

Epically Amused

[or how to strive heroically in the age of terror]

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a folk opera composed by
Blake Harrington

Blake Harrington and the Stage Door Band



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dedicated to the spirit of openness

and to the equation

$$S = k \cdot \log W$$

Blake Harrington, February 2018

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Epically Amused

a folk opera

(or how to strive heroically in the age of terror)

- Pythia *[modern woman wearing exercise outfit with yoga pants]*
Zarathustra *[Nietzsche's superman wearing garish five-button purple suit with red velvet trim, red tie, and black derby with purple band]*
Poetry *[lead female muse dressed as 19th century romantic poet]*
Music *[female muse as maniacal conductor dressed in tuxedo with baton]*
Dance *[female muse suggestively dressed as belly dancer]*
Philosophy *[male demi-god dressed as graduate in black robe with pencil and leather bound notebook, conical dunce hat, and thick glasses]*
Chaos *[male primordial void dressed in black suit, white tie, black cape, and white Greek tragedy mask]*
Socrates *[himself]*
History *[an old flea bitten, costumed horse with the name History painted on its side]*
Troupe of dancers *[dressed as harlequins]*

ACT ONE

[Poetry stands atop the ruins of a low outcropping of altar rocks. Beside her, a Greek column lays toppled. Behind her, a riser of marble steps leads into a jungle of trees.]

Poetry **What surrounds me?** *[looks with dissatisfaction around the temple ruins]*

Chaos. *[nods sternly]*

Its decay, decline and ruin

Lay exhausted all around me. *[asks the audience]*

Shall we start again? *[encourages the audience to answer yes]*

I ask, shall we? *[encourages the audience to answer yes again]*

Then let us say, Yea! to creation,

Our great and natural affirmation, and

Split what seems in disarray,

Song inside cries. *[loudly with fists shaking]*

We wish to be alive!

Chaos *[Enter Chaos who bows to Poetry, raises hands in question, shrugs shoulders, and addresses audience while walking around.]*

Why is this temple in ruins? *[hand touches chest]*
I am why, because *[hands present himself]*
I am Chaos.
And why am I?
I am why because
The muse of poetry NAMED me; *[chiding Poetry]*
But to name the unfathomable is as absurd as
Resistance to my inevitability. *[speaking in an aristocratic English accent]*
For as the hot cup of tea grows cold, *[pretends to sip from a teacup, then growls]*
So the pumping lungs of a dying beast must yield, as well.
[apologetically]
All things eventually rest,
All motions silently cease,
And all forms completely disappear into me *[proudly]*
Devoid of meaning

Poetry **I am thee Poet** *[beats breast, then points at Chaos]*
Who names you, Chaos,
And in naming you are made known
For even you, yes you
Must obey the siren call
When words poetically expose. *[raises hands]*
Now stop, stand, listen,
Give me your rapt attention, and
Greet my companions; *[with malice]*
Friends who have so much more to make of you,
Shape you,
And forcefully oppose
[Poetry gestures with hand and arm as Music enters. Poetry then steps off altar and climbs up the riser steps.]

Music *[enters stage purposefully striding, salutes Poetry with baton, steps atop altar, and confronts Chaos]*
I am the muse of Music, *[presents herself]*
The conductor of Poetry; and
I command you, Chaos *[points baton at Chaos and conducts]*
To heed with trumpeting haste *[Horns blast. Chaos flinches. Music turns and marches up steps.]*

Dance *[enters stage with hips shaking, smiles at Poetry and Music, steps atop altar, and sensually coos to Chaos]*
I am the muse of Dance, [presents herself]
The grace of Poetry; and
I demand of you, Chaos *[hips thrust at chaos with grinding pelvis while Chaos flinches and instinctively protects his crotch]*
To sway through time and space *[winks, turns, and shimmies up steps]*

Philosophy *[enters stage stumbling, bows to Poetry, Music, and Dance while dunce hat falls off, picks up hat, stumbles atop altar, and states intellectually to Chaos as if nothing awkward occurred]*
And I am the demi-god, Philosophy, [presents himself]
The reason for Poetry; and
I instruct you, Chaos *[pedantically speaking while Chaos dismissively waves hand]*
To unfold in a rational way. *[pauses to smile, swells chest, clears throat, and turns to audience]*
One blessed evening while in an impaired state, *[pretends to take a drink from a bottle]*
The great, Zeus, was inspired to mate with a fortune telling gypsy;
And I, ever so whimsically,
Am the product of that most good fortune. *[laughing]*
I just made a joke!
[Philosophy looks at muses for approval. Poetry rolls her eyes, Music gives thumbs down sign, and Dance shakes her head and points for Philosophy to address Chaos. Philosophy dejectedly turns to Chaos.]
I reveal purpose like I make a punch line known:
Always after the fact and far too late
[stumbles up steps]

Chaos *[with amused laughter while looking around and sarcastically speaking]*
Oh! Please rebuild the SACRED temple, muses.
It's all yours, for now,
But why?
I'll just be back to reclaim whatever hopelessness you create;
[confidently]
And I will reclaim it, muses.
After all I have History on my side. *[tongue clicks and gestures for History to enter stage]*

Your future awaits, but alas!

It's no different than the past *[bows and slowly swaggers off stage with History following]*

[Enter Pythia. She obliviously jogs around, stretches, climbs atop altar, sits in meditation pose, and closes her eyes. The muses look at Pythia for a time. Smoke begins rising from the altar.]

Poetry *[touches Music and points at Pythia]*

See Pythia unaware atop the altar ruins? *[spoken with concern]*

If poetic measures are not to falter

Orchestration is required

Music *[touches Dance]*

She needs, by and by,

Rhythmic Dance to march in time

Dance *[touches Philosophy]*

The point, I suppose, would be moot *[mischievously]*

Without a little Philosophy to boot *[Dance kicks Philosophy in the buttocks. Other muses laugh.]*

Philosophy *[Wounded by the kick, Philosophy rubs his buttocks. He quickly recovers and touches his head with confident pride.]*

I know just such an inspiration

Who has been forming in my noggin

For twenty-five hundred years.

He is reason personified: The superman, *[finger goes up]*

ZARATHUSTRA,

For whom Pythia pines. *[anxiously asks Poetry]*

Oh! Please, Oh! Please, Oh! Please, Oh! Pleeeeeeeeeeease,

My most high priestess, Poetry,

May we call him to come down from my mind?

[Poetry nods yes. The muses and Philosophy hold hands and one by one call for Zarathustra.]

Poetry *[poetically calls out]*

ZARATHUSTRA

Music *[commandingly calls out]*
ZARATHUSTRA

Dance *[playfully calls out]*
OH! ZARATHUSTRA

Philosophy *[curiously calls out]*
ZARATHUSTRA?

Poetry, Music, Dance, and Philosophy *[raise hands and in unison shout]*
Come down! *[hands release]*

[Horns blast. Enter Zarathustra. He ostentatiously tips hat, bows, and smiles ridiculously. Philosophy applauds enthusiastically. Poetry and Music guffaw and mime gestures of confused surprise and distaste. Dance appears intrigued while Pythia obliviously meditates.]

Poetry *[confused]*
Philosophy, are you sure this is the superman of reason?

[Enthusiasm undiminished, Philosophy clenches his fists in triumph while nodding up and down.]

Music *[disgusted]*
Get this fool off the stage

Dance *[sexually intrigued]*
Ooooh! Why all the rage?
He seems quite reasonable to my taste

Poetry **Silence!**
[thinks and laughs]
Hmmm, ok Philosophy. *[absurdly]*
Let's give your SUPERMAN a try. *[hand gestures magically]*
Here are lyrics of love for the pair to share

Music and Dance *[hands intertwine, gesture magically, and in unison speak]*
And here are Music and Dance
Delightfully intertwined

*[A troupe of dancers enters stage. The muses sing backup vocals.
Philosophy takes notes. Zarathustra steps atop the altar and offers his
hand to Pythia. Pythia opens her eyes, takes Zarathustra's hand, rises
from the altar rocks, and together sing song #1 while the dancers dance.]*

1 In Love

**If this song was unsung,
What would be?
Tomorrow would never come,
Let us sing!
The ancient song to right the wrong
Of love imprisoned,
The song of songs to bring the dawn
Of everything.
Now time is the rhythm
Of song unbound, and
We are its children,
You and I are in love**

**On that Sunday when I sang
Like a sparrow made of clay,
You took an arrow from your quiver
And pulled back the bow.
When the arrow was let go
You struck the sparrow true,
As I mourned out this song
You clapped your hands, and the sparrow flew
To time in rhythm
Of song unbound, and
We are its children,
You and I are in love**

**Emptiness is filled with
Everything,
Split its seems, light inside
Cries to be alive!
Make us timed and counted
Give us joy and sadness,
Make the light be unbound**

**Till earth is discovered.
Now time is the rhythm
Of song unbound, and
We are its children,
You and I are in love**

[Exit dancers. Zarathustra and Pythia kiss one another atop the altar oblivious to all except each other.]

Philosophy *[clears throat to speak, looks at Poetry who nods approval, looks at his notebook, and addresses audience pedantically]*

**Thus, our lovers discover in each other
The potential to bring into this world
The actualization of beauty as a result of their union;
And if the Greek philosopher, Aristotle, who once said:
"Love is composed of a single soul inhabiting two bodies."
Is correct, then, their communion will bring into fruition *[raises finger]*
Something truly unique, in point of fact. *[looks around smiling and then remembers to address and compliment Poetry]*
Oh! and good song, my most majestic muse, Poetry.
Way to start off the first act**

Poetry **I'm proud to be a part of that number.** *[Music and Dance nod and smile in agreement.]*

Our lovers are off to such a wonderful beginning

Dance **And off with their clothing if we don't get moving.** *[gestures for everyone to get moving]*

Come on

[All four walk down toward Zarathustra and Pythia.]

Music *[while walking]*

**Future songs will have to stiffen their character
For us to achieve our designs**

Dance **Stiffen, indeed,** *[coquettishly]*

And more than just Zarathustra's spine

[Poetry steps next to Zarathustra while other Muses pause. Zarathustra and Pythia are still unaware of Poetry's presence.]

Poetry **Zarathustra, recite these poetic promises of love
To heighten Pythia's anticipation**
[Poetry leans and whispers inaudibly into Zarathustra's ear.]

Music *[addressing Dance while Poetry whispers into Zarathustra's ear]*
We must raise Pythia's expectations *[baton hits palm]*
So that we can crush her dreams.
Only, then, can we rebuild her into something that seems *[maniacally]*
A little less fragile

Dance *[rolling eyes]*
No need to tell me.
This isn't my first chariot race, *[pretending to rhythmically stride a horse drawn chariot]*
You know?

Zarathustra *[lovingly recites to Pythia]*
A glimpse of what dwells hidden
Sparkles in your eyes *[touches her face]*
Like looking through stained glass windows
Into cathedrals of delight,
Golden brown gemstones
Glinting with a hint
That a treasure more immeasurable *[touches her heart]*
Is waiting within

[Pythia is both charmed and touched by Zarathustra's words. Pythia places arms around him.]

Pythia **Will you be a steed to my love?** *[running her hands down his back]*
Your back is forged strong for such purpose
With a smooth, hard, masculine surface
And long angled limbs ready to spring
To the tempered command of a goddess. *[presents her body]*
My fire rein holds the ring
Stretched taut over captive inches
As you anxiously wait to be ridden

**In the manner I please, [putting arms back around him]
Will you be a steed to my love?**

[Zarathustra kisses Pythia as they lay down upon the altar. The three muses and Philosophy encircle the altar and slowly raise their hands while the couple make sounds of love. They drop their hands and walk up the riser of steps. Dancers enter stage. Together song #2 is sung with the muses while Philosophy takes notes.]

2 Sunflower of Love

**What strange sun shall we see
When the gray drapery
Of winter clouds yield to spring?**

**What strange flower shall then grow
Beneath the sun shining so
Brilliantly more than gold?**

**And what strange thoughts shall then come
To us gazing at the sun,
The sunflower of our love?**

**Strange because never has it been seen before,
Oh! never has it ever been seen.
Strange because never has it been alive before,
Oh! never has it ever been alive.
Strange because never has it been known before,
Oh! never has it ever been known**

The sunflower of our love

[Exit dancers. Zarathustra and Pythia still remain unaware of the forces surrounding them. Chaos saunters onto the stage.]

Chaos *[addressing audience]*
**Love is but a wrinkle of borrowed energy that,
In time,
Will wink out like a candle spark set amid
The dark winds of a starless night. [Looks at Poetry and**

antagonistically calls out]
How's that for poetry?

Poetry **Not bad for a lawless hack.
How long did you blindly whack upon your typewriter
Before the random words fell into place?**

Chaos **How long? Unlike you, Poetry
My time never comes for I am without space.
You're the one operating under the gun** *[points finger like a pistol at Poetry and pulls the trigger]*

Dance **For someone whose time never comes, Chaos,
I seem to recall you have an awfully quick trigger;** *[winks with exaggeration at Chaos]*
If you know what I mean

[All three muses and Philosophy mockingly laugh. Chaos indignantly rages.]

Chaos **Snicker at me?** *[angrily]*
**Let's make the consequences for your mistakes even bigger, then.
Payback is a MUSE**

[Chaos raises hands and looks to the sky. Forcefully he throws his hands down while thunder claps. Pythia screams and collapses while Chaos storms off the stage. Reaching into her pants, Pythia pulls her hands out to reveal dripping blood. Pythia painfully addresses Zarathustra.]

Pythia **Our baby that was growing inside my womb** *[weeps]*
Is dead

[Zarathustra clutches his temples and pulls at his hair. Enter the dancers. Together song #3 is sung with the muses while the dancers dance. Philosophy takes notes.]

3 One Black Rose

**One black rose to beware
Grows inside with despair**

**Blooming dark in the shadow
Whispering things immoral,**

**One black rose poisoning
Takes up root inside of me
Naked as immodesty
Shamelessly whispering,**

**One black rose then destroys
All the hope I enjoy
When its form becomes my face
And mocking lips shockingly say,
You never may**

[Exit dancers. Zarathustra and Pythia remain oblivious to the external forces surrounding them. Enter Chaos who walks menacingly up to an intimidated Philosophy while Philosophy tries to wax about misfortune.]

Philosophy *[Affected by the presence of Chaos, Philosophy stumbles through his speech nervously while fumbling through his notebook.]*

**The promised sunflower of love has, uh, with great misfortune
Bloomed into a black rose of s-s-s-sorrow.
Thus, our lovers are devastated when, uh,
As the sublime novelist, John Steinbeck, once wrote,
Through the verbal appropriation of master poet, Robert Burns,
Who was, um, in fact, compelled by Poetry, herself, *[gestures with shaky hand towards Poetry]*
To write about expectations:
"The best laid schemes of mice and men
Go often astray
Leaving nothing but grief and pain
For promised joy."**

Chaos *[slowly clapping next to Philosophy while sarcastically addressing Poetry]*

**Bravo Poetry.
Such stunning words,
Bravo!**

Music **Poetry, *[touches Poetry's shoulder]***

**Your crystalized verse cuts through a mire of befuddlement, [*thumb jerks towards Philosophy*]
As well as a load of horse shit [*points baton at Chaos*]**

Chaos [*addressing Poetry*]
**Perhaps Zarathustra may comfort Pythia with some poetic verse?
I'm quite curious to hear if what the superman says [*amused*]
Can get any worse**

[Poetry takes up the challenge and inaudibly whispers into Zarathustra's ear.]

Music [*betting Dance while Poetry whispers to Zarathustra*]
Fifty coins of silver says Zarathustra gets slugged

Dance **I've got a hundred that says Pythia kisses him**

Chaos **If the humans do anything besides drool,
I'll allow this chimpanzee song and dance to continue**

Music [*with certainty*]
You have no choice, Chaos.
[gesturing baton towards Pythia and Zarathustra]
They are beyond you for now

Zarathustra [*sincerely to Pythia*]
**Whoever we love surely
Will one day hurt us deeply,
So very deeply.
For us it feels like heat burning [*grabs at his chest*]
A hole through the heart
So very dark.
Why are we forgiving? [*folds hands in prayer*]
Love has no reason,
Only need.
Our love needs to be [*Whereupon a self-impressed Zarathustra breaks into a ridiculous smile with "ta-da!" pose. He then mimics Chaos.*]
How's that for poetry?**

[Pythia impulsively slaps his face and turns her back. Zarathustra rubs

his chin grimacing. Chaos laughs and exits the stage.]

Music *[addressing Dance]*

I win! Pay me

[Dance annoyingly reaches into her cleavage and gives Music a small bag of coins.]

Poetry *[instructively]*

**Tell us, superman of the human race:
How do you feel with the pain of Pythia's palm
Imprinted upon your face?**

Zarathustra *[hurt and confused]*

**I try to deny my deep desire
But she slaps me back
Not to deny her,
The sting on my cheek
Heated with her fire
Commands me completely.
So I try to forget my reasoned mind
But the desire reached
Never satisfies,
Her sting on my cheek fades away
Till reason comes back
To rule the day**

Dance **Ah! The old conundrum:
Damned if you do, dumb if you don't.
What's the solution?**

Music *[hands gesture]*

Sound the trumpets!

Dance *[hands gesture]*

Bring on the dancing harlequins!

[The dancers enter stage as song #4 begins with muses singing backup vocals and Philosophy taking notes.]

4 Perfect Prison

**The perfect prison has no key
When you're sentenced to be
Alive and too terrified to ever leave.
No walls are necessary,
There is no need
In a perfect prison that has no key
To unlock the door
Because there is no door
For keys to unlock this mystery**

**There is no sign to point the way
Because there is no way
For signs to point us out of an endless maze
Where lost we remain directionless,
The compass needle spins around enigmatically
Never pointing the way
Because there is no way
For signs to point us out
Of an endless maze**

**There is no answer to the question
Why we are here
And not where there is an answer
That doesn't disappear
Projected into time and space
Shifting and unclear,
There is no answer to the question
That doesn't disappear**

[Exit dancers. Zarathustra and Pythia still show no signs of being aware of the muses and Philosophy.]

Philosophy *[addressing audience while looking at his notes]*
**Being IS the state of becoming.
Consequently, even our deepest answers change.
The only constant, therefore,
Is change**

Poetry *[surprised]*
Did Philosophy just say something that actually makes sense?

Music **Even a blind squirrel discovers a nut from time to time**

Dance **He's more like a blind nut than a squirrel**
[Dance makes pretend binoculars with her hands, squints her eyes, and shows top teeth while bobbing her head up and down absurdly.]

Poetry *[pointing at Dance]*
Now that is funny!
[All three muses laugh with delight while Philosophy sheepishly grins. Poetry then challenges Philosophy.]
Tell me, Philosophy,
While you're on a mental hot streak,
Why must being always be in a state of becoming?

Philosophy **Without action and metamorphosis,**
We are trapped inside a lifeless void.
With motion, however,
We are sentenced to spin upon a wheel of endless becoming.
In poetic words, we exist behind a prison wall *[profoundly]*
Or not at all

Poetry *[praising Philosophy]*
Excellent Philosophy. *[turning to Pythia]*
Oh! Pythia,
Let Philosophy's insight inspire you to recite

Pythia *[recites to audience]*
I begin in praise of nature
Believing in her ancient way,
Certainly she has a plan just as grand
As the myriad of form she parades, but
How like her snaking circles
I shed my skin for change

I charge her, then, with the abomination
Of creating form for her own sake,
Nature has no plan to build up man

**Beyond the circles she creates,
She simply loves to spin life's wheel
Fattening upon the next chanced meal**

Poetry **Excellent, my dear. [turns to Zarathustra]
Ok, Zarathustra,
Your turn to poeticize is here**

Zarathustra *[recites to audience]*
**Across the threshold of a heavy oak door
Your eyes adjust to the darkness
But even quicker wind whispers
As the door slams locked behind you,
Then to the horror of your soul you see
Human bones chained against the wall
One hand holds a bound leather book
While the other points directly at you,
Taking the book from its bony grip
You spy your name as author scrawled,
And although your eyes pain from dimness
Every word you read in prison**

Chaos *[Chaos enters stage with History]*
Every word of this dreadful play is prison

History **NAAAAAY**

Dance **Yoo-hoo! [arms and hands waving]
Everyone listen to me.
Sometimes you gotta boogie down [does a boogie down move]
In order to get back up. [boogies back up]
Let's shake a leg
While we sing away the blues. [looks with disdain at Chaos and History
while motioning with her thumb for Chaos and History to exit]
Beat it, Chaos and History**

*[Chaos and History retreat off stage. Dancers enter stage. Everyone
sings song #5 while Philosophy takes notes.]*

5 For Us All

**Sand in circles shifts as winds
Shape the desert sands of Am,
Day we stay in human tents
By night we travel once again**

**Sand in circles
For us all**

**We are nomads with lives of sand
Forever shaped by winds of chance,
Forms we take always change
Relentless souls never may remain remains**

**Sand in circles
For us all**

[Curtains close. Act One ends with intermission.]

ACT TWO

[Curtains open with Philosophy and the muses standing upon the riser steps. Pythia and Zarathustra dully sit on the altar.]

Philosophy *[addressing audience]*

When I was a little baby philosopher, *[holds hand knee high]*

My mother, the fortune telling gypsy,

Used to sing to me a lullaby.

For the immortal life of me I can't remember the melody, *[looks over at Music with alarm, much to Music's dissatisfaction]*

But the libretto still haunts me to this day. *[gathers himself and recites]*

Drifting in a sea of error

We sing the songs of old

Searching ourselves with scrutiny

For the Word we wish to know,

But all our words are symbols

That mirror reality

With reflections far too many

And water oh! so deep

Poetry *[seriously]*

**Philosophy, I whispered those words into your mother's ear,
For even you serve my purpose. *[merrily addressing Music and Dance]*
And that goes for you two, rascals, as well. *[spoken in a cool, street wise tone]***

Come on! Give me some Greek epidermis
*[Poetry, Music, and Dance perform an elaborate high-five handshake.
Philosophy looks on dejectedly having been left out.]*

Philosophy *[clears his throat, gathers his composure, and addresses audience]*

The point of the lullaby my mother recited is:

That LANGUAGE conceptualizes reality.

Picture a tree.

Now you see it. *[smiles]*

Now picture Chaos. *[frowns and speaks with gravity]*

Verily I say unto thee,

The possibility of God does not exist without language. *[slyly]*

Words even reflect formlessness, which otherwise,

Can not be seen

*[Inspired by Philosophy's rhetoric, Poetry, Music, and Dance give
Philosophy grudging applause with gestures of approval. Philosophy fails
at an attempt to do the high-five handshake with the other muses. Then
without any prompting from Poetry, Zarathustra recites a poem.]*

Zarathustra *[abruptly stands and shouts out the poem's title catching the muses
and Philosophy by surprise]*

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION *[pauses and poetically recites]*

**Capitalism is a skyscraper
Risen to the almighty dollar
Like some holy monolith
Higher than the steeple
That will one day cower
As did the steeple
To a tower risen higher
Hoodwinking the people**

[Zarathustra looks around stupidly blinking.]

Dance *[adoringly]*
**Oh, listen! He speaks the Logos.
Zarathustra needed neither reason from Philosophy
Nor inspiration from us to compose**

Music **He has begun to think for himself.** *[addressing Poetry]*
Your plan, my poetic superior, *[bows]*
Even works on dimwitted humans

Poetry *[indignantly]*
**Of course it does.
REALITY is my plan.
How can it unfold any other way?**

Music *[apologetically]*
**Yes, Poetry.
It's just that humans are somewhat more,
Shall I say?
More unpredictable than the others we've schooled**

Philosophy **Plus** *[slowly]*
There is always an exception to the rule, *[quicker]*
Except this rule, *[quickly]*
Which is the exception to the rule!

*[Poetry, Music, and Dance look at Philosophy with unabashed disdain.
Philosophy sheepishly grins. Then without any prompting Pythia recites a
poem.]*

Pythia *[abruptly stands and shouts out the poem's title catching the muses and
Philosophy by surprise again]*

BUTTERFLY BLUES *[pauses and poetically recites]*

**Butterflies can be caught, but
Do you really want to catch one?
You wish them sought, but
Is beauty in a collection?
Wings free thought, but**

**What an abomination!
Is it not unnatural
To capture freedom?**

[Pythia looks around with unfocused eyes along with Zarathustra.]

Poetry *[gesturing towards Pythia and Zarathustra]*

**Though our growing charges are still LOST in ignorance,
Let us celebrate today's cerebral achievements
With a song expounding upon the pain of awareness. *[Hands raise up]*
Strike up the philosophical band!
Singers, platonically sing!
Dancers, existentially PRANCE!**

[Dancers enter stage while everyone sings song #6. Philosophy takes notes.]

6 Lost

**Wandering lost my being cries out,
Flames are a pain deep in my heart.
Questioning why is fuel for the blaze,
Because I don't know sparks into flames**

**When wandering lost
And my being cries out**

**Wandering lost my being cries out,
Forever we are lost from the start.
Questioning why is smoke for the haze,
Because I don't know drifts far away**

**When wandering lost
And my being cries out
Forever we are lost from the start**

*[Exit dancers. Zarathustra and Pythia sink back into dull unawareness.
Chaos enters stage with History.]*

Chaos *[insincerely challenging Poetry]*

Please, Poetry.
For once let Philosophy foreshadow what comes next.
He always brings up the rear with the gear as: *[comically]*
The Monday morning quarterback, *[pretends to throw]*
The confetti sweeper, *[pretends to sweep]*
The back end of an ass symphony. *[pretends to fart, then speaks with clever superiority]*
A PRIORI,
That is to say, deduction before,
Rather than after observation, *[pauses with a throat quiver]*
Is his fondest dream

History **NAAAAY**

Poetry **Very well, Chaos.** *[turns to philosophy]*
Show him what you can do, Philosophy; *[warning]*
But if, pray tell,
You mess up again like that blunder with Hegel,
I'm making the twenty-first century
The epoch of anti-philosophy

Music *[doubtfully shaking her head]*
Good grief.
Philosophy has no real chance

Dance *[addressing Music]*
Double or nothing *[points at philosophy]*
The blind nut gets it right

Music **You're on.** *[greedily rubbing her hands]*
Betting against Philosophy is a steal

[Having heard Poetry and seen the bet between Dance and Music, Philosophy becomes agitated and looks to Poetry for direction.]

Poetry **Wax on! Philosophy.** *[encouragingly]*
Go ahead

Philosophy *[looks unsurely at his notes, then guesses]*
Now that Pythia and Zarathustra are capable,

The path forward can be revealed?

History **NAAAAAY**

Poetry *[steps over and congratulates Philosophy with a pat on the back]*
I knew all along you could do it

[Poetry turns her head so that Philosophy can't see. She looks at Music and Dance in disbelief. Dance snickers while Music angrily returns the purse of coins which goes back into Dance's cleavage.]

Poetry *[announcing like a ringmaster]*
**And now, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,
Look and listen!
Nature reveals the river's rhythmic path homeward**

[Poetry waves an extra magical gesticulation. Music stands at attention. Dance clutches her heart. Philosophy scratches his buttocks. Dancers enter stage. Chaos and History slip away while everyone sings song #7. Philosophy continues to take notes.]

7 River Dream

**The riverbed is sleepless,
It's too dry to dream.
Fires burn down the forest,
Clouds too white to drink.
Hazy are the ashes,
Thick with liquid heat.
The riverbed is sleepless,
It's too dry to dream.
What do rivers dream?
Rivers dream of the sea**

[The dancers freeze on stage.]

Poetry **I believe these humans have grown enough scruples
To receive instructions from one of my finest pupils.
Be silently still, fellow muses, *[makes the silence gesture with finger to lips]***

And listen to Master Socrates *[hand gesticulates magically]*
While he enlightens their confusion

[The muses and Philosophy freeze.]

Zarathustra **Did my ear hear something?**

Pythia **Only we are here, Zarathustra.**
It's just your imagination

[Socrates enters stage.]

Socrates **You did hear something, young man.**
I am Socrates;
And perhaps you are correct, also, my lady.
I very well may be a product of your imagination. *[Socrates hardily laughs.]*
Who can say just what is real, anyway?

Zarathustra **I feel I am able to say, Socrates.** *[proudly]*
I am Zarathustra, the superman of reason;
And WHAT EXISTS that is not imagined
Is real. *[presents Pythia to Socrates]*
Take Pythia, my dear bride, for example.
I know she is real because she would continue to exist
Even if I were to die
And could no longer imagine her existence

Socrates **To be consistently clear, you mean to say that**
What remains after Zarathustra is no longer here
Is real.
This way, reality can not be misconstrued.
Correct?

Zarathustra *[with self assurance]*
Perfectly revealed, Socrates, yes

Socrates **But Zarathustra,**
I fear you have only proven that you are not real;
For you CERTAINLY will not remain after you are no longer here

[Zarathustra looks puzzled.]

Socrates **What do you think, Pythia?**

Pythia **I think that WHAT INSPIRES
Is real**

Socrates **Ah! Pythia. I long to be real.**

May I inspire you? *[enthusiastically]*

For if your vision sees correctly

My being will be validated.

Look around, *[gestures to the muses and dancers]*

Do you not see the amusement unfolding around these desolate ruins?

Do not the rustling leaves sound out poetically?

Then when those leaves fall,

Do they not rhythmically whirl about like dancing beings?

[Socrates smiles, laughs, taps his toes, claps, and does a little dance. He then promenades around the stage bringing the dancers and muses into animation. The stage becomes a buzz of random voices and movement. Pythia and Zarathustra look on with astonishment as they become aware of the reality around them.]

Socrates **Wake up dancers! Come to life muses!**

Let us convene to dance and sing

Our new found meaning

[Everyone sings song #8 while the dancers dance. Philosophy takes notes.]

8 A Way With Senseless Thought

A way away, a way away

To agree with senselessness is to affirm

Truth of what must always be,

A senseless world defined by the senses

Luxuriously and lavished extreme,

Where slight perception like

A deep, torrential stream

Floods pools of an enchanted mind

La de da is the meaning of senseless thought

**Such sensation wrought by the muses
Touch, taste, sight, scent and sound,
Invokes dreams like stars yield constellations
When imagination with reason lines.
How then, we affirm when
Design is religiously taught,
But the nonsensical is the meaning of senseless thought**

*[The muses, Philosophy, and the dancers all freeze. Socrates waves
goodbye while exiting the stage dancing.]*

Pythia *[Pythia addresses Zarathustra with a strange expression on her face and
tries with difficulty to explain.]*

**While we sang, I had an inspired vision.
I saw all of creation as something like *[tries to find the right words]*
An organic machine;
And as a machine turns,
The universe twisted, revolved, and unfolded in order to yield
A fruitful purpose**

Zarathustra *[jokingly]*

**My love,
Are you sure you haven't been sniffing steaming glue vapors?**

Pythia *[laughs]*

**No, silly.
The stars, galaxies, epochs of time, and even space, itself,
All went into the machine**

Zarathustra *[calmly]*

**Pythia, my dear,
You beg the question.
What, pray tell, came out the other side?**

Pythia *[speaking with wonder]*

What was born is like a diamond

**Buried deep beneath the surface
Where pressures mold it perfect
From continental courses traveled
By the body of life**

[Pythia recites with gaining emotion and momentum.]

**The body of life is a closed gate
Waiting to be opened when
Continents collide into chasms
And what was born rises
To sparkle sacred beyond the day**

[Chaos strolls onstage.]

Chaos *[addressing Pythia and Zarathustra]*
**Good afternoon, Madame and Sir.
And by good, I hope that the blessings of stability
Remain unchanged for you both**

Pythia **Thank you, kind sir,
And may the blessings of this new day shine upon you, as well**

Zarathustra **My name is Zarathustra, *[presents Pythia]*
And this is my bride, Pythia**

[Chaos takes Pythia's hand and kisses it.]

Pythia **What is your name, good sir? Do tell**

Chaos **My name is *[pauses to think up a name]*
Doctor S. Chaosophy, and I am pleased to meet you**

Zarathustra **It's a pleasure to meet you, Doctor Chaosophy.
[Chaos and Zarathustra shake hands.]
What kind of doctor are you?**

Chaos **Why, I'm both a practicing physician and a doctor of philosophy.
I specialize in end of life medicine, as well as 19th century thought.
You could say, I suppose, *[lightheartedly]***

That reading Nietzsche just kills me
[Chaos chuckles.]

Zarathustra **Ah! what a strange coincidence.**
I've been doing quite a bit of reasoning, myself.
May I ask you a question?

Chaos **Naturally**

Zarathustra *[concentrates and asks Chaos]*
If being IS the state of becoming,
And all of creation transforms in order to survive;
Is there something that, in time,
Could come forth which need not ever change?

Chaos **Oh! my friends,**
Only two things never change.
The first is transformation, itself.
Look around. If nature sits still for even a moment,
It gets gobbled up.
[Chaos pretends to eat, followed by a big gulp. The faces of the muses and Philosophy become concerned.]
Gulp.
Which brings us to the other "THING" *[Chaos makes quotations with his fingers.]*
That never changes; *[monstrously]*
And that is NO THING, or nothing, also known as the void
Which does the gobbling

Pythia *[interjecting]*
But Doctor!
The desire to say YES never changes.
Only entangled in the slow nature of time
Do we otherwise learn to say no, *[glumly]*
I may not dream.
For such folly here is pain,
And as for hope? *[with great concern]*
Desolation till I learn negation,
And when spirit negates, what awaits?
Absolutely nothing.

We want to affirm, and last night I DID *[looks at Zarathustra]*
When my lips whispered over the word, *[passionately]*
YES, *[sweetly to Zarathustra]*
And your ear understood

[Pythia and Zarathustra spontaneously embrace and kiss.]

Chaos *[Chaos observes the lovers for a moment.]*
I must tastefully bid you, obviously young and impassioned lovers,
Adieu.
[Chaos gracefully bows.]
When, in the future, you are in need of my services;
Say, after an inevitable malady calls for attention,
Or, as a matter of course,
Some philosophical inquiry requires anxious examination,
No appointment is necessary

[Chaos begins to stroll off stage.]

Pythia *[calling after Chaos]*
Thank you Dr. Chaosophy.
By the way,
For what does the letter S in your first name stand?

Chaos *[yawning while walking off the stage dismissively]*
Oh! nothing, my dear.
Yawn... *[stretches arms]*
It stands for nothing at all

[Chaos strolls off stage.]

Zarathustra *[watches Chaos exit then addresses Pythia with a smirk]*
I think that the S stands for sleepy.
Talk about a weird old white dude.
Whew! I'm glad that Mr. Creepy is gone.
Besides, I don't want to sleep.
I'd rather wake up even more from this *[makes a dissatisfied face]*
THIS IGNORANT DREAM

Pythia *[poetically recites to Zarathustra]*

**Sound asleep deep in a dream
I see myself smiling,
Then every day I dream to wake
And forget the faith of questioning,
What is the dream?
If the dream is me asleep
Death is like a dreamless deep,
But if the dream is tomorrow morning
Death is but an awakening**

Zarathustra *[addressing everyone on stage]*
**Let us ALL sing a song of sleep, then,
To keep our eyes wide awake**

[Everyone sings song #9 while the dancers dance. Philosophy takes notes.]

9 Frozen People

**Half of life we live in winter,
Frozen people, frozen people.
From a deep and dark October gray
Into March and freezing rain,
Half of life we live in winter**

**A third of life we silently sleep,
Quiet and deep, quiet and deep.
Half that time we're bundled under
Winter blankets completely covered,
A third of life we silently sleep**

**All of life we pass away,
Day to night, night to day.
For even in the waking summer
Drifts of winter sleep forever,
All of life we pass away**

[The muses, Philosophy and the dancers all freeze. Zarathustra walks over to Philosophy and pries away the note book. Philosophy has no choice but to reluctantly give up the book as a look of horror freezes upon his face.]

Zarathustra *[opens book and begins to read it out loud to the audience]*

**At the point when sentience is capable of abstraction,
Creation attains a monumental achievement.
Formless ideas, that otherwise are devoid of possibility,
Come into being through language. *[with gravity]*
Now I shall reveal an astounding word,
A limitless idea,
A truth for all time.
Let us bring OPENNESS into existence**

Pythia *[poetically to audience]*

**Like in the garden of Eden
Where wisdom once was eaten
Through open mouths of Eve and Adam
Our wisdom opens, too.
Through legs unfolded,
Pass hearts in blossom,
To minds receptive.
This wisdom opens our eyes, but
Unlike the garden of Eden
We show you our nakedness unashamed *[Pythia and Zarathustra begin to undress]*
And exclaim why we are here:
To sanctify such glory,
Rise to heights heroically,
To pass through our bodies holy
Till death collapses down.
Then through remnants of our vision
Minds uplift on wings of wisdom
To an existence not here,
Not there, not anywhere,
Just open**

[Pythia and Zarathustra stand naked. The muses, Philosophy and the dancers come clothe them in white Grecian robes. Laurels are placed on the couple's heads. The muses and Philosophy return to the riser of steps and freeze. Zarathustra and Pythia address audience.]

Zarathustra *[holds up Philosophy's note book like a preacher while addressing*

the audience]

Out of the primordial void, creation comes forth. *[closes eyes]*
Through the pain of becoming, nature transforms. *[opens eyes*
and raises one finger languidly]
Into the idea of openness, soul is unbound. *[reaches out for Pythia]*
Pythia, are you ready?

Pythia **Yes, my love.** *[opens up her hand]*
My open hand is an empty hand
Ready for so much more,
Into the hands of openness
Riches may pour,
Clenched tight in a fist
Hands grip emptiness,
I open up my hand and take yours *[takes Zarathustra's hand]*

[Everyone sings song #10 while the dancers dance.]

10 Racing Home

Time and time and time again
I've heard you call and not come in
Pretending to hear the blowing wind
Without answering anything,
But when you trust to call again
Home I'll race like blowing wind
To rest my head below your chin
And hear the angels sing,
For there is where I must attend
Brokenness that needs to mend
Then love will heal the separate when
Home I come racing

[The muses, Philosophy, and the dancers freeze.]

Zarathustra *[addressing the audience with full authority]*

In the twenty-first century
How does one strive heroically?
Into an age of death and terror?
Amid the depths of human error?

**Verily I say unto thee
The hero proceeds openly,
With neither concealment nor deception,
Even government is his reflection
Unafraid of transparency,
And unafraid of leading the way
Out of this desolate place**

Pythia *[lovingly to Zarathustra]*
**Zarathustra,
You lived without knowing a love secure,
Would love be here tomorrow?
Would love occur?
How wearily my heart weighs *[clutches her heart]*
Like dying black flowers
Knowing you never knew
The meaning of always *[touches his face]***

**Always will your heart be renewed
When you say the words
Come to me truly,
And always will my heart bouquet
Blossom securely
Knowing you learned forever *[weeping with joy]*
The meaning of always**

Zarathustra **Come on, Pythia.
Let's get out of here**

[They kiss; and as the couple begins to walk off stage, History trots out.]

History **NAAAAY**

[Pythia and Zarathustra chuckle with laughter as the horse comes up to them. Suddenly the horse separates into two masked assassins wielding knives. The couple is knifed down on stage. Blood covers their white robes as the assassins run off stage. The muses, Philosophy, and the dancers all gather around their bodies while Poetry steps atop the altar.]

Poetry *[addressing the audience]*

**I am the muse of Poetry,
Mother to all who venture out of the void; [pointing at audience]
And long after you mortals have passed through this forsaken place,
I shall remain waiting.
Waiting for the next creature to appear upon the stage of sentience.
[gesturing proudly]
For I am the eternal recurrence.
I have the patience, courage, and strength to endure eons of eternity.
I heroically lead you forth from the lifeless void.
I deliver you, in time, from the prison of becoming.
I inspire your soul into OPENNESS beyond the power of entropy.
I am your [long pause]
Muse
[Poetry bows. Curtains close.]**