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Book 3 – 53 – The Return Home

There is a faint connection here to Siddhartha the Buddha. Not only did he keep returning to the same place, and he seemed to get annoyed by his apostles. This caused him to want to be alone to think.

[3_53:1] O lonesomeness! My HOME, lonesomeness! Too long have I lived wildly in wild remoteness, to return to thee without tears!

Author inversion. Coming to a cave is going home while living in civilization was living in the wild. Sets up for a prodigal son retelling where being alone is not just a state of being and an emotion but a role, like a parent.

[3_53:2] Now threaten me with the finger as mothers threaten; now smile upon me as mothers smile; now say just: “Who was it that like a whirlwind once rushed away from me?—

Living deeply with solitude, Zarathustra begins to anthropomorphize it. Not typical for absence itself have moods. A little note: Zarathustra’s followers morphed and forsook him in his absence but his solitude remained as it were.

[3_53:3] —Who when departing called out: ‘Too long have I sat with lonesomeness; there have I unlearned silence!’ THAT hast thou learned now—surely?

Okay so he is saying when you sit with being alone a long time you forget how to be silent. You know the opposite result you would expect at first. Silence isn’t just lack of noise. It is not speaking when speaking is possible. Which is only the case when people are around. Like friendship, you don’t have it without someone else. The sage remains silent until they find the right ears, then they overflow. Being alone had driven out the habit of silence from Zarathustra. A bit like not having physical access to alcohol is not the same as sobriety.

[3_53:4] O Zarathustra, everything do I know; and that thou wert MORE FORSAKEN amongst the many, thou unique one, than thou ever wert with me!

The projection of Lonesomeness continues to monologue. Reminding the prophet that it knows what happened. The uniqueness of Zarathustra makes him more forsaken in a crowd than he ever was with his own Lonesomeness.

[3_53:5] One thing is forsakenness, another matter is lonesomeness: THAT hast thou now learned! And that amongst men thou wilt ever be wild and strange:

It declares a difference between the two states. One is active abandonment, the other is absence of people. Tearing down the prophet, telling him that you will always be more at home without me than with them. It's possible the author intended this cringe narcissism for the voice. Trying to demonstrate that inner voices often overstate how much they claim to be important when they aren't, we humans are important, inner voices are merely ways our brain presents information to itself. If self-comfort stagnation sounds cringe, it means you still got a mind that can judge.

[3_53:6] —Wild and strange even when they love thee: for above all they want to be TREATED INDULGENTLY!

Among people you seem wild, as in you need to be tamed, strange as in you are just another oddity not yet assigned to a box. Love didn't bridge the gap in understanding, it concealed the truth. And why? Because anyone who has read this far has complained once that Zarathustra sets the bar too high. Still, Lonesomeness is lying here or at least not telling the whole truth. Yes, the reader and his followers didn't enjoy the standard set but it is not binary. One can complain and still aspire. This is the stick.

[3_53:7] Here, however, art thou at home and house with thyself; here canst thou utter everything, and unbosom all motives; nothing is here ashamed of concealed, congealed feelings.

And here is the carrot. No one will distort and simplify you, no one will use what you are against you. You have radical freedom from the gaze of others. Note the double home and house. This is not just his home, this is where he really belongs, at least according to avatar of Lonesomeness.

[3_53:8] 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.

The temptress continues. Offering Zarathustra something he cannot have amongst humans. His ideas will remain here unchallenged, they will fit together perfectly. Whim will become law and castles in the sky shall be built.

[3_53:9] Uprightly and openly mayest thou here talk to all things: and verily, it soundeth as praise in their ears, for one to talk to all things—directly!

Without shame and without guile you may talk about all things, concretes and abstractions. No one will be searching for agendas and hidden meanings. And these object/abstractions will love being worthy of being talked to directly. Almost as if some object/abstract concept would enjoy the idea that a human thinks of them not in terms of utility, not in terms of what the human wants them to be but are not, but exactly what the human wants them to be. Not talking about liberty as in what it gains a society, not talking about it in trying to match what the typical definition is to what you need it to be at the moment, but instead just saying liberty is what the person wants it to mean. The jargon heavy world of continental philosophy is avoided here.

[3_53:10] Another matter, however, is forsakenness. For, dost thou remember, O Zarathustra? When thy bird screamed overhead, when thou stoodest in the forest, irresolute, ignorant where to go, beside a corpse:—

The temptress is doubling back after promising a play area. This whole thing reads like a clingy parent talking to their 20- year-old "hey why don't you move back in? You remember that car accident? We can set up the basement so you can have some privacy". In any case this is a clear reference to the prologue and it reads like emotional blackmail. She/it takes a low moment that Zarathustra managed to overcome and turns it until a proof of deficiency. Good parenting would have reminded Zarathustra that at his low moment she was still with him and she will always be there to help him be even better, bad parenting is cutting him down at his root. Of note she/it says the corpse not his friend. For solitude is a jealous goddess.

[3_53:11] —When thou spakest: 'Let mine animals lead me! More dangerous have I found it among men than among animals:'—THAT was forsakenness!

Recall the speech in the beginning where Zarathustra likened man to a rope stretched between animal and ubermensch. Recall his parable of the last man which ties into the idea that you might think moving to a safe spot and staying there will protect you, but it won't. There is no

static spot in our existence. You will continue down the path you choose. The serpent and eagle are companions not meant for destinations.

[3_53:12] And dost thou remember, O Zarathustra? When thou satest in thine isle, a well of wine giving and granting amongst empty buckets, bestowing and distributing amongst the thirsty:

Tricky passage. This event did not happen the way described in the text. There are scenes like it but none match exactly. He said in the beginning he was like a bee that gathered too much honey and he wanted to bestow and distribute it. The invocation of wells resembles Night-Song. It would appear that Lonesomeness is gas-lighting him. The metaphor with the well of water seems to echo Moses and Jesus, one smiting the rock to make a well for the people and one transforming water into wine. This combined with the idea that he is distributing wine to the thirsty gives us a dark vision. Lonesomeness arguing that the mission was not a failure from lack of resources, it was because the need was infinite. The poor will always be among you, Zarathustra will not always be among you. Even if given infinite resources, literal wells of wine, it still would not have been enough.

[3_53:13] —Until at last thou alone satest thirsty amongst the drunken ones, and wailedst nightly: ‘Is taking not more blessed than giving? And stealing yet more blessed than taking?’— THAT was forsakenness!

Lonesomeness twisting the knife here. The mission was not only doomed from the start but even moderate success was pathetic. Zarathustra’s vision of his cup overflowing became the designated driver for the human race. Note the double stacked inversions. It is better to get than to give, and it is better to take what is not yours than to accept a gift freely given. Giving is overflow, taking is sensible, stealing is will to power without the path. Lonesomeness inverts the hierarchy pronouncing worthy as unworthy and unworthy as having worth.

[3_53:14] And dost thou remember, O Zarathustra? When thy stillest hour came and drove thee forth from thyself, when with wicked whispering it said: ‘Speak and succumb!’—

A clear reference to the Stillest hour when a voice gave Zarathustra the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence and he was a reluctant prophet. There is a stacked attack here, Lonesomeness finishes. Acts, via the corpse, words via his moment of failure, mission with the parable of the wine well, and lastly she undercuts his insight calling the knowledge of the Eternal Recurrence wicked. What he does, what he says, what his task is, and what knowledge he has have been devastatingly undercut. And for this to happen right after the Apostates must have been his lowest moment.

[3_53:15] —When it disgusted thee with all thy waiting and silence, and discouraged thy humble courage: THAT was forsakenness!”—

She continues to invert and toss it in his face. Even you became insulted by yourself, even you pitied yourself with your desire to remain silent, with your strength held in reserve. You waited for the right time? How did that work out for you?

[3_53:16] O lonesomeness! My home, lonesomeness! How blessedly and tenderly speaketh thy voice unto me!

It is a bit aligned. However, he did begin by asking Lonesomeness to scold him. Granted she brought a tank to a knife fight but she did do what he asked. Maybe the author is implying that Zarathustra never fully got past good and evil. And so he wants the punishment he thinks he deserves. Or maybe he, like the Fool in Section 51, needs someone to be a witness. Someone to say "I see your pain and I pity you". After spending so much time not being seen or understood he needs someone, anyone, to really see him. Which Lonesomeness gives him. The child is scolded and runs back to the parent for a hug, it is the only safe spot they know.

[3_53:17] We do not question each other, we do not complain to each other; we go together openly through open doors.

True questions are not needed. She knows him perfectly, he knows her perfectly. They don't complain because there is nothing to complain about, their relationship is with thought, not with clean vs. dirty socks. The last part implies a life with no obstacles, everything an open door, you just walk without struggle or shame through. There is a faint thing here. Like Zarathustra is saying we get one another but we aren't working together. Kinda like one's couch that has a small indent in it from its owner. On the surface it sounds ideal. No friction, no misunderstanding, but there is also no growth and no friction.

[3_53:18] For all is open with thee and clear; and even the hours run here on lighter feet. For in the dark, time weigheth heavier upon one than in the light.

In the lightness of the mountaintop is contrasted with the darkness of civilization. Everything moves swifter up here in the land without responsibility. Think the author is implying that there is yet another way to fall off the tightrope when one mistakes play of the child for the freedom from burden. The hours not only pass quickly but they run on lighter feet, i.e. children's feet. No obligations, no roots, no future, no past, just an ever present now and that now is fun.

You can fall into the darkness, mediocrity, the herd, or you can fall into the light and have the self dissolve another way.

[3_53:19] Here fly open unto me all being's words and word-cabinets: here all being wanteth to become words, here all becoming wanteth to learn of me how to talk.

Everything ever said and everything that can be said lies there for Zarathustra, it seems that all of the vague ideas themselves wish to be named, and all that are named want to be fleshed out in full. In the sun on his mountain the physical beings do not aspire to be with the ideal, the ideal aspires to be on earth. Zarathustra is mistaking the power of his ability to articulate the unspoken to insight in them. Playing god without the wisdom. According to the mythos of the Bible the first act of Man was to name all he saw, the second was to complain he had no equal to speak it to. Zarathustra however has Lonesomeness. An Adam who thinks he has no need of an Eve. Words are coined, but the communication is dead. He can tell his insights to Lonesomeness, but she already knows what he does.

[3_53:20] Down there, however—all talking is in vain! There, forgetting and passing-by are the best wisdom: THAT have I learned now!

Zarathustra continues the downward spiral. Referencing the Fool [3_51:42] and the Apostates. He points out the futility of speech and the only form of movement at all is not engaging and forgetting instead of integrating into self. Passing-by references the fool again and the Apostates. Forgetting was for the apostates. He is admitting you know what? Waking those guys up and they crawled back to sleep. Now they are even worse off compared to if they had never heard the good news, had he never met them. Some have even become night-watchman. So the best possible advice Zarathustra can give you here at his bleakest? If you have wisdom don't share it, and if you hear it forget it. The hermit very long ago had it right, stay on the mountain give them nothing. Of note he complains about talking being in vain yet admits that here it is also the case. One is being misunderstood completely the other is to be understood completely. Either way Lonesomeness shall reign in wisdom. Even at his lowest Zarathustra knows he is leaning to one side on the tightrope and will fall.

[3_53:21] He who would understand everything in man must handle everything. But for that I have too clean hands.

The clean hands echoes the gravediggers in the beginning which leans into the idea that some ideas or motifs or people are not worth burying as that is too dignified of a response. Perhaps the way some dictators and arch criminals are given unmarked graves or burials at sea. He says that if you are going to begin the project of understanding humans you must be capable

of handing anything they throw at you, the worst in us. He says he cannot do that task but the way he says it is telling. He is too clean for it. The vice of cowardice of being squeamishness pretending to be refinement and goodness. You can see how the rant is slowly taking on the Ecclesiastes at this point.

[3_53:22] I do not like even to inhale their breath; alas! that I have lived so long among their noise and bad breaths!

He is really starting to sound like the fool in section 51. His disgust has long degraded beyond philosophy disagreements to pure physical sensation. The thing is he did pass-by. Almost as if the author is saying “when you can no longer love pass-by is step 1, step 2 is saying yes-again to your failure”. Here Zarathustra is stuck between steps, he condemned the mess, he left the mess, but he has not affirmed the mess as part of his journey.

[3_53:23] O blessed stillness around me! O pure odours around me! How from a deep breast this stillness fetcheth pure breath! How it hearkeneth, this blessed stillness!

Stillness is given a human form and we are told it only inhales the pureness. You can almost hear it pull you in. It inhales, it does not exhale so it is uncorrupted with what its breath can do. When Zarathustra was with humans he exchanged breath, here he exhales into stillness. While the sun overflows the stillness absorbs. Once virtue has been taken from the body it becomes the stillness, static pure and unchanging. He is almost like addressing the platonic realm and heaven and calling it a parasite. This thing that takes the best in us and drinks from it without being sated. All our sacrifice, all our thoughts, all our prayers, all our striving has been directed to the supreme form, lifeless unchanging stillness. A virtue pit. If the sun was heaven, this isn't even hell, this is much worse. The blessed would seem to be the height of sarcasm or an indication of how low Zarathustra has fallen.

[3_53:24] But down there—there speaketh everything, there is everything misheard. If one announce one's wisdom with bells, the shopmen in the market-place will out-jingle it with pennies!

Contrast to the earth where everything fills the air with stirring and life and noise. The perfect clarity is broken. Even if you would tell people you have wisdom loudly, some money maker will out-advertise you with not even gold, the lowest possible value. The reading might be strained but it is as if Zarathustra is saying if you could actually talk to a Platonic form it would want to be real, and yet everything that is real wishes to be absorbed into the lifeless stillness. A perfect triangle would plead for a child to draw it, while a drawing of a triangle would sigh and wish for perfection. And Zarathustra is standing there the mediator between being and becoming.

[3_53:25] Everything among them talketh; no one knoweth any longer how to understand. Everything falleth into the water; nothing falleth any longer into deep wells.

Slight tense shift. He talked in past before but now talks in present. The act of Recalling it, has made him revisit it. Nothing speaks up here but down there everything speaks and no one understands. Things still fall into water but it is surface water, foamy chops, not the deep still water of wisdom. It might be an echo of Old and Young Women when he addresses the embodiment of wisdom and likens humans to a deep cavern for her to fill with water. If that is the case he would be saying yeah, this time has passed don't bother with wisdom and humans anymore. However, that is metaphor-stacking so it could be reaching. Would explain the tense shift, before he argued for the project with Sophia. Let us humans work with you to make the Übermensch, she did not think much of his plan, so now he is saying yeah I am done with this project. Sophia glides on the surface, Zarathustra tried to pull her down into the depths now he knows the depths are gone.

[3_53:26] Everything among them talketh, nothing succeedeth any longer and accomplisheth itself. Everything cackleth, but who will still sit quietly on the nest and hatch eggs?

Again repeating himself. He is frustrated about the talking. "succeedeth" means to be successful not to follow. Everything makes a cry as if they have made something, anything but is there even one among them that will do their bloody job without demand of recognition?

[3_53:27] Everything among them talketh, everything is out-talked. And that which yesterday was still too hard for time itself and its tooth, hangeth to-day, outchamped and outchewed, from the mouths of the men of to-day.

That the speaking is everlasting. It isn't that everyone just talks, it is everyone claps back on what was said. Time and talk is supposed to wear down the extra and give us only eternal great truths. Instead it is chewed and chewed and chewed until what remains is pulp. Zarathustra smashes idols, the men of earth macerate them.

[3_53:28] Everything among them talketh, everything is betrayed. And what was once called the secret and secrecy of profound souls, belongeth to-day to the street-trumpeters and other butterflies.

Speech betrays you, it reveals what is most secret in your spirit. Everyone belongs to everyone else, every thought is for public discussion. You must have an opinion on every topic and it will be proclaimed to the world. Possible allusion to your ideas becoming the wings of

butterflies. Which exist to be seen but whose notice can spell their demise. Street-trumpeters take your idea and scream it to the world, butterflies go from flower to flower with no loyalty to any. One is a clenched fist the other this week's shiny idea. The fool's rant also matches here.

[3_53:29] O human hubbub, thou wonderful thing! Thou noise in dark streets! Now art thou again behind me:—my greatest danger lieth behind me!

Wonderful thing as it's complicated strange, not as praise. Dark as in the play on light and dark in the book. The imagery of dark concealing while there is sound which you can hear but it is just noise. The imagery is haunting. One imagines stumbling in the dark. With man-made buildings cutting you from what little light there is. You desperately orientate yourself to whatever sound you hear but it is just noise. And you can only define yourself relative to it. Humans used to be guided by the stars but in the cage we have fashioned we are guided by the endlessly chattering. Maybe a reference to the Jesus-Peter interaction, when Jesus told him to get behind him. Jesus foretells his death, Peter denies the prophecy, and Jesus calls him out. Also implying that Zarathustra denies Eternal Recurrence, he knows he will face this danger again.

[3_53:30] In indulging and pitying lay ever my greatest danger; and all human hubbub wisheth to be indulged and tolerated.

The Jesus metaphor continues. Jesus knows he will die and has to die, Peter wishes to spare him to soften what needs to happen, Jesus condemns Peter for softening him. For his pity. The real danger is not anything the crowd can do to Zarathustra in terms of physical danger, it is what the influence of the crowd can do by trying to be nice. Humans do not want to be told to strive, they want to be pitied and indulged and amused. As Zarathustra dwelt among men, he faced the danger of giving them what they want.

[3_53:31] With suppressed truths, with fool's hand and befooled heart, and rich in petty lies of pity:—thus have I ever lived among men.

A teacher to be effective must teach on the level of understanding, Zarathustra in his agony doesn't declare this good. He understands it is the price one must pay, and no longer wishes to do so. Bending low, softening your words are required, not desirable.

[3_53:32] Disguised did I sit amongst them, ready to misjudge MYSELF that I might endure THEM, and willingly saying to myself: "Thou fool, thou dost not know men!"

A reference to prologue. Notice the bent here. Zarathustra isn't expressing his will to power. If he had he would see human nature as something he has to work with, a given without judgment that he could forge into something. Instead he is revising his own history. The carpenter blaming his tools and raving that the failure is really on himself for assuming that he was the wrong one in the situation. Instead of blaming his tools.

[3_53:33] "One unlearneth men when one liveth amongst them: there is too much foreground in all men—what can far-seeing, far-longing eyes do THERE! "

You learn less about humanity by more time with humanity. Because humans have too much going on up front, if you are looking for depth you won't see it. The way is blocked. But the rage, it isn't simply that this is the nature of the beast, this is unacceptable a disgrace. A totally hopeless situation. Zarathustra is blinded, he can no longer physically see anymore what he once loved.

[3_53:34] "And, fool that I was, when they misjudged me, I indulged them on that account more than myself, being habitually hard on myself, and often even taking revenge on myself for the indulgence. "

Repeating himself again. Twisting the knife in his own narrative yet again. Originally he was right. No one on earth had talked like he did, he should have expected people not to instantly get it. Now he is still constructing an ego-preserving narrative. Not Yes Saying, stewing in resentment. Trying to make his failure noble instead of fuel for growth.

[3_53:35] Stung all over by poisonous flies, and hollowed like the stone by many drops of wickedness: thus did I sit among them, and still said to myself: "Innocent is everything petty of its pettiness!"

We have seen poisonous flies before, a swarm that saps your energy one little bite at a time. The image of the stone is telling. A strong hard thing, granite being worn out by the formless one pat pat pat at a time. And he expresses resentment at what he said before, even when he knew what was going on he still, through clenched jaw perhaps, uttered: they are innocent of their smallness just like all small things are. So in a sense he did commit the sin he accused himself of before, he did show pity. The shame must be intense for him now, remembering that he once allowed himself to mistake his pity for strength.

[3_53:36] Especially did I find those who call themselves "the good," the most poisonous flies; they sting in all innocence, they lie in all innocence; how COULD they—be just towards me!

An inversion. We typically think of those of us who are good as those who avoid causing harm, are careful of their words and actions, and align themselves with justice. He is saying that they were the worst to him in practice. Because they are innocent. How could one expect them to judge his words correctly when they are confidently correct in their errors? And since they call themselves the good, not society them, for them to accept Zarathustra was correct means rejection of their own works.

[3_53:37] He who liveth amongst the good—pity teacheth him to lie. Pity maketh stifling air for all free souls. For the stupidity of the good is unfathomable.

You feel bad. You are seeing a group of people who are actually making an effort they just are heading in the wrong direction, so you nudge them to the correct path. And when you pity the good you end up lying to spare their feelings. The very air becomes a foul and stifling because honesty is holding its breath. Also, it is freaken work, you want to explore and build instead you are playing the role of a teacher saying "A for good effort!" And you know what? The sheer depths of ignorance of the self-righteous is beyond your ken. You can correct an error, you can't argue with ignorance that declares itself virtue, all you can do is lie and pity it.

[3_53:38] To conceal myself and my riches—THAT did I learn down there: for every one did I still find poor in spirit. It was the lie of my pity, that I knew in every one,

Perhaps a more modern translation would read: I learned down there to conceal the richness of my spirit, because everyone else was so poor in their spirit, my pity lied to me. It told me that I saw a spark of resemblance, myself in them. Now, Zarathustra is lying to himself. He did find his type down there. The hermit, the tightrope walker, and the youth.

[3_53:39] —That I saw and scented in every one, what was ENOUGH of spirit for him, and what was TOO MUCH!

He is disgusted that he thought he could actually judge people and decide what they were capable of. He said he wanted equals and eventually more than equals. People who would ascend so much higher than him that they would have contempt for Zarathustra. Instead their pathetic state made Zarathustra have to keep lying, keep softening, keep begging. His mission was to bring out the best in humanity, instead we brought out the worst in him. He has contempt for his pity, the pity we imposed on him. We kept offering him our weakness as if it were a gift and eventually Zarathustra accepted it as good enough and now resents his compromise.

[3_53:40] Their stiff wise men: I call them wise, not stiff—thus did I learn to slur over words.

One can imagine a young Nietzsche in university with his thick-headed teacher sucking the joy out of Homer and him years later raging at himself for groveling calling the man “Herr Professor”. Zarathustra had to learn the art of lying among humanity, first a lie of omission. Not calling their best what they were.

[3_53:41] "The grave-diggers dig for themselves diseases. Under old rubbish rest bad vapours. One should not stir up the marsh. One should live on mountains. "

Seems to be a metaphor for professors and anyone who wants to teach. Grave diggers put away safely what has passed on. As a sign of respect for what was once living and protection of the living from what is now dead. Yet here the act of reverence and practical living summons the very demons it sought to dispose of safely. So don't bother, he wanted to give god a proper burial and now fears he instead pulled up from the past the worst god had for us. He regrets the entire project. It would have been better to let the corpse of god just lay on the streets instead of attempting to put it in the ground.

[3_53:42] With blessed nostrils do I again breathe mountain-freedom. Freed at last is my nose from the smell of all human hubbub!

We finally got the location, he has left Pied Cow and is up on the mountain either at or very near his home. Rejoicing at his freedom, even his nostrils will be blessed with the clean air. There is a slight humor here. The sense we feel the least attached to, smell, is the first sense to feel salvation. The last shall be first, the first shall be last.

[3_53:43] With sharp breezes tickled, as with sparkling wine, SNEEZETH my soul— sneezeth, and shouteth self-congratulatingly: “Health to thee!”

Breezes, indifferent often blocked by human civilization, is instead the worthy thing and it alone brings his soul redemption. As it tickles it, and he violently expels the rot. It is almost as if his own soul is rising a toast to the rest of him. Good health, my main man!

[3_53:44] Thus spake Zarathustra.

And so ends the dark section on a high note.