

In you what is unredeemed of my youth lives on; and as life and youth you sit here hoping upon greying ruins of graves.

Yes, to me you are still the shatterer of all graves: Hail to you, my will! And only where there are graves are there resurrections. –

Thus sang Zarathustra. –

On Self-Overcoming

“Will to truth” you call that which drives you and makes you lustful, you wisest ones?

Will to thinkability of all being, that’s what *I* call your will!

You first want to *make* all being thinkable, because you doubt, with proper suspicion, whether it is even thinkable.

But for you it shall behave and bend! Thus your will wants it. It shall become smooth and subservient to the spirit, as its mirror and reflection.

That is your entire will, you wisest ones, as a will to power; and even when you speak of good and evil and of valuations.

You still want to create the world before which you could kneel: this is your ultimate hope and intoxication.

The unwise, to be sure, the people – they are like a river on which a skiff floats; valuations are seated in the skiff, solemn and cloaked.

Your will and your values you set upon the river of becoming; what the people believe to be good and evil reveals to me an ancient will to power.

It was you, you wisest ones, who placed such guests into the skiff and gave them pomp and proud names – you and your dominating will!

Now the river carries your skiff along: *it has to* carry it. It matters little whether the breaking wave foams and angrily opposes the keel!

The river is not your danger and the end of your good and evil, you wisest ones; but this will itself, the will to power – the unexhausted begetting will of life.

But in order that you understand my words on good and evil, I also want to tell you my words on life and on the nature of all that lives.

I pursued the living, I walked the greatest and the smallest paths in order to know its nature.

With a hundredfold mirror I captured even its glance, when its mouth was closed, so that its eyes could speak to me. And its eyes spoke to me.

However, wherever I found the living, there too I heard the speech on obedience. All living is an obeying.

And this is the second thing that I heard: the one who cannot obey himself is commanded. Such is the nature of the living.

This however is the third thing that I heard: that commanding is harder than obeying. And not only that the commander bears the burden of all obeyers, and that this burden easily crushes him: –

In all commanding it seemed to me there is an experiment and a risk; and always when it commands, the living risks itself in doing so.

Indeed, even when it commands itself, even then it must pay for its commanding. It must become the judge and avenger and victim of its own law.

How does this happen? I asked myself. What persuades the living to obey and command, and to still practice obedience while commanding?

Hear my words, you wisest ones! Check seriously to see whether I crept into the very heart of life and into the roots of its heart!

Wherever I found the living, there I found the will to power; and even in the will of the serving I found the will to be master.

The weaker is persuaded by its own will to serve the stronger, because it wants to be master over what is still weaker: this is the only pleasure it is incapable of renouncing.

And as the smaller gives way to the greater, in order for it to have its pleasure and power over the smallest, so too the greatest gives way, and for the sake of power it risks – life itself.

That is the giving-way of the greatest, that it is a risk and a danger and a tossing of dice unto death.

And where there are sacrificing and favors and love-looks, there too is the will to be master. Along secret passages the weaker sneaks into the fortress and straight to the heart of the more powerful – and there it steals power.

And this secret life itself spoke to me: “Behold,” it said, “I am that *which must always overcome itself*.”

To be sure, you call it will to beget or drive to a purpose, to something higher, more distant, more manifold: but all this is one, and one secret.

I would rather perish than renounce this one thing; and truly, wherever there is decline and the falling of leaves, behold, there life sacrifices itself – for power!

That I must be struggle and becoming and purpose and the contradiction of purposes – alas, whoever guesses my will guesses also on what *crooked* paths it must walk!