Oh life's midday! Oh festival! Oh garden of summer! I wait in restless ecstasy, I stand and watch and wait - where are you, friends? It is you I await, in readiness day and night. Come now! It is time you were here!

Was it not for you the glacier today exchanged its grey for roses? The brook seeks you; and wind and clouds press higher in the blue, longingly they crowd aloft to look for you.

For you have I prepared my table in the highest height - who lives so near the stars as I, or who so near the depths of the abyss? My empire - has an empire ever reached so far? And my honey - who has tasted the sweetness of it?

- And there you are, friends! - But, alas, am I not he you came to visit? You hesitate, you stare - no, be angry, rather! Is it no longer - I? Are hand, step, face transformed? And what I am, to you friends - I am not?

Am I another? A stranger to myself? Sprung from myself? A wrestler who subdued himself too often? Turned his own strength against himself too often, checked and wounded by his own victory?

Did I seek where the wind bites keenest, learn to live where no one lives, in the desert where only the polar bear lives, unlearn to pray and curse, unlearn man and god, become a ghost flitting across the glaciers?

- Old friends! how pale you look, how full of love and terror! No - be gone! Be not angry! Here - you could not be at home: here in this far domain of ice and rocks - here you must be a huntsman, and like the Alpine goat.

A wicked huntsman is what I have become! - See how bent my bow! He who drew that bow, surely he was the mightiest of men - : but the arrow, alas - ah, no arrow is dangerous as that arrow is dangerous - away! be gone! For your own preservation! . . .

You turn away? - O heart, you have borne up well, your hopes stayed strong: now keep your door open to new friends! Let the old go! Let memories go! If once you were young, now - you are younger!

What once united us, the bond of one hope - who still can read the signs love once inscribed therein, now faint and faded? It is like a parchment - discoloured, scorched - from which the hand shrinks back.
No longer friends, but - what shall I call them? - they are the ghosts of friends which at my heart and window knock at night, which gaze on me and say: 'were we once friends?' - oh faded word, once fragrant as the rose!

Oh longing of youth, which did not know itself! Those I longed for, those I deemed changed into kin of mine - that they have aged is what has banished them: only he who changes remains akin to me.

Oh life's midday! Oh second youth! Oh garden of summer! I wait in restless ecstasy, I stand and watch and wait - it is friends I await, in readiness day and night, new friends. Come now! It is time you were here!

This song is done - desire's sweet cry died on the lips: a sorcerer did it, the timely friend, the midday friend - no! ask not, who he is - at midday it happened, at midday one became two...

Now, sure of victory together, we celebrate the feast of feasts: friend Zarathustra has come, the guest of guests! Now the world is laughing, the dread curtain is rent, the wedding day has come for light and darkness . . .