

Zarathustra's Prologue

I

When Zarathustra was thirty years old he left his home and the lake of his home and went into the mountains. Here he enjoyed his spirit and his solitude and for ten years he did not tire of it. But at last his heart transformed, – one morning he arose with the dawn, stepped before the sun and spoke thus to it:

“You great star! What would your happiness be if you had not those for whom you shine?

For ten years you have come up here to my cave: you would have tired of your light and of this route without me, my eagle and my snake.

But we awaited you every morning, took your overflow from you and blessed you for it.

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

I want to bestow and distribute until the wise among human beings have once again enjoyed their folly, and the poor once again their wealth.

For this I must descend into the depths, as you do evenings when you go behind the sea and bring light even to the underworld, you super-rich star!

Like you, I must *go down*¹ as the human beings say, to whom I want to descend.

So bless me now, you quiet eye that can look upon even an all too great happiness without envy!

Bless the cup that wants to flow over, such that water flows golden from it and everywhere carries the reflection of your bliss!

Behold! This cup wants to become empty again, and Zarathustra wants to become human again.”

– Thus began Zarathustra's going under.

¹ German uses *untergehen*, literally “to go under” for the expression the sun “goes down.” Nietzsche throughout *Zarathustra* uses wordplay to signify that Zarathustra's “going under” is a “going over” or transition, *übergehen*, from human to superhuman, from man to overman. After Zarathustra draws his first analogy between himself and the sun, I use “going under” for *untergehen* and its noun form *Untergang*. In setting or going down the sun marks a transition. Zarathustra meanwhile has been higher than human in both figurative and literal terms, and so his “going under” has the effect of him transitioning to human again. However, on the ecumenical level, when human beings transition or go under, and when they “overcome” the human, they should achieve the superhuman (overman).

Zarathustra climbed down alone from the mountains and encountered no one. But when he came to the woods suddenly an old man stood before him, who had left his saintly hut in search of roots in the woods. And thus spoke the old man to Zarathustra:

“This wanderer is no stranger to me: many years ago he passed by here. Zarathustra he was called; but he is transformed.

Back then you carried your ashes to the mountain: would you now carry your fire into the valley? Do you not fear the arsonist’s punishment?

Yes, I recognize Zarathustra. His eyes are pure, and no disgust is visible around his mouth. Does he not stride like a dancer?

Zarathustra is transformed, Zarathustra has become a child, an awakened one is Zarathustra. What do you want now among the sleepers?

You lived in your solitude as if in the sea, and the sea carried you. Alas, you want to climb ashore? Alas, you want to drag your own body again?”

Zarathustra answered: “I love mankind.”²

“Why,” asked the saint, “did I go into the woods and the wilderness in the first place? Was it not because I loved mankind all too much?

Now I love God: human beings I do not love. Human beings are too imperfect a thing for me. Love for human beings would kill me.”

Zarathustra replied. “Why did I speak of love? I bring mankind a gift.”

“Give them nothing,” said the saint. “Rather take something off them and help them to carry it – that will do them the most good, if only it does you good!

And if you want to give to them, then give nothing more than alms, and make them beg for that too!”

“No,” answered Zarathustra. “I do not give alms. For that I am not poor enough.”

The saint laughed at Zarathustra and spoke thus: “Then see to it that they accept your treasures! They are mistrustful of hermits and do not believe that we come to give gifts.

² “Ich liebe die Menschen” means literally “I love human beings.” Earlier translators ignored the ecological framework in which Nietzsche wrote *Zarathustra* by using expressions like “man.” The prologue establishes a prevailing semantic field, a framework in which human beings, animals, nature and earth interact or should interact as never before.

To them our footsteps sound too lonely in the lanes. And if at night lying in their beds they hear a man walking outside, long before the sun rises, they probably ask themselves: where is the thief going?

Do not go to mankind and stay in the woods! Go even to the animals instead! Why do you not want to be like me – a bear among bears, a bird among birds?”

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

The saint answered: “I make songs and sing them, and when I make songs I laugh, weep and growl: thus I praise God.

With singing, weeping, laughing and growling I praise the god who is my god. But tell me, what do you bring us as a gift?”

When Zarathustra had heard these words he took his leave of the saint and spoke: “What would I have to give you! But let me leave quickly before I take something from you!” – And so they parted, the oldster and the man, laughing like two boys laugh.

But when Zarathustra was alone he spoke thus to his heart: “Could it be possible! This old saint in his woods has not yet heard the news that *God is dead!*” –

3

When Zarathustra came into the nearest town lying on the edge of the forest, he found many people gathered in the market place, for it had been promised that a tightrope walker would perform. And Zarathustra spoke thus to the people:

“*I teach you the overman.*³ Human being is something that must be overcome. What have you done to overcome him?

All creatures so far created something beyond themselves; and you want to be the ebb of this great flood and would even rather go back to animals than overcome humans?

³ “Ich lehre euch den Übermenschen.” Just as *Mensch* means human, human being, *Übermensch* means superhuman, which I render throughout as overman, though I use human being, mankind, people, and humanity to avoid the gendered and outmoded use of “man.” Two things are achieved by using this combination. First, using “human being” and other species-indicating expressions makes it clear that Nietzsche is concerned ecumenically with humans as a species, not merely with males. Secondly, expanding beyond the use of “man” puts humans in an ecological context; for Zarathustra to claim that “the overman shall be the meaning of the earth” is to argue for a new relationship between humans and nature, between humans and the earth. Overman is preferred to superhuman for two basic reasons; first, it preserves the word play Nietzsche intends with his constant references to going under and going over, and secondly, the comic book associations called to mind by “superman” and super-heroes generally tend to reflect negatively, and frivolously, on the term superhuman.

What is the ape to a human? A laughing stock or a painful embarrassment. And that is precisely what the human shall be to the overman: a laughing stock or a painful embarrassment.

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

But whoever is wisest among you is also just a conflict and a cross between plant and ghost. But do I implore you to become ghosts or plants?

Behold, I teach you the overman!

The overman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: the overman *shall be* the meaning of the earth!

I beseech you, my brothers, *remain faithful to the earth* and do not believe those who speak to you of extraterrestrial hopes! They are mixers of poisons whether they know it or not.

They are despisers of life, dying off and self-poisoned, of whom the earth is weary: so let them fade away!

Once the sacrilege against God was the greatest sacrilege, but God died, and then all these desecrators died. Now to desecrate the earth is the most terrible thing, and to esteem the bowels of the unfathomable higher than the meaning of the earth!

Once the soul gazed contemptuously at the body, and then such contempt was the highest thing: it wanted the body gaunt, ghastly, starved. Thus it intended to escape the body and the earth.

Oh this soul was gaunt, ghastly and starved, and cruelty was the lust of this soul!

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

Truly, mankind is a polluted stream. One has to be a sea to take in a polluted stream without becoming unclean.

Behold, I teach you the overman: he is this sea, in him your great contempt can go under.

What is the greatest thing that you can experience? It is the hour of your great contempt. The hour in which even your happiness turns to nausea and likewise your reason and your virtue.

The hour in which you say: 'What matters my happiness? It is poverty and filth, and a pitiful contentment. But my happiness ought to justify existence itself!'

The hour in which you say: ‘What matters my reason? Does it crave knowledge like the lion its food? It is poverty and filth and a pitiful contentment!’

The hour in which you say: ‘What matters my virtue? It has not yet made me rage. How weary I am of my good and my evil! That is all poverty and filth and a pitiful contentment!’

The hour in which you say: ‘What matters my justice? I do not see that I am ember and coal. But the just person is ember and coal!’

The hour in which you say: ‘What matters my pity? Is pity not the cross on which he is nailed who loves humans? But my pity is no crucifixion.’

Have you yet spoken thus? Have you yet cried out thus? Oh that I might have heard you cry out thus!

Not your sin – your modesty cries out to high heaven, your stinginess even in sinning cries out to high heaven!

Where is the lightning that would lick you with its tongue? Where is the madness with which you should be inoculated?

Behold, I teach you the overman: he is this lightning, he is this madness! –”

When Zarathustra had spoken thus someone from the crowd cried out:

“We have heard enough already about the tightrope walker, now let us see him too!” And all the people laughed at Zarathustra. But the tightrope walker, believing that these words concerned him, got down to his work.

4

Now Zarathustra looked at the people and he was amazed. Then he spoke thus:

“Mankind is a rope fastened between animal and overman – a rope over an abyss.

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

What is great about human beings is that they are a bridge and not a purpose: what is lovable about human beings is that they are a *crossing over* and a *going under*.

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

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

I love those who do not first seek behind the stars for a reason to go under and be a sacrifice, who instead sacrifice themselves for the earth, so that the earth may one day become the overman's.

I love the one who lives in order to know, and who wants to know so that one day the overman may live. And so he wants his going under.

I love the one who works and invents in order to build a house for the overman and to prepare earth, animals and plants for him: for thus he wants his going under.

I love the one who loves his virtue: for virtue is the will to going under and an arrow of longing.

I love the one who does not hold back a single drop of spirit for himself, but wants instead to be entirely the spirit of his virtue: thus he strides as spirit over the bridge.

I love the one who makes of his virtue his desire and his doom: thus for the sake of his virtue he wants to live on and to live no more.

I love the one who does not want to have too many virtues. One virtue is more virtue than two, because it is more of a hook on which his doom may hang.

I love the one whose soul squanders itself, who wants no thanks and gives none back: for he always gives and does not want to preserve himself.⁴

I love the one who is ashamed when the dice fall to his fortune and who then asks: am I a cheater? – For he wants to perish.

I love the one who casts golden words before his deeds and always does even more than he promises: for he wants his going under.

I love the one who justifies people of the future and redeems those of the past: for he wants to perish of those in the present.

I love the one who chastises his god, because he loves his god: for he must perish of the wrath of his god.

I love the one whose soul is deep even when wounded, and who can perish of a small experience: thus he goes gladly over the bridge.

I love the one whose soul is overfull, so that he forgets himself, and all things are in him: thus all things become his going under.

⁴ See Luke 17:33. This is the first of approximately 135 direct allusions to the Bible, in which Nietzsche typically applies Christ's words to Zarathustra's task, or inverts Christ's words in order to achieve a life- and earth-affirming effect. Whenever possible, these passages will be translated using the phrasing of the Bible. For drafts and alternative versions of the various chapters, biblical references, and other references see vol. xiv of the *Kritische Studienausgabe*, which provides commentary to vols. I–XIII and treats TSZ on pp. 279–344.

I love the one who is free of spirit and heart: thus his head is only the entrails of his heart, but his heart drives him to his going under.

I love all those who are like heavy drops falling individually from the dark cloud that hangs over humanity: they herald the coming of the lightning, and as heralds they perish.

Behold, I am a herald of the lightning and a heavy drop from the cloud: but this lightning is called overman. —”

5

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

Must one first smash their ears so that they learn to hear with their eyes? Must one rattle like kettle drums and penitence preachers? Or do they believe only a stutterer?

They have something of which they are proud. And what do they call that which makes them proud? Education they call it, it distinguishes them from goatherds.

For that reason they hate to hear the word ‘contempt’ applied to them. So I shall address their pride instead.

Thus I shall speak to them of the most contemptible person: but he is *the last human being.*”

And thus spoke Zarathustra to the people:

“It is time that mankind set themselves a goal. It is time that mankind plant the seed of their highest hope.

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

Beware! The time approaches when human beings no longer launch the arrow of their longing beyond the human, and the string of their bow will have forgotten how to whirl!

I say to you: one must still have chaos in oneself in order to give birth to a dancing star. I say to you: you still have chaos in you.

Beware! The time approaches when human beings will no longer give birth to a dancing star. Beware! The time of the most contemptible human is coming, the one who can no longer have contempt for himself.

Behold! I show you *the last human being.*

‘What is love? What is creation? What is longing? What is a star?’ – thus asks the last human being, blinking.

Then the earth has become small, and on it hops the last human being, who makes everything small. His kind is ineradicable, like the flea beetle; the last human being lives longest.

‘We invented happiness’ – say the last human beings, blinking.

They abandoned the regions where it was hard to live: for one needs warmth. One still loves one’s neighbor and rubs up against him: for one needs warmth.

Becoming ill and being mistrustful are considered sinful by them: one proceeds with caution. A fool who still stumbles over stones or humans!

A bit of poison once in a while; that makes for pleasant dreams. And much poison at the end, for a pleasant death.

One still works, for work is a form of entertainment. But one sees to it that the entertainment is not a strain.

One no longer becomes poor and rich: both are too burdensome. Who wants to rule anymore? Who wants to obey anymore? Both are too burdensome.

No shepherd and one herd! Each wants the same, each is the same, and whoever feels differently goes voluntarily into the insane asylum.

‘Formerly the whole world was insane’ – the finest ones say, blinking.

One is clever and knows everything that has happened, and so there is no end to their mockery. People still quarrel but they reconcile quickly – otherwise it is bad for the stomach.

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

‘We invented happiness’ say the last human beings, and they blink.”

And here ended the first speech of Zarathustra, which is also called “The Prologue,” for at this point he was interrupted by the yelling and merriment of the crowd. “Give us this last human being, oh Zarathustra” – thus they cried – “make us into these last human beings! Then we will make you a gift of the overman!” And all the people jubilated and clicked their tongues. But Zarathustra grew sad and said to his heart:

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

Too long apparently I lived in the mountains, too much I listened to brooks and trees: now I speak to them as to goatherds.

My soul is calm and bright as the morning mountains. But they believe I am cold, that I jeer, that I deal in terrible jests.

And now they look at me and laugh, and in laughing they hate me too. There is ice in their laughter.”

6

Then, however, something happened that struck every mouth silent and forced all eyes to stare. For in the meantime the tightrope walker had begun his work; he had emerged from a little door and was walking across the rope stretched between two towers, such that it hung suspended over the market place and the people. Just as he was at the midpoint of his way, the little door opened once again and a colorful fellow resembling a jester leaped forth and hurried after the first man with quick steps. “Forward, sloth, smuggler, pale face! Or I’ll tickle you with my heel! What business have you here between the towers? You belong in the tower, you should be locked away in the tower, for you block the way for one who is better than you!” And with each word he came closer and closer to him. But when he was only one step behind him, the terrifying thing occurred that struck every mouth silent and forced all eyes to stare: – he let out a yell like a devil and leaped over the man who was in his way. This man, seeing his rival triumph in this manner, lost his head and the rope. He threw away his pole and plunged into the depths even faster than his pole, like a whirlwind of arms and legs. The market place and the people resembled the sea when a storm charges in: everyone fled apart and into one another, and especially in the spot where the body had to impact.

But Zarathustra stood still and the body landed right beside him, badly beaten and broken, but not yet dead. After a while the shattered man regained consciousness and saw Zarathustra kneeling beside him. “What are you doing here?” he said finally. “I’ve known for a long time that the devil would trip me up. Now he is going to drag me off to hell: are you going to stop him?”

“By my honor, friend!” answered Zarathustra. “All that you are talking about does not exist. There is no devil and no hell. Your soul will be dead even sooner than your body – fear no more!”

The man looked up mistrustfully. “If you speak the truth,” he said, “then I lose nothing when I lose my life. I am not much more than an animal that has been taught to dance by blows and little treats.”

“Not at all,” said Zarathustra. “You made your vocation out of danger, and there is nothing contemptible about that. Now you perish of your vocation, and for that I will bury you with my own hands.”

When Zarathustra said this the dying man answered no more, but he moved his hand as if seeking Zarathustra’s hand in gratitude. –

7

Meanwhile evening came and the market place hid in darkness. The people scattered, for even curiosity and terror grow weary. But Zarathustra sat beside the dead man on the ground and was lost in thought, such that he lost track of time. Night came at last and a cold wind blew over the lonely one. Then Zarathustra stood up and said to his heart:

“Indeed, a nice catch of fish Zarathustra has today! No human being did he catch, but a corpse instead.

Uncanny is human existence and still without meaning: a jester can spell its doom.

I want to teach humans the meaning of their being, which is the over-man, the lightning from the dark cloud ‘human being.’

But I am still far away from them, and I do not make sense to their senses. For mankind I am still a midpoint between a fool and a corpse.

The night is dark, the ways of Zarathustra are dark. Come, my cold and stiff companion! I shall carry you where I will bury you with my own hands.”

8

When Zarathustra had said this to his heart, he hoisted the corpse onto his back and started on his way. And he had not yet gone a hundred paces when someone sneaked up on him and whispered in his ear – and behold! The one who spoke was the jester from the tower. “Go away from this town, oh Zarathustra,” he said. “Too many here hate you. The good and the just hate you and they call you their enemy and despiser; the believers of the true faith hate you and they call you the danger of the multitude. It was your good fortune that they laughed at you: and really, you spoke like a jester. It was your good fortune that you took up with the dead dog; when you lowered yourself like that, you rescued yourself for today. But go away from this town – or tomorrow I shall leap over you, a living man

over a dead one.” And when he had said this, the man disappeared, but Zarathustra continued his walk through dark lanes.

At the town gate he met the gravediggers. They shone their torches in his face, recognized Zarathustra and sorely ridiculed him. “Zarathustra is lugging away the dead dog: how nice that he’s become a gravedigger! For our hands are too pure for this roast. Would Zarathustra steal this morsel from the devil? So be it then! And good luck with your meal! If only the devil were not a better thief than Zarathustra! – he’ll steal them both, he’ll devour them both!” And they laughed and huddled together.

Zarathustra did not say a word and went on his way. By the time he had walked for two hours past woods and swamps, he had heard too much of the hungry howling of wolves and he grew hungry himself. And so he stopped at a lonely house in which a light was burning.

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

My hunger has odd moods. Often it comes to me only after a meal, and today it did not come the whole day: just where was it?”

And so Zarathustra pounded on the door to the house. An old man appeared, bearing a light, and he asked: “Who comes to me and to my bad sleep?”

“A living man and a dead one,” replied Zarathustra. “Give me food and drink, I forgot it during the day. Whoever feeds the hungry quickens his own soul – thus speaks wisdom.”

The old man went away but returned promptly and offered Zarathustra bread and wine. “This is a bad region for those who hunger,” he said. “That is why I live here. Beast and human being come to me, the hermit. But bid your companion eat and drink, he is wearier than you.” Zarathustra replied: “My companion is dead, I would have a hard time persuading him.” “That does not concern me,” snapped the old man. “Whoever knocks at my house must also take what I offer him. Eat and take care!” –

Thereupon Zarathustra walked again for two hours, trusting the path and the light of the stars, for he was a practiced night-walker and loved to look in the face of all sleepers. But as dawn greyed Zarathustra found himself in a deep wood and no more path was visible to him. Then he laid the dead man into a hollow tree – for he wanted to protect him from the wolves – and he laid himself down head first at the tree, upon the earth

and the moss. And soon he fell asleep, weary in body but with a calm soul.

9

Long Zarathustra slept, and not only the dawn passed over his face but the morning as well. At last, however, he opened his eyes: amazed Zarathustra looked into the woods and the silence, amazed he looked into himself. Then he stood up quickly, like a seafarer who all at once sees land, and he rejoiced, for he saw a new truth. And thus he spoke to his heart:

“It dawned on me: I need companions, and living ones – not dead companions and corpses that I carry with me wherever I want.

Instead I need living companions who follow me because they want to follow themselves – wherever I want.

It dawned on me: let Zarathustra speak not to the people, but instead to companions! Zarathustra should not become the shepherd and dog of a herd!

To lure many away from the herd – for that I came. The people and herd shall be angry with me: Zarathustra wants to be called a robber by shepherds.

Shepherds I say, but they call themselves the good and the just. Shepherds I say: but they call themselves the faithful of the true faith.

Look at the good and the just! Whom do they hate most? The one who breaks their tablets of values, the breaker, the lawbreaker – but he is the creative one.

Look at the faithful of all faiths! Whom do they hate most? The one who breaks their tablets of values, the breaker, the lawbreaker – but he is the creative one.

Companions the creative one seeks and not corpses, nor herds and believers. Fellow creators the creative one seeks, who will write new values on new tablets.

Companions the creative one seeks, and fellow harvesters; for to him everything stands ready for harvest. But he lacks the hundred scythes, and so he plucks out spikes and is angry.

Companions the creative one seeks, and those who know how to whet their scythes. They shall be called annihilators and despisers of good and evil. But they are the harvesters and the celebrators.

Fellow creators seeks Zarathustra, fellow harvesters and fellow celebrators Zarathustra seeks: what need does he have of herds and shepherds and corpses!

And you, my first companion, take care! I buried you well in your tree, I concealed you well from the wolves.

But I am leaving you, the time is up. Between dawn and dawn a new truth came to me.

I shall not be a shepherd, nor a gravedigger. I do not want to even speak again with the people – for the last time have I spoken to a dead person.

I shall join the creators, the harvesters, the celebrators: I shall show them the rainbow and all the steps to the overman.

I shall sing my song to lonesome and twosome hermits, and for him who still has ears for the unheard of, I shall make his heart heavy with my happiness.

I want to go to my goal, and I go my own way; over the hesitating and dawdling I shall leap. Thus let my going be their going under!”

10

Thus Zarathustra had spoken to his heart when the sun stood at noon, then he gazed at the sky with a questioning look, for above him he heard the sharp cry of a bird. And behold! An eagle cut broad circles through the air, and upon it hung a snake, not as prey but as a friend, for the snake curled itself around the eagle’s neck.

“It is my animals!” said Zarathustra, and his heart was delighted.

“The proudest animal under the sun and the wisest animal under the sun – they have gone forth to scout.

They want to determine whether Zarathustra is still alive. Indeed, am I still alive?

I found it more dangerous among human beings than among animals; Zarathustra walks dangerous paths. May my animals guide me!”

When Zarathustra had said this he recalled the words of the saint in the woods, sighed and spoke thus to his heart:

“May I be wiser! May I be wise from the ground up like my snake!

But I ask the impossible, and so I ask instead of my pride that it always walk with my wisdom!

And if some day my wisdom abandons me – oh it loves to fly away! – may my pride then fly away with my folly!”
– Thus began Zarathustra’s going under.

The Speeches of Zarathustra

On the Three Metamorphoses

Three metamorphoses of the spirit I name for you: how the spirit becomes a camel, and the camel a lion, and finally the lion a child.

To the spirit there is much that is heavy; to the strong, carrying spirit imbued with reverence. Its strength demands what is heavy and heaviest.

What is heavy? thus asks the carrying spirit. It kneels down like a camel and wants to be well loaded.

What is heaviest, you heroes? thus asks the carrying spirit, so that I might take it upon myself and rejoice in my strength.

Is it not this: lowering oneself in order to hurt one’s pride? Letting one’s foolishness glow in order to mock one’s wisdom?

Or is it this: abandoning our cause when it celebrates victory? Climbing high mountains in order to tempt the tempter?

Or is it this: feeding on the acorns and grass of knowledge and for the sake of truth suffering hunger in one’s soul?

Or is it this: being ill and sending the comforters home and making friends with the deaf who never hear what you want?

Or is it this: wading into dirty water when it is the water of truth, and not shrinking away from cold frogs and hot toads?

Or is it this: loving those who despise us, and extending a hand to the ghost when it wants to frighten us?

All of these heaviest things the carrying spirit takes upon itself, like a loaded camel that hurries into the desert, thus it hurries into its desert.

But in the loneliest desert the second metamorphosis occurs. Here the spirit becomes lion, it wants to hunt down its freedom and be master in its own desert.

Here it seeks its last master, and wants to fight him and its last god. For victory it wants to battle the great dragon.

Who is the great dragon whom the spirit no longer wants to call master and god? “Thou shalt” is the name of the great dragon. But the spirit of the lion says “I will.”

“Thou shalt” stands in its way, gleaming golden, a scaly animal, and upon every scale “thou shalt!” gleams like gold.

The values of millennia gleam on these scales, and thus speaks the most powerful of all dragons: “the value of all things – it gleams in me.

All value has already been created, and the value of all created things – that am I. Indeed, there shall be no more ‘I will!’” Thus speaks the dragon.

My brothers, why is the lion required by the spirit? Why does the beast of burden, renouncing and reverent, not suffice?

To create new values – not even the lion is capable of that: but to create freedom for itself for new creation – that is within the power of the lion.

To create freedom for oneself and also a sacred No to duty: for that, my brothers, the lion is required.

To take the right to new values – that is the most terrible taking for a carrying and reverent spirit. Indeed, it is preying, and the work of a predatory animal.

Once it loved “thou shalt” as its most sacred, now it must find delusion and despotism even in what is most sacred to it, in order to wrest freedom from its love by preying. The lion is required for this preying.

But tell me, my brothers, of what is the child capable that even the lion is not? Why must the preying lion still become a child?

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

Yes, for the game of creation my brothers a sacred yes-saying is required. The spirit wants *its* will, the one lost to the world now wins *its own* world.

Three metamorphoses of the spirit I named for you: how the spirit became a camel, and the camel a lion, and finally the lion a child. –

Thus spoke Zarathustra. And then he sojourned in the town which is called The Motley Cow.

On the Teachers of Virtue

A wise man was praised to Zarathustra who could speak well of sleep and of virtue. For this he was much honored and rewarded, and all the youths

sat at his feet. Zarathustra went to him and sat at his feet with all the youths. And thus spoke the wise man:

“Have honor and bashfulness for sleep! That is the first thing! And avoid all who sleep badly and remain awake nights!

Even the thief is bashful toward sleep; he constantly steals through the night, silently. But the watchman of the night is shameless, and shamelessly he carries his horn.

Sleeping is no mean art, it is necessary to remain awake the entire day for it.

Ten times a day you must overcome yourself, that makes for a good weariness and is poppy for the soul.

Ten times you must reconcile yourself again with yourself, for overcoming causes bitterness and the unreconciled sleep badly.

Ten truths you must find by day, or else you will still be seeking truth by night and your soul will have remained hungry.

Ten times you must laugh by day and be cheerful, or else your stomach will bother you at night, this father of gloom.

Few 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 neighbor's maid? All that would be incompatible with good sleep.

And even when one has all the virtues, one must understand one more thing: how to send the virtues to sleep at the right time.

So that they do not quarrel with each other, the good little women! And quarrel over you, wretch!

At peace with God and neighbor, thus good sleep demands. And at peace too with the neighbor's devil! Otherwise he will be at your house at night.

Honor the authorities and practice obedience, even toward the crooked authorities! Thus good sleep demands. What can I do about it that the powers like to walk on crooked legs? He shall always be the best shepherd in my view who leads his sheep to the greenest pasture; this is compatible with good sleep.

I do not want many honors, nor great treasures – that inflames the spleen. But sleep is bad without a good name and a little treasure.

A little company is more welcome to me than evil company, but they must go and come at the right time, for this is compatible with good sleep.

I also like very much the poor in spirit, they promote sleep. Blessed are they, especially when they are always told they are right.

Thus passes the day for the virtuous one. Now when night comes I am careful not to summon sleep – the master of virtues does not like to be summoned!

Instead I think what I have done and thought throughout the day. Ruminating, I ask myself, patient as a cow; what then were my ten overcomings?

And what were the ten reconciliations and the ten truths and the ten laughters to which my heart treated itself?

In this manner reflecting and rocked by forty thoughts, sleep suddenly falls upon me, the unsummoned, the master of virtues.

Sleep knocks at my eyelids, and they become heavy. Sleeps brushes my mouth, and it stays open.

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

But then I am not standing for long, and soon I am lying.” –

When Zarathustra heard the wise man speak thus, he laughed inwardly in his heart, for something dawned on him, and he spoke thus to his heart:

“That wise man there with his forty thoughts is just a fool to me, but I believe that he well understands sleep.

Happy the one who lives even near this wise man! Such a sleep is infectious, and it infects even through a thick wall.

In this teacher nothing less than magic resides, and not in vain did youths sit at the feet of this preacher of virtue.

The meaning of his wisdom is: wake in order to sleep well. And truly, if life had no meaning and if I had to choose nonsense, then to me too this would be the worthiest nonsense I could choose.

Now I understand clearly what was once sought before all else when teachers of virtue were sought. Good sleep was sought and poppy-blossomed virtues to boot!

For all these highly praised wise men and teachers wisdom was the sleep without dreams: they knew no better meaning of life.

And still today there are a few like this preacher of virtue, and some not so honest. But their time is up, not for long will they be standing, and soon they’ll be lying.

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

Thus spoke Zarathustra.