

CHAPTER 11

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

Nietzsche, the philosopher who announced the death of God, was born in Saxony on October 15, 1844. Like Sartre and Camus, he lost his father in early childhood.

After his father's death, Nietzsche moved to Naumberg, where he lived with his mother, grandmother, sister, and two aunts. Quiet and withdrawn as a child, Nietzsche was dubbed the "Little Pastor" by his schoolmates. But the Little Pastor was a very good student. At fourteen, Nietzsche won a scholarship to Schulpforta, the most prestigious private school in Germany at that time.

In 1864 Nietzsche entered the University of Bonn with plans to study theology and philosophy, but a year later he followed his favorite professor, Ritschl, to the University of Leipzig. There he began the study of the German philosopher and pessimist Arthur Schopenhauer. For Schopenhauer, the aim of life was, in effect, to overcome our will to live. Nietzsche found an intellectual soul mate in Schopenhauer, but unlike Schopenhauer, Nietzsche was devoted to finding a way to a more sanguine conclusion.

Nietzsche began publishing scholarly essays in 1866. Soon thereafter, he was drafted into service in the Prussian army, but was eventually mustered out because of a chest injury. While a soldier, Nietzsche became disenchanted with what he termed “the molelike” lifestyle of academics. In contrast to ivory tower thinkers, Nietzsche came to believe that all thinking ought to be connected with action. But while Nietzsche was spiritually departing from the hallowed halls of the university, he was also being pursued for his enormous scholarly potential. At a mere twenty-four and even before he had taken his doctoral exams, Nietzsche was appointed professor of classical philology at the University of Basel in Switzerland.

In 1870 Nietzsche volunteered for service as a medical orderly in the Franco-Prussian War. After seeing action and bloodshed, he developed diphtheria and was again discharged. Two years later, Nietzsche’s *Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* appeared. In this, the first movement of Nietzsche’s philosophy, he focuses on the struggle between the two main currents of life—the Dionysian or the ecstatic and the Apollonian, the rational. Nietzsche concludes that at great cost, Western civilization has repressed its Dionysian side. This academically unconventional book received only one critical note. The reviewer prophetically remarked, “Anyone who has written a thing like that is finished as a scholar.” And sure enough, Nietzsche was soon thereafter finished with the Academy. Constantly on sick leave from Basel, Nietzsche resigned his university post in 1879.

For the next sixteen years, Nietzsche led a nomadic existence, always searching for spots that were conducive to his health and to being able to write. During these years of astounding productivity, Nietzsche wrote his *Untimely Meditations*, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, *Beyond Good and Evil*, *The Genealogy of Morals*, *Twilight of the Idols*, and other works. In these texts, Nietzsche shook the very crossbeams of the Western psyche by pressing probing questions about the origins and ultimate value of ethics and religion.

Possibly due to the effects of syphilis, Nietzsche began to show signs of madness by the late 1880s. In 1889 in Turin, a man was beating his horse. Nietzsche intervened and threw his arms around the animal to protect it. He was then taken to a hospital, where he continued to decline. For the last decade of his life, Nietzsche lived in a childlike mental state under the care of his mother and sister. He died on August 25, 1900.

The selection that follows is from Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals*, one of Nietzsche's most closely argued texts. Here he plumbs the origins of morality in the West and formulates his famous notion of the slave revolt. More than that, in what he terms a "re-evaluation of values," the philosopher with the hammer presses, What is the value of value? Or put another way: What is the good and evil that comes from our notions of good and evil? For Nietzsche this problem reduces to the question: Do our morals make us healthy or sick?

secret, malicious, mean instinct to belittle man, which is perhaps unacknowledged? Or perhaps a pessimistic suspicion, the mistrust of disillusioned, surly idealists who have turned poisonous and green? Or a certain subterranean animosity and *rancune* toward Christianity (and Plato), which has perhaps not even passed the threshold of the consciousness? Or even a lewd taste for the strange, for the painful paradox, for the dubious and nonsensical in life? Or finally—a bit of everything, a bit of meanness, a bit of gloominess, a bit of anti-Christianity, a bit of a thrill and need for pepper? ... But people tell me that they are just old, cold, boring frogs crawling round men and hopping into them as if they were in their element, namely a *swamp*. I am resistant to hearing this and, indeed, I do not believe it; and if it is permissible to wish where it is impossible to know, I sincerely hope that the reverse is true,—that these analysts holding a microscope to the soul are actually brave, generous and proud animals, who know how to control their own pleasure and pain and have been taught to sacrifice desirability to truth, every truth, even a plain, bitter, ugly, foul, unchristian, immoral truth ... Because there are such truths.

2. So you have to respect the good spirits which preside in these historians of morality! But it is unfortunately a fact that *historical spirit* itself is lacking in them, they have been left in the lurch by all the

Buddhist yearning for nothingness, Nirvâna—and no more!). Priests make *everything* more dangerous, not just medicaments and healing arts but pride, revenge, acumen, debauchery, love, lust for power, virtue, sickness;—in any case, with some justification one could add that man first became an *interesting animal* on the foundation of this *essentially dangerous* form of human existence, the priest, and that the human soul became *deep* in the higher sense and turned *evil* for the first time—and of course, these are the two basic forms of man's superiority, hitherto, over other animals! ...

7. —You will have already guessed how easy it was for the priestly method of valuation to split off from the chivalric-aristocratic method and then to develop further into the opposite of the latter; this receives a special impetus when the priestly caste and warrior caste confront one another in jealousy and cannot agree on the prize of war. The chivalric-aristocratic value-judgments are based on a powerful physicality, a blossoming, rich, even effervescent good health which includes the things needed to maintain it, war, adventure, hunting, dancing, jousting and everything else that contains strong, free, happy action. The priestly-aristocratic method of valuation—as we have seen—has different criteria: woe betide it when it comes to war! As we know, priests make the most *evil enemies*—but why? Because they are the most powerless. Out of this powerlessness, their

hate swells into something huge and uncanny to a most intellectual and poisonous level. The greatest haters in world history, and the most intelligent [*die geistreichsten Hasser*], have always been priests:—nobody else's intelligence [*Geist*] stands a chance against the intelligence [*Geist*] of priestly revenge.* The history of mankind would be far too stupid a thing if it had not had the intellect [*Geist*] of the powerless injected into it:—let us take the best example straight away. Nothing which has been done on earth against “the noble,” “the mighty,” “the masters” and “the rulers,” is worth mentioning compared with what *the Jews* have done against them: the Jews, that priestly people, which in the last resort was able to gain satisfaction from its enemies and conquerors only through a radical revaluation of their values, that is, through an act of the most deliberate revenge [*durch einen Akt der geistigsten Rache*]. Only this was fitting for a priestly people with the most entrenched priestly vengefulness. It was the Jews who, rejecting the aristocratic value equation (good = noble = powerful = beautiful = happy = blessed) ventured, with awe-inspiring consistency, to bring about a reversal and held it in the teeth of their unfathomable hatred (the hatred of the powerless), saying, “Only those who suffer are good, only the poor, the powerless, the lowly are good; the suffering, the deprived, the sick, the ugly, are the only pious people, the only ones saved, salva-

tion is for them alone, whereas you rich, the noble and powerful, you are eternally wicked, cruel, lustful, insatiate, godless, you will also be eternally wretched, cursed and damned!" ... We know *who* became heir to this Jewish revaluation ... With regard to the huge and incalculably disastrous initiative taken by the Jews with this most fundamental of all declarations of war, I recall the words I wrote on another occasion (*Beyond Good and Evil*, section 195)—namely, that *the slaves' revolt in morality* begins with the Jews: a revolt which has two thousand years of history behind it and which has only been lost sight of because—it was victorious ...

8. —But you don't understand that? You don't have eyes for something which needed two millennia to achieve victory? ... There is nothing surprising about that: all *long* things are difficult to see, to see round. But *that* is what happened: from the trunk of the tree of revenge and hatred, Jewish hatred—the deepest and most sublime, indeed a hatred which created ideals and changed values, the like of which has never been seen on earth—there grew something just as incomparable, a *new love*, the deepest and most sublime kind of love:—and what other trunk could it have grown out of? ... But don't make the mistake of thinking that it had grown forth as a denial of the thirst for revenge, as the opposite of Jewish hatred! No, the reverse is true! This love grew out of the hatred, as its crown, as the triumphant crown expanding ever wider in

the purest brightness and radiance of the sun, the crown which, as it were, in the realm of light and height, was pursuing the aims of that hatred, victory, spoils, seduction with the same urgency with which the roots of that hatred were burrowing ever more thoroughly and greedily into everything that was deep and evil. This Jesus of Nazareth, as the embodiment of the gospel of love, this "redeemer" bringing salvation and victory to the poor, the sick, to sinners—was he not seduction in its most sinister and irresistible form, seduction and the circuitous route to just those very *Jewish* values and innovative ideals? Did Israel not reach the pinnacle of her sublime vengefulness via this very "redeemer," this apparent opponent of and disperser of Israel? Is it not part of a secret black art of a truly *great* politics of revenge, a far-sighted, subterranean revenge, slow to grip and calculating, that Israel had to denounce her actual instrument of revenge before all the world as a mortal enemy and nail him to the cross so that "all the world," namely all Israel's enemies, could safely nibble at this bait? And could anyone, on the other hand, using all the ingenuity of his intellect, think up a more *dangerous* bait? Something to equal the enticing, intoxicating, benumbing, corrupting power of that symbol of the "holy cross," to equal that horrible paradox of a "God on the Cross," to equal that mystery of an unthinkable final act of extreme cruelty

and self-crucifixion of God for the *salvation of mankind*? ... At least it is certain that *sub hoc signo* Israel, with its revenge and revaluation of all former values, has triumphed repeatedly over all other ideals, all *nobler* ideals.—

9. —“But why do you talk about *nobler* ideals! Let's bow to the facts: the people have won—or ‘the slaves,’ the ‘plebeians,’ ‘the herd,’ or whatever you want to call them—if the Jews made this come about, good for them! No people ever had a more world-historic mission. ‘The Masters’ are deposed; the morality of the common people has triumphed. You might take this victory for blood-poisoning (it did mix the races up)—I do not deny it; but undoubtedly this intoxication has *succeeded*. The ‘salvation’ of the human race (I mean, from ‘the Masters’) is well on course; everything is being made appreciably Jewish, Christian or plebeian (never mind the words!). The passage of this poison through the whole body of mankind seems unstoppable, even though its tempo and pace, from now on, might tend to be slower, softer, quieter, calmer—there is no hurry ... With this in view, does the church still have a *vital* role, indeed, does it have a right to exist? Or could one do without it? *Quaeritur*.^{*} If seems that the Church rather slows down and blocks the passage of poison instead of accelerating it? Well, that might be what makes it useful ... Certainly it is by now crude and boorish, something which is repugnant to a more tender intellect, to a truly modern

taste. Should not the church at least try to be more refined? ... Nowadays it alienates, more than it seduces ... Who amongst us would be a free-thinker if it were not for the Church? We loathe the Church, *not* its poison ... Apart from the Church, we too love the poison ...”—This is the epilogue by a “free-thinker” to my speech, an honest animal as he clearly shows himself to be, and moreover a democrat; he had listened to me up to that point, and could not stand listening to my silence. As a matter of fact, there is much for me to keep silent about at this point.

10. The beginning of the slaves’ revolt in morality occurs when *ressentiment* itself turns creative and gives birth to values: the *ressentiment* of those beings who, being denied the proper response of action, compensate for it only with imaginary revenge. Whereas all noble morality grows out of a triumphant saying “yes” to itself, slave morality says “no” on principle to everything that is “outside,” “other,” “non-self”: and *this* “no” is its creative deed. This reversal of the evaluating glance—this *inevitable* orientation to the outside instead of back onto itself—is a feature of *ressentiment*: in order to come about, slave morality first has to have an opposing, external world, it needs, physiologically speaking, external stimuli in order to act at all,—its action is basically a reaction. The opposite is the case with the noble method of valuation: this acts and grows spontaneously, seeking out its opposite only so that it can say “yes” to itself even

more thankfully and exultantly,—its negative concept “low,” “common,” “bad” is only a pale contrast created after the event compared to its positive basic concept, saturated with life and passion, “We the noble, the good, the beautiful and the happy!” When the noble method of valuation makes a mistake and sins against reality, this happens in relation to the sphere with which it is *not* sufficiently familiar, a true knowledge of which it has indeed rigidly resisted: in some circumstances, it misjudges the sphere it despises, that of the common man, the rabble; on the other hand, we should bear in mind that the distortion which results from the feeling of contempt, disdain and superciliousness, always assuming that the image of the despised person is *distorted*, remains far behind the distortion with which the entrenched hatred and revenge of the powerless man attacks his opponent—in effigy of course. Indeed, contempt has too much negligence, nonchalance, complacency and impatience, even too much personal cheerfulness mixed into it, for it to be in a position to transform its object into a real caricature and monster. Nor should one fail to hear the almost kindly nuances which the Greek nobility, for example, places in all words which it uses to distinguish itself from the rabble; a sort of sympathy, consideration and indulgence incessantly permeates and sugars them, with the result that nearly all words referring to the com-

mon man remain as expressions for "unhappy," "pitiable" (compare δειλός δειλοῖος πονηρός μοχθηρός the last two actually designating the common man as slave worker and beast of burden)—and on the other hand, "bad," "low" and "unhappy" have never ceased to reverberate in the Greek ear in a tone in which "unhappy" predominates: this is a legacy of the old, nobler, aristocratic method of valuation, which does not deny itself even in contempt (—philologists will remember the sense in which οἶζυρος,* ἄνολβος,† τλήμων,‡ οὐκ εὐτυχεῖν,§ εὐμφορέα are used). The "well-born" felt they were "the happy"; they did not need first of all to construct their happiness artificially by looking at their enemies, or in some cases by talking themselves into it, *lying themselves into it* (as all men of *ressentiment* are wont to do); and also, as complete men bursting with strength and therefore *necessarily* active, they knew they must not separate happiness from action,—being active is by necessity counted as part of happiness (this is the etymological derivation of ἐνπρόττειν)⁴ all very much the opposite of "happiness" at the level of the powerless, the oppressed, and those rankled with poisonous and hostile feelings, for whom it manifests itself as essentially a narcotic, an anaesthetic, rest, peace, "sabbath," relaxation of the mind and stretching of the limbs, in short as something *passive*. While the noble man is confident and frank with himself (γενναῖος "of noble birth," underlines the nuance "upright"

and probably "naïve" as well), the man of *ressentiment* is neither upright nor naïve, nor honest and straight with himself. His soul *squints*; his mind loves dark corners, secret paths and back-doors, everything secretive appeals to him as being *his* world, *his* security, *his* comfort; he knows all about keeping quiet, not forgetting, waiting, temporarily humbling and abasing himself. A race of such men of *ressentiment* will inevitably end up *cleverer* than any noble race, and will respect cleverness to a quite different degree as well: namely, as a condition of existence of the first rank, whilst the cleverness of noble men can easily have a subtle aftertaste of luxury and refinement about it:—precisely because in this area, it is nowhere near as important as the complete certainty of function of the governing *unconscious* instincts, nor indeed as important as a certain lack of cleverness, such as a daring charge at danger or at the enemy, or those frenzied sudden fits of anger, love, reverence, gratitude and revenge by which noble souls down the ages have recognized one another. When *ressentiment* does occur in the noble man himself, it is consumed and exhausted in an immediate reaction, and therefore it does not *poison*, on the other hand, it does not occur at all in countless cases where it is unavoidable for all who are weak and powerless. To be unable to take his enemies, his misfortunes and even his *misdeeds* seriously for long—that is the sign of strong, rounded natures with a superabundance of a power

which is flexible, formative, healing and can make one forget (a good example from the modern world is Mirabeau, who had no recall for the insults and slights directed at him and who could not forgive, simply because he—forgot). A man like this shakes from him, with one shrug, many worms which would have burrowed into another man; here and here alone is it possible, assuming that this is possible at all on earth—truly to “love your neighbor.”* How much respect a noble man has for his enemies!—and a respect of that sort is a bridge to love ... For he insists on having his enemy to himself, as a mark of distinction, indeed he will tolerate as enemies none other than such as have nothing to be despised and a *great deal* to be honored! Against this, imagine “the enemy” as conceived of by the man of *ressentiment*—and here we have his deed, his creation: he has conceived of the “evil enemy,” “*the evil one*” as a basic idea to which he now thinks up a copy and counterpart, the “good one”—himself! ...

11. Exactly the opposite is true of the noble man who conceives of the basic idea “good” by himself, in advance and spontaneously, and only then creates a notion of “bad”! This “bad” of noble origin and that “evil” from the cauldron of unassuaged hatred—the first is an afterthought, an aside, a complementary color, whilst the other is the original, the beginning, the actual *deed* in the conception of slave morality—how different are the two

words "bad" and "evil," although both seem to be the opposite for the same concept, "good"! But it is *not* the same concept "good"; on the contrary, one should ask *who* is actually evil in the sense of the morality of *ressentiment*. The stern reply is: *precisely* the "good" person of the other morality, the noble, powerful, dominating man, but re-touched, re-interpreted and re-viewed through the poisonous eye of *ressentiment*. Here there is one point which we would be the last to deny: anyone who came to know these "good men" as enemies came to know nothing but "*evil enemies*," the same people who are so strongly held in check by custom, respect, habit, gratitude and even more through spying on one another and through peer-group jealousy, who, on the other hand, behave toward one another by showing such resourcefulness in consideration, self-control, delicacy, loyalty, pride and friendship,—they are not much better than uncaged beasts of prey in the world outside where the strange, the foreign, begin. There they enjoy freedom from every social constraint, in the wilderness they compensate for the tension which is caused by being closed in and fenced in by the peace of the community for so long, they *return* to the innocent conscience of the wild beast, as exultant monsters, who perhaps go away having committed a hideous succession of murder, arson, rape and torture, in a mood of bravado and spiritual equilibrium as though they had simply played a stu-

dent's prank, convinced that poets will now have something to sing about and celebrate for quite some time. At the center of all these noble races we cannot fail to see the blond beast of prey, the magnificent *blond beast* avidly prowling round for spoil and victory; this hidden center needs release from time to time, the beast must out again, must return to the wild:—Roman, Arabian, Germanic, Japanese nobility, Homeric heroes, Scandinavian Vikings—in this requirement they are all alike. It was the noble races which left the concept of “barbarian” in their traces wherever they went; even their highest culture betrays the fact that they were conscious of this and indeed proud of it (for example, when Pericles, in that famous funeral oration, tells his Athenians, “Our daring has forced a path to every land and sea, erecting timeless memorials to itself everywhere for good and ill”). This “daring” of the noble races, mad, absurd and sudden in the way it manifests itself, the unpredictability and even the improbability of their undertakings—Pericles singles out the **παθὺν** of the Athenians for praise—their unconcern and scorn for safety, body, life, comfort, their shocking cheerfulness, and depth of delight in all destruction, in all the debauches of victory and cruelty—all this, for those who suffered under it, was summed up in the image of the “barbarian,” the “evil enemy,” perhaps the “Goth” or the “Vandal.” The deep and icy mistrust

which the German arouses as soon as he comes to power, which we see again even today—is still the aftermath of that extinguishable horror with which Europe viewed the raging of the blond Germanic beast for centuries (although between the old Germanic peoples and us Germans there is scarcely an idea in common, let alone a blood relationship). I once remarked on Hesiod's dilemma when he thought up the series of cultural eras and tried to express them in gold, silver and iron: he could find no other solution to the contradiction presented to him by the magnificent but at the same time so shockingly violent world of Homer than to make two eras out of one, which he now placed one behind the other—first the era of heroes and demigods from Troy and Thebes, as that world which remained in the memory of the noble races which had their ancestors in it; then the iron era, as that same world appeared to the descendants of the downtrodden, robbed, ill-treated, and those carried off and sold: as an era of iron, hard, as I said, cold, cruel, lacking feeling and conscience, crushing everything and coating it with blood. Assuming that what is at any rate believed as “truth” were indeed true, that it is the *meaning of all culture* to breed a tame and civilized animal, a *household pet*, out of the beast of prey “man,” then one would undoubtedly have to view all instinctive reaction and instinctive *ressentiment*, by means of which the noble races and their ideals were finally wrecked and overpow-

ered, as the actual *instruments of culture*; which, however, is not to say that the *bearers* of these instincts were themselves representatives of the culture. Instead, the opposite would be not only probable—no! it is *visible* today! These bearers of oppressive, vindictive instincts, the descendants of all European and non-European slavery, in particular of all pre-Aryan population—represent the *decline* of mankind! These “instruments of culture” are a disgrace to man, more a grounds for suspicion of, or an argument against, “culture” in general! We may be quite justified in retaining our fear of the blond beast at the center of every noble race and remain on our guard: but who would not, a hundred times over, prefer to fear if he can admire at the same time, rather than *not* fear, but thereby permanently retain the disgusting spectacle of the failed, the stunted, the wasted away and the poisoned? And is that not *our* fate? What constitutes *our* aversion to “man” today?—for we *suffer* from man, no doubt about that—*Not* fear; rather, the fact that we have nothing to fear from man; that “man” is first and foremost a teeming mass of worms; that the “tame man,” who is incurably mediocre and unedifying, has already learnt to view himself as the aim and pinnacle, the meaning of history, the “higher man”;—yes, the fact that he has a certain right to feel like that insofar as he feels distanced from the superabundance of failed, sickly, tired and exhausted people of whom today’s Europe is beginning

to reek, and insofar as he is at least relatively successful, at least still capable of living, at least saying "yes" to life ...

12. —At this juncture I cannot suppress a sigh and one last hope. What do I find absolutely intolerable? Something which I just cannot cope alone with and which suffocates me and makes me feel faint? Bad air! Bad air! That something failed comes near me, that I have to smell the bowels of a failed soul! ... Apart from that, what cannot be borne in the way of need, deprivation, bad weather, disease, toil, solitude? Basically we can cope with everything else, born as we are to an underground and battling existence; again and again we keep coming up to the light, again and again we experience our golden hour of victory,—and then there we stand, the way we were born, unbreakable, tense, ready for new, more difficult and distant things, like a bow which is merely stretched tauter by affliction.—But from time to time grant me—assuming that there are divine benefactresses beyond good and evil—a glimpse, grant me just one glimpse of something perfect, completely finished, happy, powerful, triumphant, which still leaves something to fear! A glimpse of a man who justifies man *himself*, a stroke of luck, an instance of a man who makes up for and redeems man, and enables us to retain our *faith in mankind*! ... For the matter stands like so: the stunting and leveling of European man conceals *our* greatest danger, because the sight of this makes us

tired ... Today we see nothing that wants to expand, we suspect that things will just continue to decline, getting thinner, better-natured, cleverer, more comfortable, more mediocre, more indifferent, more Chinese, more Christian—no doubt about it, man is getting “better” all the time ... Right here is where the destiny of Europe lies—in losing our fear of man we have also lost our love for him, our respect for him, our hope in him and even our will to be man. The sight of man now makes us tired—what is nihilism today if it is not *that*? ... We are tired of *man* ...

13. —But let us return: the problem of the *other* origin of “good,” of good as thought up by the man of *ressentiment*, demands its solution.—There is nothing strange about the fact that lambs bear a grudge toward large birds of prey: but that is no reason to blame the large birds of prey for carrying off the little lambs. And if the lambs say to each other, “These birds of prey are evil; and whoever is least like a bird of prey and most like its opposite, a lamb,—is good, isn’t he?,” then there is no reason to raise objections to this setting-up of an ideal beyond the fact that the birds of prey will view it somewhat derisively, and will perhaps say, “We don’t bear any grudge at all toward these good lambs, in fact we love them, nothing is tastier than a tender lamb.”—It is just as absurd to ask strength *not* to express itself as strength, *not* to be a desire to overthrow, crush, become master, to be a thirst for enemies, resistance and triumphs, as it is to ask

weakness to express itself as strength. A quantum of force is just such a quantum of drive, will, action, in fact it is nothing but this driving, willing and acting, and only the seduction of language (and the fundamental errors of reason petrified within it), which construes and misconstrues all actions as conditional upon an agency, a "subject," can make it appear otherwise. And just as the common people separates lightning from its flash and takes the latter to be a *deed*, something performed by a subject, which is called lightning, popular morality separates strength from the manifestations of strength, as though there were an indifferent substratum behind the strong person which had the *freedom* to manifest strength or not. But there is no such substratum; there is no "being" behind the deed, its effect and what becomes of it; "the doer" is invented as an afterthought,—the doing is everything. Basically, the common people double a deed; when they see lightning, they make a doing-a-deed out of it: they posit the same event, first as cause and then as its effect. The scientists do no better when they say "force moves, force causes" and such like,—all our science, in spite of its coolness and freedom from emotion, still stands exposed to the seduction of language and has not ridded itself of the changelings foisted upon it, the "subjects" (the atom is, for example, just such a changeling, likewise the Kantian "thing-in-itself"): no

wonder, then, if the entrenched, secretly smouldering emotions of revenge and hatred put this belief to their own use and, in fact, do not defend any belief more passionately than that *the strong are free* to be weak, and the birds of prey are free to be lambs:—in this way, they gain the right to make the birds of prey *responsible* for being birds of prey ... When the oppressed, the downtrodden, the violated say to each other with the vindictive cunning of powerlessness: “Let us be different from evil people, let us be good! And a good person is anyone who does not rape, does not harm anyone, who does not attack, does not retaliate, who leaves the taking of revenge to God, who keeps hidden as we do, avoids all evil and asks little from life in general, like us who are patient, humble and upright”—this means, if heard coolly and impartially, nothing more than “We weak people are just weak; it is good to do nothing *for which we are not strong enough*”—but this grim state of affairs, this cleverness of the lowest rank which even insects possess (which play dead, in order not to “do too much” when in great danger), has, thanks to the counterfeiting and self-deception of powerlessness, clothed itself in the finery of self-denying, quiet, patient virtue, as though the weakness of the weak were itself—I mean its *essence*, its effect, its whole unique, unavoidable, irredeemable reality—a voluntary achievement, something wanted, chosen, a *deed*, an *accom-*

plishment. This type of man *needs* to believe in an unbiased “subject” with freedom of choice, because he has an instinct of self-preservation and self-affirmation in which every lie is sanctified. The reason the subject (or, as we more colloquially say, *the soul*) has been, until now, the best doctrine on earth, is perhaps because it facilitated that sublime self-deception whereby the majority of the dying, the weak and the oppressed of every kind could construe weakness itself as freedom, and their particular mode of existence as an *accomplishment*.

14. —Would anyone like to have a little look down into the secret of how *ideals are fabricated* on this earth? Who has enough pluck? ... Come on! Here we have a clear glimpse into this dark workshop. Just wait one moment, Mr. Nosy Daredevil: your eyes will have to become used to this false, shimmering light ... There! That’s enough! Now you can speak! What’s happening down there? Tell me what you see, you with your most dangerous curiosity—now *I* am the one who’s listening.—

—“I cannot see anything but I can hear all the better. There is a guarded, malicious little rumor-mongering and whispering from every nook and cranny. I think people are telling lies; a sugary mildness clings to every sound. Lies are turning weakness into an *accomplishment*, no doubt about it—it’s just as you said.”—

—Go on!

—“and impotence which doesn’t retaliate is being turned into ‘goodness’; timid baseness is being turned into ‘humility’; submission to people one hates is being turned into ‘obedience’ (actually toward someone who, they say, orders this submission—they call him God). The inoffensiveness of the weakling, the very cowardice with which he is richly endowed, his standing-by-the-door, his inevitable position of having to wait, are all given good names such as ‘patience,’ which is also called *the* virtue; not-being-able-to-take-revenge is called not-wanting-to-take-revenge, it might even be forgiveness (‘for *they* know not what they do—but we know what *they* are doing!’).” They are also talking about ‘loving your enemy’—and sweating while they do it.”

—Go on!

—“They are miserable, without a doubt, all these rumormongers and clandestine forgers, even if they do crouch close together for warmth—but they tell me that their misery means they are God’s chosen and select, after all, people beat the dogs they love best; perhaps this misery is just a preparation, a test, a training, it might be even more than that—something which will one day be balanced up and paid back with enormous interest in gold, no! in happiness. They call that ‘bliss.’”

—Go on!

—“They are now informing me that not only are they better than the powerful, the masters of the world whose spittle they have to lick (*not* from fear, not at all from fear! but because God orders them to honor those in authority)*—not only are they better, but they have a ‘better time,’ or at least will have a better time one day. But enough! enough! I can’t bear it any longer. Bad air! Bad air! This workshop where *ideals are fabricated*—it seems to me just to stink of lies.”

—No! Wait a moment! You haven’t said anything yet about the masterpieces of those black magicians who can turn anything black into whiteness, milk and innocence:—haven’t you noticed their perfect *raffinement*, their boldest, subtlest, most ingenious and mendacious stunt? Pay attention! These cellar rats full of revenge and hatred—what do they turn revenge and hatred into? Have you ever heard these words? Would you suspect, if you just went by what they said, that the men around you were nothing but men of *ressentiment*? ...

—“I understand, I’ll open my ears once more (oh! oh! oh! and *hold* my nose). Now, at last, I can hear what they have been saying so often: ‘We good people—we *are the just*’—what they are demanding is not called retribution, but ‘the triumph of *justice*’; what they hate is not their enemy, oh no! they hate ‘*injustice*,’ ‘godlessness’; what they believe and hope for is not the prospect of revenge, the delirium

of sweet revenge (—Homer early on dubbed it ‘sweeter than honey’), but the victory of God, the *just* God, over the Godless; all that remains for them to love on earth are not their brothers in hate but their ‘brothers in love,’[†] as they say, all good and just people on earth.”

—And what do they call that which serves as a consolation for all the sufferings of the world—their phantasmagoria of anticipated future bliss?

—“What? Do I hear correctly? They call it ‘the last judgment,’ the coming of *their* kingdom, the ‘kingdom of God’—but *in the meantime* they live ‘in faith,’ ‘in love,’ ‘in hope.’”*

—Enough! Enough!