

Demian

by Hermann Hesse

Hermann Karl Hesse

2 July 1877 – 9 August 1962

- German novelist, poet, Nobel laureate in Literature;
- Hesse grew up in a Swabian Pietist household;
- Served in the German Army as a warder;
- Became preoccupied with psychoanalysis after receiving psychotherapy;
- Was strongly influenced by Buddhist philosophy.





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*I cannot tell my story without reaching a long
way back.*

The Plot

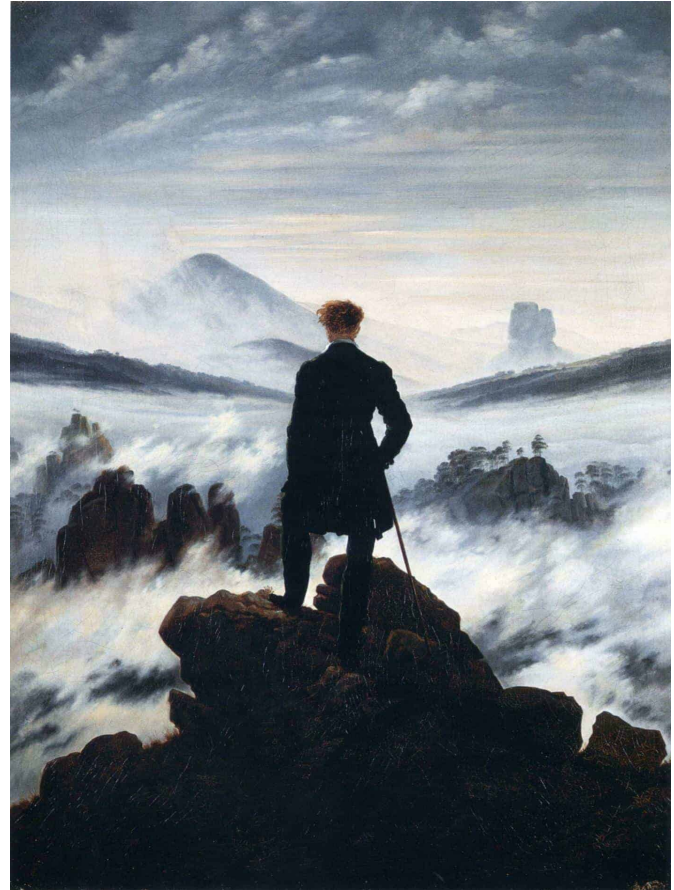
Demian begins through the narration of the main character, Emil Sinclair, concerning his youth as of 1904 or 1905. The entire novel depicts ten years' activity, which takes us up to his involvement as a German soldier in World War I, at which point Sinclair is twenty years old.

The book falls into three sections. The first of these deals with the protagonist's awareness of an inharmonious world and some action which causes the loss of his innocence and can be paralleled with the biblical fall from grace. The second section, which is the longest, concerns itself with the period of anguish and despair which follows the fall. The third portion contains some degree of enlightenment for the protagonist. In one manner or other, he learns to come to terms with his life and with himself.

The Main characters

Emil Sinclair

- ▣ The protagonist of the novel;
- ▣ Sinclair is confused as to what his life is, and is going to be, and constantly seeks mentorship throughout the novel. He tends to need validation by an older figure, and finds mentors in figures such as Pistorius, Demian, and Eva.



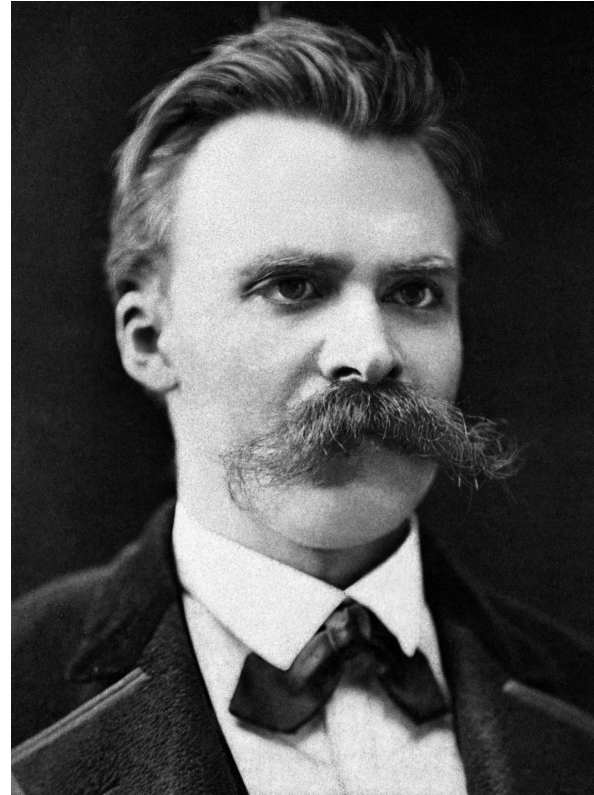


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Mine is not a pleasant story, it does not possess the gentle harmony of invented tales; like the lives of all men who have given up trying to deceive themselves, it is a mixture of nonsense and chaos, madness and dreams.

Max Demian

- The title character;
- Acts as Emil's guide in his search for fulfillment;
- Emil's daemon or inner spirit;
- He and his actions frequently defies rational thinking and reality;
- Possibly is the spokesman of philosophical Nietzsche's influence.



Friedrich Nietzsche



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People with courage and character always seem sinister to the rest. It was a scandal that a breed of fearless and sinister people ran around freely, so they attached a nickname and a myth to these people to get even with them, to make up for the many times they had felt afraid.

Frau Eva

- ▣ Appropriately named, she functions as a symbol for Eve, the universal mother;
- ▣ As Demian is leading Sinclair toward his goal, it is Frau Eva who actually is his goal;
- ▣ She is Sinclair's fulfillment, at least in a symbolic sense.





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The bird fights its way out of the egg. The egg is the world. Who would be born must first destroy a world. The bird flies to God. The God's name is Abraxas.

The Abraxas

The Gnostic deity Abraxas is used as a symbol throughout the text, idealizing the interdependence of all that is good and evil in the world. Demian argues that Jehovah, the Jewish God, is only one face of God; it rules over all that is wholesome, but there is another half of the world, and an infinite god must encompass both sides of this world.





Abraxas doesn't take exception to any of your thoughts or any of your dreams. Never forget that. But he will leave you once you become blameless and normal.

Thanks for your attention!