in body, but with a tranquil soul.

9.

Long slept Zarathustra; and not only the rosy dawn passed over his head, but also the morning. At last, however, his eyes opened, and amazedly he gazed into the forest and the stillness, amazedly he gazed into himself. Then he arose quickly, like a seafarer who all at once seeth the land; and he shouted for joy: for he saw a new truth. And he spake thus to his heart:

A light hath dawned upon me: I need companions—living ones; not dead companions and corpses, which I carry with me where I will.

But I need living companions, who will follow me because they want to follow themselves—and to the place where I will.

A light hath dawned upon me. Not to the people is Zarathustra to speak, but to companions! Zarathustra shall not be the herd’s herdsman and hound!

To allure many from the herd—for that purpose have I come. The people and the herd must be angry with me: a robber shall Zarathustra be called by the herdsmen.

Herdsmen, I say, but they call themselves the good and just. Herdsmen, I say, but they call themselves the believers in the orthodox belief.

Behold the good and just! Whom do they hate most? Him who breaketh up their tables of values, the breaker, the lawbreaker:—he, however, is the creator.

Behold the believers of all beliefs! Whom do they hate most? Him who breaketh up their tables of values, the breaker, the law-breaker—he, however, is the creator.

Companions, the creator seeketh, not corpses—and not herds or believers either. Fellow-creators the creator seeketh—those who grave new values on new tables.

Companions, the creator seeketh, and fellow-reapers: for everything is ripe for the harvest with him. But he lacketh the hundred sickles: so he plucketh the ears of corn and is vexed.

Companions, the creator seeketh, and such as know how to whet their sickles. Destroyers, will they be called, and despisers of good and evil. But they are the reapers and rejoicers.

Fellow-creators, Zarathustra seeketh; fellow-reapers and fellow-rejoicers, Zarathustra seeketh: what hath he to do with herds and herdsmen and corpses!

And thou, my first companion, rest in peace! Well have I buried thee in thy hollow tree; well have I hid thee from the wolves.

But I part from thee; the time hath arrived. ‘Twixt rosy dawn and rosy dawn there came unto me a new truth.

I am not to be a herdsman, I am not to be a grave-digger. Not any more will I discourse unto the people; for the last time have I spoken unto the dead.

With the creators, the reapers, and the rejoicers will I associate: the rainbow will I show them, and all the stairs to the Superman.

To the lone-dwellers will I sing my song, and to the twain-dwellers; and unto him who hath still ears for the unheard, will I make the heart heavy with my happiness.

I make for my goal, I follow my course; over the loitering and tardy will I leap. Thus let my on-going be their down-going!

10.

This had Zarathustra said to his heart when the sun stood at noon-tide. Then he looked inquiringly aloft,—for he heard above him the sharp call of a bird. And behold! An eagle swept through the air in wide circles, and on it hung a serpent, not like a prey, but like a friend: for it kept itself coiled round the eagle’s neck.

“They are mine animals,” said Zarathustra, and rejoiced in his heart.

“The proudest animal under the sun, and the wisest animal under the sun,—they have come out to reconnoitre.

They want to know whether Zarathustra still liveth. Verily, do I still live?

More dangerous have I found it among men than among animals; in dangerous paths goeth Zarathustra. Let mine animals lead me!”

When Zarathustra had said this, he remembered the words of the saint in the forest. Then he sighed and spake thus to his heart:

“Would that I were wiser! Would that I were wise from the very heart, like my serpent!

But I am asking the impossible. Therefore do I ask my pride to go always with my wisdom!

And if my wisdom should some day forsake me:—alas! it loveth to fly away!—may my pride then fly with my folly!”

Thus began Zarathustra’s down-going.

ZARATHUSTRA'S DISCOURSES.

I. THE THREE METAMORPHOSES.

Three metamorphoses of the spirit do I designate to you: how the spirit becometh a camel, the camel a lion, and the lion at last a child.

Many heavy things are there for the spirit, the strong load-bearing spirit in which reverence dwelleth: for the heavy and the heaviest longeth its strength.

What is heavy? so asketh the load-bearing spirit; then kneeleth it down like the camel, and wanteth to be well laden.

What is the heaviest thing, ye heroes? asketh the load-bearing spirit, that I may take it upon me and rejoice in my strength.

Is it not this: To humiliate oneself in order to mortify one's pride? To exhibit one's folly in order to mock at one's wisdom?

Or is it this: To desert our cause when it celebrateth its triumph? To ascend high mountains to tempt the tempter?

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

Or is it this: To be sick and dismiss comforters, and make friends of the deaf, who never hear thy requests?

Or is it this: To go into foul water when it is the water of truth, and not disclaim cold frogs and hot toads?

Or is it this: To love those who despise us, and give one's hand to the phantom when it is going to frighten us?

All these heaviest things the load-bearing spirit taketh upon itself: and like the camel, which, when laden, hasteneth into the wilderness, so hasteneth the spirit into its wilderness.

But in the loneliest wilderness happeneth the second metamorphosis: here the spirit becometh a lion; freedom will it capture, and lordship in its own wilderness.

Its last Lord it here seeketh: hostile will it be to him, and to its last God; for victory will it struggle with the great dragon.

What is the great dragon which the spirit is no longer inclined to call Lord and God? "Thou-shalt," is the great dragon called. But the spirit of the lion saith, "I will."

"Thou-shalt," lieth in its path, sparkling with gold—a scale-covered beast; and on every scale glittereth golden, "Thou shalt!"

The values of a thousand years glitter on those scales, and thus speaketh the mightiest of all dragons: "All the values of things—glitter on me.

All values have already been created, and all created values—do I represent. Verily, there shall be no 'I will' any more." Thus speaketh the dragon.

My brethren, wherefore is there need of the lion in the spirit? Why sufficeth not the beast of burden, which renounceth and is reverent?

To create new values—that, even the lion cannot yet accomplish: but to create itself freedom for new creating—that can the might of the lion do.

To create itself freedom, and give a holy Nay even unto duty: for that, my brethren, there is need of the lion.

To assume the right to new values—that is the most formidable assumption for a load-bearing and reverent spirit. Verily, unto such a spirit it is preying, and the work of a beast of prey.

As its holiest, it once loved “Thou-shalt”: now is it forced to find illusion and arbitrariness even in the holiest things, that it may capture freedom from its love: the lion is needed for this capture.

But tell me, my brethren, what the child can do, which even the lion could not do? Why hath the preying lion still to become a child?

Innocence is the child, and forgetfulness, a new beginning, a game, a self-rolling wheel, a first movement, a holy Yea.

Aye, for the game of creating, my brethren, there is needed a holy Yea unto life: ITS OWN will, willeth now the spirit; HIS OWN world winneth the world’s outcast.

Three metamorphoses of the spirit have I designated to you: how the spirit became a camel, the camel a lion, and the lion at last a child.—

Thus spake Zarathustra. And at that time he abode in the town which is called The Pied Cow.

II. THE ACADEMIC CHAIRS OF VIRTUE.

People commended unto Zarathustra a wise man, as one who could discourse well about sleep and virtue: greatly was he honoured and rewarded for it, and all the youths sat before his chair. To him went Zarathustra, and sat among the youths before his chair. And thus spake the wise man:

Respect and modesty in presence of sleep! That is the first thing! And to go out of the way of all who sleep badly and keep awake at night!

Modest is even the thief in presence of sleep: he always stealeth softly through the night. Immodest, however, is the night-watchman; immodestly he carrieth his horn.

No small art is it to sleep: it is necessary for that purpose to keep awake all day.

Ten times a day must thou overcome thyself: that causeth wholesome weariness, and is poppy to the soul.

Ten times must thou reconcile again with thyself; for overcoming is bitterness, and badly sleep the unreconciled.

Ten truths must thou find during the day; otherwise wilt thou seek truth during the night, and thy soul will have been hungry.

Ten times must thou laugh during the day, and be cheerful; otherwise thy stomach, the father of affliction, will disturb thee in the night.

Few people know it, but one must have all the virtues in order to sleep well. Shall I bear false witness? Shall I commit adultery?

Shall I covet my neighbour's maidservant? All that would ill accord with good sleep.

And even if one have all the virtues, there is still one thing needful: to send the virtues themselves to sleep at the right time.

That they may not quarrel with one another, the good females! And about thee, thou unhappy one!

Peace with God and thy neighbour: so desireth good sleep. And peace also with thy neighbour's devil! Otherwise it will haunt thee in the night.

Honour to the government, and obedience, and also to the crooked government! So desireth good sleep. How can I help it, if power like to walk on crooked legs?

He who leadeth his sheep to the greenest pasture, shall always be for me the best shepherd: so doth it accord with good sleep.

Many honours I want not, nor great treasures: they excite the spleen. But it is bad sleeping without a good name and a little treasure.

A small company is more welcome to me than a bad one: but they must come and go at the right time. So doth it accord with good sleep.