

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–XII 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