Republic

PLATO

c. 428–348 BC

Republic

Πολιτεία

Translated from the Greek with AI (Claude) and edited



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Republic · Plato (c. 428–348 BC)

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INTRODUCTION

The *Republic* begins with a simple question at a dinner in the Piraeus, the port of Athens: what is justice, and is a just person happier than an unjust one? To answer it, Socrates and his companions build an ideal city in words, and find the same structure in the human soul.

Along the way come some of the most famous images in philosophy: the ring of Gyges, the philosopher-kings, the sun, the divided line, the cave, and the myth of Er. It is Plato's longest and most ambitious work, and the one that has shaped Western thought about politics, education and the good life more than any other.

Socrates narrates the whole conversation himself. Each of the ten books is on its own page.

Book I

What is justice? Cephalus, Polemarchus and Thrasymachus.

SOCRATES 327a I went down to the Piraeus yesterday with Glaucon, son of Ariston, to offer my prayers to the goddess, and also because I wanted to see how they would conduct the festival, since this was the first time they were holding it. I thought the procession of the local people was a fine one, but the one the Thracians sent looked every bit as good. 327b When we had said our prayers and watched the show, we started back toward the city. Polemarchus, son of Cephalus, caught sight of us from a distance as we were setting off for home, and told his slave to run and ask us to wait for him. The slave caught hold of my cloak from behind and said, "Polemarchus wants you to wait." I turned around and asked where Polemarchus himself was. "He's coming up behind you," he said. "Just wait." "All right, we'll wait," said Glaucon. 327c [1]

A little later Polemarchus arrived, with Adeimantus, Glaucon's brother, Niceratus, son of Nicias, and a few others, apparently on their way from the procession.

Polemarchus said, "Socrates, it looks to me as if you two are off to town and leaving us."

"Not a bad guess," I said.

"Well, do you see how many of us there are?" he said.

"Of course."

1 The Piraeus is the harbor town of Athens. The goddess is Bendis, a Thracian deity whose festival had just been introduced there.

"Then either prove yourselves stronger than all these," he said, "or stay here."

"Isn't there one other possibility," I said: "that we persuade you to let us go?"

"But could you persuade people who won't listen?" he said.

"Certainly not," said Glaucon.

"Then you'd better assume we won't be listening."

And Adeimantus said, "Don't you even know that there's going to be a torch race on horseback this evening, for the goddess?"

"On horseback?" I said. "That's something new. Will they carry torches and hand them on to one another as they race their horses? Or what do you mean?"

328a "Just that," said Polemarchus. "And on top of that they'll hold an all-night festival that's worth seeing. We'll get up after dinner and go and watch it. We'll meet lots of the young men there and have some conversation. So stay, 328b and don't say no."

And Glaucon said, "It looks as though we'll have to stay."

"Well, if you think so," I said, "that's what we should do."

So we went to Polemarchus' house, and there we found Lysias and Euthydemus, Polemarchus' brothers, and also Thrasymachus of Chalcedon, Charmantides of Paeania, and Clitophon, son of Aristonymus. Polemarchus' father Cephalus was at home too. He looked very old to me, since it had been a long time since 328c I'd seen him. He was sitting on a cushioned chair, wearing a garland, because he had just been offering a sacrifice in the courtyard. So we sat down beside him, since there were some chairs set out there in a circle.[2]

CEPHALUS ON OLD AGE AND WEALTH

At Polemarchus' house, old Cephalus tells Socrates that wealth helps a decent man face death with a clear conscience.

SOCRATES As soon as Cephalus saw me he greeted me and said, "Socrates, you don't often come down to the Piraeus to see us.

You really should. If I still had the strength to walk up to town easily, there'd be no need for you to come here; 328d we would come to you. But as things are, you ought to come here more often. I can tell you that for me, as the other pleasures, the bodily ones, wither away, my desire for conversation and my pleasure in it grow in equal measure. So don't say no. Spend time with these young men, and come and visit us here regularly, as you would friends who are very close to you."

"Well, Cephalus," I said, "I really do enjoy talking 328e with the very old. I think we ought to learn from them, since they've gone ahead of us down a road that we too will probably have to travel, what kind of road it is—rough and hard, or easy and smooth. And I'd especially like to hear from you how it looks to you, since you've now reached the time of life the poets call 'the threshold of old age.' Is it a hard part of life, or how would you describe it?"

329a "By Zeus, Socrates," he said, "I'll tell you just how it seems to me. A few of us who are about the same age often get together, keeping up the old proverb. When we meet, most of us complain. They long for the pleasures of their youth and reminisce about sex and drinking and feasts and everything that goes with them, and they get upset, as if they'd been robbed of something important—back then they were living well, and now they're not even alive. 329b Some also lament how their families mistreat them in their old age, and on that account they recite a litany of all the evils old age causes them. But in my view, Socrates, these men are blaming the wrong thing. If old age were to blame, I'd have had the same experiences too, as far as old age goes, and so would everyone else who has reached these years.[3] "As it is, I've met others who don't feel this way. In particular, I was once with the poet Sophocles when someone asked him, 'Sophocles,' he said, 329c 'how are you when it comes to sex? Can you still make

2 Lysias later became a famous Athenian speechwriter; Thrasymachus of Chalcedon was a well-known sophist and teacher of rhetoric.

3 The proverb is "like age delights like age," roughly "birds of a feather flock together."

love to a woman?' And he said, 'Hush, man! I'm very glad to have escaped it, as if I'd run away from a raging, savage master.' I thought he spoke well then, and I think so no less now. For in old age there comes a great peace and freedom from such things altogether. When the desires stop straining and relax, what Sophocles said comes completely true: 329d you're rid of a great many masters, and mad ones at that. But as regards these things, and our relations with our families too, there's one single cause, Socrates—not old age, but people's character. "If they're orderly and good-tempered, even old age is only moderately burdensome. If not, Socrates, then both old age and youth turn out hard for someone like that."

I admired him for saying this, and wanting him to keep 329e talking, I prodded him and said, "Cephalus, I imagine that when you say this, most people don't accept it. They think you bear old age easily not because of your character but because you've acquired a great deal of wealth. The rich, they say, have many consolations."

"That's true," he said. "They don't accept it. And they have a point, though not as much of one as they think. What Themistocles said fits well here. When a man from Seriphus was abusing him and saying 330a that his fame was due not to himself but to his city, he answered that he wouldn't have become famous if he'd been a Seriphian, and neither would the other man if he'd been an Athenian. The same principle applies well to people who aren't rich and find old age hard. A decent man wouldn't find old age altogether easy to bear if he were poor, but an indecent one, even if he became rich, would never be at peace with himself."[4]

"Cephalus," I said, "did you inherit most of what you own, or did you make it yourself?" 330b

"Make it, Socrates?" he said. "As a moneymaker I've come out somewhere between my grandfather and my father. My grandfather, whose name I share, inherited about as much property as

4 Themistocles was the Athenian statesman who led the Greek fleet against Persia at Salamis in 480 BC; Seriphus was a small, insignificant island in the Aegean.

I own now and multiplied it many times over, while my father Lysanias reduced it to even less than it is now. I'm content if I leave these boys not less, but a little more than I inherited."

"The reason I asked," I said, "is that you didn't seem to me especially 330c attached to money. That's usually the way with people who didn't make it themselves. Those who did make it love it twice as much as anyone else. Just as poets love their own poems and fathers their children, so people who have made money care about it as their own work, as well as for its usefulness, as others do. That makes them hard even to be around: they won't praise anything but wealth."

"That's true," he said. 330d

"It certainly is," I said. "But tell me one more thing. What do you think is the greatest good you've enjoyed from owning great wealth?"

"Something," he said, "that I probably couldn't persuade many people of if I said it. You should know, Socrates," he said, "that when a man comes close to thinking he's going to die, fear and worry come over him about things that never troubled him before. The stories told about what happens in Hades—that someone who has done wrong here must pay 330e the penalty there—which he used to laugh at, now torment his soul with the fear that they might be true. And he himself—whether because of the weakness of old age, or because he's closer now to what's there and sees it more clearly—at any rate he's filled with suspicion and dread, and begins to reckon up and examine whether he has wronged anyone.

"The man who finds many wrongs in his life wakes up often from his sleep in terror, like children, 331a and lives with bad expectations. But the man who knows of no wrong he's done always has sweet hope beside him, a good 'nurse of old age,' as Pindar puts it. He said it beautifully, Socrates: whoever lives his life justly and piously, 'sweet hope goes with him, cherishing his heart, the nurse of his old age—hope, which most of all steers the twisting minds of mortals.' That's wonderfully well said. And it's with this in view that I count owning money most valuable—

not 331b for every man, but for one who is decent and orderly.[5] "Not cheating or lying to anyone, even unintentionally, and not having to depart for the other world afraid because you still owe sacrifices to a god or money to a person—the possession of money contributes a great deal to that. It has many other uses too. But weighing one thing against another, I'd put this down as not the least of the ways wealth is most useful to a man of sense, Socrates." 331c

JUSTICE AS PAYING WHAT YOU OWE

Polemarchus defines justice as helping friends and harming enemies, and Socrates refutes him.

SOCRATES "Beautifully put, Cephalus," I said. "But this very thing, justice—are we to say it's simply telling the truth and giving back whatever you've received from someone? Or is it sometimes just and sometimes unjust to do these very things? Here's the kind of case I mean. Surely everyone would agree that if you took weapons from a friend when he was in his right mind, and he went mad and asked for them back, you shouldn't return them, and whoever returned them wouldn't be just—nor would someone who was willing to tell the whole truth to a man in that state." 331d

"You're right," he said.

"Then this isn't the definition of justice: telling the truth and giving back what you've received."

"Yes, it is, Socrates," said Polemarchus, breaking in, "if we're to believe Simonides at all."

"Well, in any case," said Cephalus, "I'm handing the argument over to you. It's time for me to see to the sacrifices."

"So I'm your heir, am I?" said Polemarchus.

"Certainly," he said with a laugh, and went off to the sacrifices. 331e [6]

5 Pindar was a lyric poet of the fifth century BC; the lines quoted come from a poem now lost.

6 Simonides of Ceos (c. 556–468 BC) was a celebrated lyric poet.

"Tell me, then," I said, "you, the heir of the argument: what is it that Simonides says about justice that you think is right?"

"That it's just to give back to each person what is owed to him," he said. "In saying that, I think he speaks well."

"Well, it isn't easy to disbelieve Simonides," I said—"he's a wise and godlike man. But what on earth he means by this, Polemarchus, you may know; I don't. Clearly he doesn't mean what we were just talking about: that when someone has left something in your keeping and asks for it back when he's not in his right mind, you [332a] return it. And yet what he left in your keeping is owed to him, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"But it's not to be returned under any circumstances when the person asking for it isn't in his right mind?"

"True," he said.

"Then it seems Simonides means something different when he says it's just to give back what is owed."

"Something different, by Zeus," he said. "He thinks friends owe it to friends to do them some good, and nothing bad."

"I understand," I said. "A man isn't giving back what is owed if he returns gold to someone who deposited it with him, when the returning [332b] and receiving turn out to be harmful and the one who receives and the one who returns are friends. Isn't that what you say Simonides means?"

"Certainly."

"What about enemies? Should we give them back whatever we happen to owe them?"

"Absolutely," he said, "what is owed to them. And what an enemy owes an enemy, I think, is just what's fitting: something bad."

"So it seems," I said, "that Simonides was speaking in riddles, the way poets do, [332c] about what justice is. What he had in mind, apparently, was that justice is giving each person what is fitting for him, and he called this 'what is owed.'"

"Well, what do you think?" he said.

"By Zeus," I said, "suppose someone had asked him, 'Simonides, the craft called medicine gives what, owed and fitting, to what?' What do you think he'd have answered us?"

"Obviously," he said, "it's the one that gives drugs, food and drink to bodies."

"And the craft called cookery gives what, owed and fitting, to what?" 332d

"The one that gives seasonings to dishes."

"Very well. Then the craft that would be called justice gives what to whom?"

"If we're to follow what was said before, Socrates," he said, "it's the one that gives benefits and harms to friends and enemies."

"So by justice he means doing good to friends and harm to enemies?"

"I think so."

"Then who is most able to do good to sick friends and harm to enemies where disease and health are concerned?"

"A doctor." 332e

"And to people at sea, when it comes to the dangers of the sea?"

"A ship's captain."

"What about the just man? In what activity and for what work is he most able to help friends and harm enemies?"

"In making war on the one and fighting alongside the other, I think."

"Very well. But to people who aren't sick, my dear Polemarchus, a doctor is useless."

"True."

"And a captain to people who aren't sailing."

"Yes."

"Then is the just man useless to people who aren't at war?"

"I really don't think so."

"So justice is useful in peacetime too?"

"It is."

"So is farming, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"For getting crops?"

"Yes."

"And shoemaking too?"

"Yes."

"For getting shoes, I suppose you'd say?"

"Certainly."

333a "Well then, justice—for the use or acquisition of what would you say it's useful in peacetime?"

"For contracts, Socrates."

"By contracts do you mean partnerships, or something else?"

"Partnerships, of course." 333b

"Then is it the just man who is a good and useful partner in placing the pieces in a board game, or the skilled player?"

"The skilled player."

"And in laying bricks and stones, is the just man a more useful and better partner than the builder?"

"Not at all."

"Then in what kind of partnership is the just man a better partner than the builder or the lyre player, the way the lyre player is better than the just man at striking notes?"

"In money matters, I think."

"Except perhaps, Polemarchus, when it comes to using money—when you and a partner need to buy or sell a horse with it. Then, 333c I think, it's the horseman. Isn't it?"

"Apparently."

"And when it's a boat, the shipbuilder or the captain?"

"It seems so."

"Then when silver or gold has to be used jointly, when is the just man more useful than the others?"

"When it's to be deposited and kept safe, Socrates."

"You mean when there's no need to use it, just to let it lie?"

"Exactly."

"So when money is useless, that's when justice is useful 333d for it?"

"It may be."

"And when a pruning knife has to be kept safe, justice is useful, both in public and in private life; but when it has to be used, the vinedresser's craft is?"

"Apparently."

"And you'll say that when a shield or a lyre has to be kept safe and not used at all, justice is useful, but when they have to be used, it's the soldier's craft and the musician's?"

"Necessarily."

"And so with everything else: justice is useless when each thing is in use, and useful when it isn't?"

"It may be." 333e

"Then justice can't be anything very important, my friend, if it's only useful for things that aren't being used. But let's look at this. Isn't the man most skilled at landing a blow in a fight, whether boxing or any other kind, also the most skilled at guarding against one?"

"Certainly."

"And whoever is skilled at guarding against disease is also the most skilled at secretly producing it?"

"I think so."

334a "And the man who is a good guardian of an army camp is the same one who is good at stealing the enemy's plans and their other operations?"

"Certainly."

"So whatever someone is a skilled guardian of, he's also a skilled thief of."

"It seems so."

"Then if the just man is skilled at guarding money, he's also skilled at stealing it."

"That's where the argument points, anyway," he said.

"So the just man has turned out to be a kind of thief, it seems. And you probably learned that from Homer. He admires 334b Autolycus, Odysseus' grandfather on his mother's side, and says he 'outdid all men in thieving and in oaths.' So according to you, and Homer, and Simonides, justice seems to be a kind of art of

stealing—but for the benefit of friends and the harm of enemies. Isn't that what you meant?"[7]

"No, by Zeus," he said. "I don't know anymore what I meant. But this much I still believe: justice is helping friends and harming enemies." 334c

"By friends, do you mean those who seem good to a given person, or those who really are good, even if they don't seem so? And the same with enemies?"

"It's natural," he said, "to love those you think are good and hate those you think are bad."

"But don't people make mistakes about this, so that many seem good to them who aren't, and many the reverse?"

"They do."

"So for them the good are enemies and the bad are friends?"

"Certainly."

"And all the same, it's just for them in that case to help the bad 334d and harm the good?"

"Apparently."

"And yet the good are just and the sort who don't do wrong?"

"True."

"Then by your account it's just to harm those who do no wrong."

"Not at all, Socrates," he said. "That seems a bad account."

"Then it's just," I said, "to harm the unjust and help the just?"

"That seems finer than the other."

"Then for many people, Polemarchus—all who have misjudged 334e others—it will turn out to be just to harm their friends, since to them those friends are bad, and to help their enemies, since they're good. And so we'll be saying the very opposite of what we said Simonides meant."

"That's certainly how it turns out," he said. "But let's make a change. It looks as though we didn't define friend and enemy correctly."

"How did we define them, Polemarchus?"

7 The line is from the *Odyssey* (19.395–96); skill "in oaths" means skill at swearing deceptive or equivocal oaths.

"That whoever seems good is a friend."

"And how should we change it now?" I said.

"That a friend is someone who both seems good and is good," he said. 335a "Someone who seems good but isn't only seems to be a friend and isn't one. And the same goes for an enemy."

"Then by this account, it seems, the good man will be a friend and the bad man an enemy."

"Yes."

"So you want us to add to what we said about the just at first. We said it was just to do good to a friend and harm to an enemy; now you want us to add that it's just to do good to a friend who is good, and to harm an enemy who is bad?" 335b

"Certainly," he said. "Put that way, I think it would be well said."

"Then is it the part of a just man," I said, "to harm anyone at all?"

"Of course," he said. "He has to harm those who are bad and are his enemies."

"When horses are harmed, do they become better or worse?"

"Worse."

"With respect to the excellence of dogs, or of horses?"

"Of horses."

"And dogs, when they're harmed, become worse with respect to the excellence of dogs, not of horses?"

"Necessarily." 335c

"And shouldn't we say the same of human beings, my friend—that when they're harmed they become worse with respect to human excellence?"

"Certainly."

"But isn't justice human excellence?"

"That's necessary too."

"Then, my friend, people who are harmed necessarily become more unjust."

"It seems so."

"Now can musicians, by music, make people unmusical?"

"Impossible."

"Or horsemen, by horsemanship, make people bad at riding?"

"They can't."

"Then can just people, by justice, make people unjust? Or, 335d to sum up, can good people, by excellence, make people bad?"

"No, that's impossible."

"It isn't the work of heat, I suppose, to cool things, but of its opposite."

"Yes."

"Nor the work of dryness to make things wet, but of its opposite."

"Certainly."

"Nor, then, the work of the good to harm, but of its opposite."

"Apparently."

"And the just man is good?"

"Certainly."

"Then it isn't the work of the just man to harm, Polemarchus, whether a friend or anyone else, but of his opposite, the unjust man."

"I think what you say is entirely true, Socrates," he said. 335e

"So if anyone says that it's just to give each person what is owed, and by this he means that the just man owes harm to his enemies and help to his friends, whoever said it wasn't wise. What he said wasn't true: it has become clear to us that it's never just to harm anyone."

"I agree," he said.

"Then you and I will fight side by side," I said, "against anyone who claims that Simonides said it, or Bias or Pittacus or any other of the wise and blessed men."

"I, for one," he said, "am ready to join the fight."

"But do you know whose saying I think it is," I said, "that it's just to help friends and harm enemies?"

"Whose?" he said.

"I think it's a saying of Periander, or Perdiccas, or Xerxes, or Ismenias of Thebes, or some other rich man who thought he had great power."

"That's very true," he said.[8]

THRASYMACHUS BURSTS IN

Thrasymachus angrily claims that justice is the advantage of the stronger, and Socrates challenges him.

SOCRATES 336a "Very well," I said. "Since it has become clear that justice and the just aren't this either, what else could anyone say it is?" 336b

Now Thrasymachus had several times, while we were talking, started to break in and take over the argument, but he'd been held back by the people sitting near him, who wanted to hear it through. When we paused and I said this, he couldn't keep quiet any longer. He gathered himself like a wild beast and sprang at us as if to tear us to pieces.

Polemarchus and I were terrified and flustered. He shouted out into our midst: "What's this nonsense that has had hold of you two 336c all this time, Socrates? Why are you playing the simpleton with each other, bowing and deferring to one another? If you really want to know what the just is, don't just ask questions and show off by refuting whatever answer anyone gives—you know perfectly well that it's easier to ask than to answer. Give an answer yourself, and say what you claim the just is. And don't you dare tell me that it's 336d what's needful, or what's beneficial, or profitable, or gainful, or advantageous. Tell me clearly and precisely whatever you mean. I won't accept it if you talk drivel like that."

When I heard this I was stunned, and I looked at him in fear. I think that if I hadn't seen him before he saw me, I'd have been struck dumb. As it was, when the argument began to drive him wild, I had looked at him first, 336e so I was able to answer him, and I said, trembling a little, "Thrasymachus, don't be hard on us. If he and I are making some mistake in examining the argu-

8 Bias and Pittacus were counted among the Seven Sages of early Greece. Periander (tyrant of Corinth), Perdiccas (king of Macedon), Xerxes (king of Persia) and Ismenias (a wealthy Theban politician) stand for powerful men.

ments, you can be sure we're making it unwillingly. If we were looking for gold, you surely don't think we'd ever willingly defer to each other in the search and ruin our chances of finding it. So don't think that when we're looking for justice, a thing more precious than a great deal of gold, we'd then give way to each other so mindlessly, and not make every effort to bring it to light.[9]

"No, my friend, you should believe we're in earnest. But I don't think we're able. So it's surely far 337a more fitting for clever people like you to pity us than to be harsh with us."

When he heard this he burst out in a loud, sardonic laugh and said, "Heracles! Here it is, Socrates' usual irony. I knew it, and I told these people beforehand that you'd refuse to answer, that you'd play the innocent and do anything rather than answer if someone asked you something."

"That's because you're wise, Thrasymachus," I said. "So you knew very well that if you asked someone how much twelve is, and when you asked him you warned him in advance, 337b 'And don't you tell me, man, that twelve is two times six, or three times four, or six times two, or four times three, because I won't accept that kind of drivel from you'—it was clear to you, I think, that nobody would answer a person who asked that way. But suppose he said to you, 'Thrasymachus, what do you mean? Am I not to give any of the answers you ruled out? Even, you amazing man, if one of them happens to be right? Am I to say something other 337c than the truth? Or what do you mean?' What would you say to him?"

"Oh, of course," he said. "As if this case were like that one!"

"Nothing stops it from being," I said. "But even if it isn't alike, and yet it seems so to the person being asked, do you think he's any less likely to answer as it seems to him, whether we forbid him or not?"

"So that's what you're going to do too?" he said. "You're going to give one of the answers I ruled out?"

9 A folk belief held that anyone seen by a wolf before seeing it would lose his voice.

"I wouldn't be surprised," I said, "if that's how it seemed to me once I'd looked into it." 337d

"Well then," he said, "what if I show you a different answer about justice, besides all these, and better than them? What penalty do you think you deserve?"[10]

"What else," I said, "but the penalty that's fitting for someone who doesn't know? And what's fitting, I suppose, is to learn from someone who does. So that's the penalty I propose for myself."

"You're delightful," he said. "But on top of learning, you'll pay a fine in cash too."

"I will, once I have some," I said.

"But he has it," said Glaucon. "If it's a question of money, Thrasymachus, speak. We'll all chip in for Socrates." 337e

"Oh yes, of course," he said, "so that Socrates can do what he always does: not answer himself, but take up someone else's answer and refute it."

"But my excellent friend," I said, "how could anyone answer when, first, he doesn't know and doesn't claim to know, and second, even if he does have some view about these things, he's been forbidden by no ordinary man to say any of what he believes? No, it's more 338a reasonable for you to speak, since you're the one who claims to know and to have something to say. So don't refuse. Do me a favor and answer, and don't begrudge your teaching to Glaucon here and the others."

When I'd said this, Glaucon and the others begged him not to refuse. It was obvious that Thrasymachus wanted to speak so as to win a good name, since he thought he had a splendid answer; but he pretended to insist that I be the one to answer. In the end he gave in, 338b and then he said, "So this is Socrates' wisdom: he refuses to teach anything himself, but goes around learning from others, and doesn't even thank them for it."

"That I learn from others," I said, "is true, Thrasymachus. But when you say I don't pay back the favor, that's false: I pay back as much as I can. And all I can do is praise, since I don't have any

10 Thrasymachus mimics the Athenian court procedure in which a convicted defendant proposed the penalty he thought he deserved.

money. How eagerly I do that when someone seems to me to speak well, you'll find out very soon, once you've answered—because I think you'll speak well." 338c

"Listen, then," he said. "I say that what is just is nothing other than the advantage of the stronger. Well, why don't you praise me? No, you won't want to."

"I will, once I understand what you mean," I said. "Right now I don't yet know. You say that the advantage of the stronger is just. What on earth do you mean by that, Thrasymachus? Surely you don't mean something like this: if Polydamas the pancratiast is stronger than we are, and beef is good for his body, then this 338d food is also advantageous, and just as well, for us who are weaker than he is."

"You're disgusting, Socrates," he said. "You take up the argument in whatever way lets you do it the most damage."

"Not at all, my excellent friend," I said. "Just tell me more clearly what you mean."[11]

"Well, don't you know," he said, "that some cities are ruled by tyrants, some are democracies, and some are aristocracies?"

"Of course."

"And in each city it's the ruling element that holds power?"

"Certainly." 338e

"And each ruling body makes laws for its own advantage: a democracy makes democratic laws, a tyranny tyrannical ones, and the others the same way. Having made them, they declare that this—what's to their own advantage—is just for their subjects, and they punish anyone who departs from it as a lawbreaker and a wrongdoer.

"This, then, my excellent friend, is what I mean: in all 339a cities the same thing is just, the advantage of the established rule. And that rule, I take it, holds power, so that anyone who reasons correctly concludes that everywhere the just is the same thing, the advantage of the stronger."

"Now I understand what you mean," I said. "Whether it's true or not, I'll try to find out. So you too, Thrasymachus, have

answered that the just is the advantageous—though you forbade me to give that answer. But you've added 'of the stronger' to it." 339b

"A small addition, perhaps," he said.

"It isn't clear yet whether it's even a big one. But it is clear that we have to examine whether what you say is true. I too agree that the just is something advantageous; but you add to it and say it's the advantage of the stronger, and that I don't know. So we have to examine it."

"Examine away," he said.

"I will," I said. "Tell me: you also say, don't you, that obeying the rulers is just?"

"I do." 339c

"And are the rulers in each city infallible, or are they capable of making mistakes too?"

"Of course," he said, "they're capable of making mistakes too."

"So when they set about making laws, some they make correctly, but some incorrectly?"

"I suppose so."

"And making them correctly means making them to their own advantage, and incorrectly to their disadvantage? Or how would you put it?"

"That way."

"And whatever they lay down, the subjects must do, and that is what's just?"

"Of course." 339d

"Then according to your argument it's just to do not only what's to the advantage of the stronger but also the opposite, what isn't to his advantage."

"What are you saying?" he said.

"What you're saying, I think. But let's look at it more carefully. Haven't we agreed that when rulers order their subjects to do something they sometimes miss what's best for themselves, and

11 Polydamas of Scotussa was a celebrated champion who won the pancration, a brutal combination of boxing and wrestling, at the Olympic Games of 408 BC.

that whatever the rulers order, it's just for the subjects to do? Haven't we agreed on that?"

"I suppose so," he said. 339e

"Then you must realize," I said, "that you've also agreed it's just to do what's to the disadvantage of the rulers, the stronger, whenever the rulers unintentionally order what's bad for themselves, since you say it's just for the others to do whatever the rulers have ordered. In that case, my most wise Thrasymachus, doesn't it necessarily follow that it's just to do the opposite of what you say? For the weaker are then ordered, surely, to do what's to the disadvantage of the stronger."

"Yes, by Zeus, Socrates," said Polemarchus, "that's perfectly clear."

"If you're his witness, anyway," Clitophon broke in.

340a "And what need is there of a witness?" he said. "Thrasymachus himself agrees that rulers sometimes order what's bad for themselves, and that it's just for the others to do it."

"Yes, Polemarchus, because what Thrasymachus laid down as just was doing what the rulers command."

"Yes, Clitophon, and he also laid down that the advantage of the stronger 340b is just. And having laid down both, he agreed in turn that the stronger sometimes order the weaker, their subjects, to do what's to the stronger's own disadvantage. From these agreements it follows that the advantage of the stronger would be no more just than what isn't to their advantage."

"But," said Clitophon, "by the advantage of the stronger he meant what the stronger believes to be to his advantage. That's what the weaker must do, and that's what he laid down as just."

"But that's not what was said," said Polemarchus. 340c

"It makes no difference, Polemarchus," I said. "If that's how Thrasymachus puts it now, let's accept it from him. Tell me, Thrasymachus: is this what you meant by the just—what seems to the stronger to be to the stronger's advantage, whether it actually is or not? Shall we say that's what you mean?"

"Not in the least," he said. "Do you think I call someone who makes a mistake 'stronger' at the very moment he's making it?"

"I did think," I said, "that that was what you meant, when you agreed that rulers aren't infallible but do make some mistakes." 340d

"That's because you argue in bad faith, Socrates," he said, "like a malicious prosecutor. For instance, do you call someone who makes mistakes about the sick a doctor with respect to the very mistake he's making? Or someone who makes an error in calculation an accountant at the moment he makes it, with respect to that error? We talk that way, I think—we say the doctor made a mistake, and the accountant made a mistake, and the schoolteacher. But in fact, I think, each of these, insofar as he is what 340e we call him, never makes mistakes. So, speaking precisely—since you insist on precision—no craftsman ever makes a mistake. The one who errs errs when his knowledge fails him, and in that respect he isn't a craftsman. So no craftsman or wise man or ruler makes mistakes at the moment he's a ruler, even though everyone would say that the doctor made a mistake and the ruler made a mistake.

"Take my answer just now in that sense too. But the most precise version of it is this: the ruler, insofar 341a as he is a ruler, makes no mistakes; and making no mistakes, he lays down what's best for himself, and this is what his subject must do. So, as I said at the start, what I call just is doing what's to the advantage of the stronger."

"Very well, Thrasymachus," I said. "So you think I argue in bad faith?"

"I certainly do," he said.

"You think I asked the questions I did as a deliberate plot to do you harm in the argument?"

"I don't think it, I know it," he said. "And it won't get you anywhere. 341b You can't do me harm without my noticing, and once I've noticed, you can't overpower me in argument."

"I wouldn't even try, my dear fellow," I said. "But so that nothing like this happens to us again, make clear which you mean by

the ruler and the stronger: the one who is so called in ordinary speech, or the one in the precise sense you were just talking about, whose advantage, since he's stronger, it will be just for the weaker to carry out."

"The ruler in the most precise sense," he said. "Do your worst against that with your tricks and bad-faith arguments, if you can —I'm not asking for any mercy. But you won't be able to." 341c

"Do you think I'm so mad," I said, "as to try to shave a lion, or to argue in bad faith against Thrasymachus?"

"You tried just now, anyway," he said, "useless as you are at it."

"Enough of this sort of thing," I said. "But tell me: the doctor in the precise sense, whom you mentioned just now—is he a moneymaker or someone who takes care of the sick? And speak of the one who really is a doctor."

"Someone who takes care of the sick," he said.[12]

"And what about a ship's captain? Is the captain, properly speaking, a ruler of sailors or a sailor?"

"A ruler of sailors." 341d

"I don't suppose we should take into account the fact that he sails in the ship; that doesn't mean he should be called a sailor. It isn't for sailing that he's called a captain, but for his craft and his rule over the sailors."

"True," he said.

"Now, is there something that's to the advantage of each of these?"

"Certainly."

"And isn't the craft," I said, "by its nature aimed at just this—seeking out and providing for each what's to its advantage?"

"Yes, at that," he said.

"Then is there something to the advantage of each of the crafts too, other than being as perfect as possible?" 341e

"What do you mean by that question?"

"It's as if," I said, "you asked me whether it's enough for a body to be a body, or whether it needs something more. I'd say:

'It certainly needs something more. That's why the craft of medicine has now been discovered: because a body is defective, and it isn't enough for it to be as it is. So the craft was developed to provide it with what's to its advantage.' Do you think I'd be right to say that, or not?"

"Right," he said. 342a

"Well then: is medicine itself defective? Is there any other craft that needs some further excellence—the way eyes need sight and ears hearing, so that they need some craft over them to consider and provide what's to their advantage? Is there some defect in the craft itself too, so that each craft needs another craft to consider what's to its advantage, and the one doing the considering needs yet another like it, and so on without end? 342b Or will each craft consider its own advantage for itself? "Or does it need neither itself nor another to consider what's to its advantage in view of its own defect? For there's no defect or error at all in any craft, and it isn't proper for a craft to seek the advantage of anything other than what it's the craft of. It is itself unharmed and pure, being correct, as long as each is precisely and wholly what it is. Look at it in that precise sense of yours: is it so or otherwise?"

"It appears to be so," he said. 342c

"Then medicine," I said, "doesn't consider what's to the advantage of medicine, but of the body."

"Yes," he said.

"And horsemanship doesn't consider what's to the advantage of horsemanship, but of horses. No other craft considers its own advantage either—it doesn't need anything—but that of what it's the craft of."

"So it appears," he said.

"But surely, Thrasymachus, the crafts rule and hold power over what they're the crafts of."

He conceded this too, though very reluctantly.

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12 "Shaving a lion" was a proverbial image for a reckless and hopeless undertaking.

"Then no kind of knowledge considers or orders what's to the advantage of the stronger, but what's to the advantage of the weaker, which is ruled 342d by it."

In the end he agreed to this too, though he tried to put up a fight over it. When he had agreed, I said, "Then isn't it also true that no doctor, insofar as he's a doctor, considers or orders what's to the doctor's advantage, but what's to the patient's? For we've agreed that the doctor in the precise sense is a ruler of bodies and not a moneymaker. Or haven't we?"

He agreed.

"And that the captain in the precise sense is a ruler of sailors, not a sailor?" 342e

"We have."

"Then a captain and ruler of that kind won't consider or order what's to the captain's advantage, but what's to the advantage of the sailor, the one he rules."

He agreed, reluctantly.

"Then, Thrasymachus," I said, "no one else in any position of rule either, insofar as he's a ruler, considers or orders what's to his own advantage, but what's to the advantage of the one he rules, the one for whom he practices his craft. It's to that he looks, and to what's advantageous and fitting for it, in everything he says and everything he does."

THE SHEPHERD AND THE TYRANT

Thrasymachus argues that rulers treat subjects like sheep, and Socrates says true rule serves the ruled.

SOCRATES 343a When we had reached this point in the argument and it was plain to everyone that the account of the just had been turned into its opposite, Thrasymachus, instead of answering, said, "Tell me, Socrates, do you have a nurse?"

"Why?" I said. "Shouldn't you be answering rather than asking questions like that?"

"Because she lets you go around with a runny nose," he said, "and doesn't wipe it when you need it—seeing that, thanks to her, you can't even tell sheep from shepherd."

"And why exactly do you say that?" I said. 343b

Because you think that shepherds and cowherds consider the good of their sheep or cattle, and fatten them and look after them, with an eye to something other than their masters' good and their own. And you suppose that rulers in cities too—the ones who truly rule—think about their subjects differently from the way a man would regard his sheep, and that night and day they consider anything other than this: 343c how they themselves will profit. And you're so far off about the just and justice, and the unjust and injustice, that you don't realize that justice and the just are really someone else's good—the advantage of the stronger, the ruler—and a harm to the one who obeys and serves. Injustice is the opposite: it rules over those who are truly naive, the just, and the ruled do what's to the advantage of the ruler, since he's the stronger, and by serving 343d him they make him happy, but themselves not in the least. You should look at it this way, my most naive Socrates: a just man always gets less than an unjust one. First, in private contracts: wherever one of this sort goes into partnership with one of the other, you'll never find, when the partnership is dissolved, the just man with more than the unjust, but less. Then in dealings with the city: when there are taxes to pay, the just man pays more on the same property and the other less; and when there's something to be received, 343e the one gains nothing and the other a great deal. And when each of them holds some office, the just man's lot, even if he suffers no other penalty, is that his own affairs go downhill from neglect, while he gets no benefit from public funds because he's just; and on top of that he's hated by his relatives and acquaintances when he refuses to do them any favor that goes against what's just. For the unjust man it's the exact opposite in every respect.

I mean 344a the man I was talking about just now, the one with the power to take more than his share on a large scale. Look at

him, if you want to judge how much more it profits him personally to be unjust than to be just. You'll see it most easily of all if you go to the most complete injustice, which makes the wrongdoer happiest, and those who are wronged, and who wouldn't be willing to do wrong themselves, most miserable. That is tyranny, which takes away other people's property by stealth and by force—sacred and consecrated, private and public—not bit by bit but 344b all at once. When someone is caught committing any single part of this injustice, he's punished and meets with the deepest disgrace: those who commit such crimes piecemeal are called temple-robbers, kidnappers, burglars, swindlers and thieves. But when someone, on top of seizing the citizens' property, kidnaps and enslaves the citizens themselves, instead of these shameful names he's called happy and blessed, 344c not only by the citizens but by everyone else who hears that he has committed injustice in full. For those who condemn injustice do so not because they're afraid of doing unjust things, but because they're afraid of suffering them. So, Socrates, injustice, when it's on a large enough scale, is stronger, freer and more masterful than justice; and, as I said at the start, the just is what's to the advantage of the stronger, while the unjust is what profits and benefits oneself. 344d

Having said this, Thrasymachus meant to leave, like a bath attendant who had drenched our ears with his speech in one great flood. But those present wouldn't let him; they made him stay and give an account of what he'd said. I myself begged him hard as well, and said, "Thrasymachus, you extraordinary man, after hurling a speech like that at us, do you mean to leave before properly teaching us, or learning, whether it's so or otherwise? 344e Or do you think it's a small matter you're trying to settle—the conduct of a whole life, the way each of us can live the most profitable life?"

"And do you suppose I think otherwise?" said Thrasymachus.

"You seem to," I said. "Or else you don't care about us at all, and aren't the least bit concerned whether we'll live worse or better in our ignorance of what you claim to know.

"Come on, my good man, be willing to show us too—it won't 345a be a bad investment for you, whatever favor you do for so many of us. For I'll tell you where I stand: I'm not persuaded, and I don't believe that injustice is more profitable than justice, not even if it's given free rein and not prevented from doing what it wants. My good man, let someone be unjust, and let him have the power to do wrong, either by going undetected or by fighting it out: still, he doesn't convince me that it's more profitable than justice. Perhaps 345b someone else here feels the same way, not just me. So convince us properly, my dear fellow, that we're wrong to value justice more than injustice."

"And how am I to convince you?" he said. "If you aren't convinced by what I said just now, what more can I do for you? Am I to take the argument and stuff it into your soul?"

"By Zeus, no, don't do that!" I said. "But first, stick to whatever you say—or if you change position, change it openly and don't deceive us. As it is, Thrasymachus, you see—let's 345c go back over what came before—that although you first defined the true doctor, you didn't think you needed to keep strictly to the true shepherd later on. You think that he, insofar as he's a shepherd, fattens his sheep not with an eye to what's best for the sheep but, like a dinner guest about to be treated to a banquet, with an eye to the feast—or else to 345d selling them, like a moneymaker and not a shepherd. "But the shepherd's craft surely cares about nothing other than providing what's best for what it's been put in charge of—since its own affairs, so that it's at its best, are surely provided for well enough, as long as it lacks nothing of being the shepherd's craft. That's why I thought just now that we had to agree that every kind of rule, insofar as it's rule, considers what's best for nothing other than that 345e which it rules and looks after, whether in public or in private rule. But do you think that the rulers in cities, the ones who truly rule, rule willingly?"

"By Zeus, I don't think it," he said. "I know it."

"Really, Thrasymachus?" I said. "Don't you notice that in the other kinds of office no one is willing to rule of his own accord?

They ask for pay, on the assumption that the benefit from ruling will go not to themselves but 346a to those they rule. Tell me this much: don't we say that each of the crafts is different from the others in having a different power? And, my dear fellow, don't answer against what you really think, so that we can get somewhere."

"Yes," he said, "that's what makes it different."

"And each of them provides us with some particular benefit, not a common one—medicine health, for instance, navigation safety at sea, and the others likewise?"

"Certainly." 346b

"And wage-earning provides wages? That's its power. Or do you call medicine and navigation the same thing? Or rather, if you want to make precise distinctions, as you proposed, and a captain becomes healthy because sailing on the sea is good for him, would you call his craft medicine on that account?"

"Of course not," he said.

"Nor, I think, would you call wage-earning medicine if someone is healthy while earning wages."

"Of course not."

"Well then, would you call medicine wage-earning if someone earns wages while healing?" 346c

He said no.

"And we agreed that the benefit of each craft is particular to it?"

"Granted," he said.

"Then whatever benefit all craftsmen receive in common, they clearly get from making additional use of some one thing that's common to them all."

"It seems so," he said.

"And we say that craftsmen benefit by earning wages because they make additional use of the craft of wage-earning."

He agreed, reluctantly. 346d

"Then this benefit, receiving wages, doesn't come to each of them from his own craft. If we're to examine it precisely, medicine produces health, and wage-earning wages; building pro-

duces a house, and wage-earning, which goes along with it, wages; and all the others likewise each do their own work and benefit what they've been put in charge of. But if no wage is added, does the craftsman get any benefit from his craft?"

"It doesn't appear so," he said. 346e

"Then does he confer no benefit either, when he works for nothing?"

"I think he does confer benefit."

"So, Thrasymachus, this much is now clear: no craft and no kind of rule provides what's beneficial to itself. As we've been saying for some time, it provides and orders what's beneficial to the one it rules, considering the advantage of the weaker, not of the stronger.

"That's exactly why, my dear Thrasymachus, I said just now that no one is willing to rule of his own accord and take other people's troubles in hand to set them right, 347a but asks for pay: anyone who is going to practice his craft well never does or orders what's best for himself, when he gives orders according to his craft, but what's best for the one he rules. That's why, it seems, there has to be pay for those who are going to be willing to rule—money, or honor, or a penalty if he doesn't rule."

"What do you mean by that, Socrates?" said Glaucon. "The two kinds of pay I recognize, but I don't understand what this penalty is, or how you can count it as a kind of pay."

"Then you don't understand the pay of the best people," I said, "the pay for which 347b the most decent people rule, when they're willing to rule. Don't you know that loving honor and loving money are called disgraceful, and are?"

"I do," he said.

"That's why," I said, "good people aren't willing to rule for the sake of money or honor. They don't want to be called hirelings for openly taking pay for ruling, or thieves for secretly helping themselves from their office. Nor will they rule for honor, since they don't love honor. So compulsion 347c and a penalty have to be applied to them if they're going to be willing to rule—which is probably why going to rule willingly, instead of waiting to be

compelled, has come to be thought shameful. And the greatest penalty is to be ruled by someone worse, if one isn't willing to rule oneself. It's from fear of this, it seems to me, that decent people rule, when they do rule. And then they go to it not as to something good, or expecting to enjoy themselves in it, but 347d as to something necessary, since they have no one better than themselves, or even as good, to entrust it to. "For if a city of good men came to be, it's likely that people would fight to avoid ruling, as they now fight to rule; and there it would become plain that a true ruler really isn't by nature the kind to consider his own advantage, but that of the one he rules. So anyone who knew this would choose to be benefited by another rather than to go to the trouble of benefiting someone else. So on this point I don't concede 347e to Thrasymachus in the slightest that the just is the advantage of the stronger. But we'll look into that again another time. What Thrasymachus is saying now—when he claims that the unjust man's life is better than the just man's—seems to me much more important. Which do you choose, Glaucon?" I said. "And which view do you think is closer to the truth?"

"For my part, I think the just man's life is more profitable."

"Did you hear," I said, "all the good things Thrasymachus just listed for the unjust man's life?"

"I heard," he said, "but I'm not persuaded."

"Then do you want us to persuade him, if we can find some way, that what he says isn't true?"

"Of course I want to," he said.

348a "Well then," I said, "if we match him speech for speech, setting out in our turn all the good things there are in being just, and then he replies, and then we give another speech, we'll have to count 348b the good things and measure how many each side mentions in each speech, and then we'll need some judges to decide between us. But if we examine the matter as we did just now, by reaching agreement with each other, we'll be judges and advocates ourselves at the same time."

"Certainly," he said.

"So which way do you prefer?" I said.

"This way," he said.

IS INJUSTICE WISER AND STRONGER?

Socrates argues against Thrasymachus that justice, not injustice, is wise, good and strong.

SOCRATES "Come on, then, Thrasymachus," I said, "answer us from the beginning. You say that perfect injustice is more profitable than perfect justice?" 348c

"I certainly do say so," he said, "and I've told you why."

"Well then, how would you put the following about them? I suppose you call one of the two an excellence and the other a badness?"

"Of course."

"Justice the excellence, and injustice the badness?"

"Oh, very likely, my sweet friend," he said, "when I'm saying that injustice pays and justice doesn't!"

"Then what?"

"The opposite," he said.

"You mean justice is a badness?"

"No, but a thoroughly noble good-naturedness." 348d

"Then you call injustice ill-naturedness?"

"No—good judgment," he said.

"Do you actually think the unjust are intelligent and good, Thrasymachus?"

"The ones who can do wrong to perfection, at any rate," he said, "who are able to bring whole cities and nations of people under their power. You probably think I mean purse-snatchers. Not that that sort of thing doesn't pay too," he said, "so long as you don't get caught. But it isn't worth mentioning next to what I was just describing." 348e

"I know what you mean," I said. "What surprised me was that you rank injustice with excellence and wisdom, and justice with their opposites."

"But that's exactly how I rank them."

"Now that's a tougher position, my friend," I said, "and it's no longer easy to know what to say.

"If you had held that injustice pays, but admitted, as some others do, that it's a badness or something shameful, we could have said something by appealing to conventional views. But as it is, you'll obviously call it both fine and strong, and credit it with all the other qualities 349a we used to credit to the just, since you've dared to rank it with excellence and wisdom."

"Your prophecy is perfectly true," he said.

"All the same," I said, "I mustn't shrink from following the argument through and examining it, as long as I take you to be saying what you really think. Because it seems to me, Thrasymachus, that you're honestly not joking now, but saying what you believe to be the truth."

"What difference does it make to you," he said, "whether I believe it or not? Why don't you just refute the argument?" 349b

"None," I said. "But try to answer me this as well. Do you think a just man would want to have more than another just man?"

"Not at all," he said. "Otherwise he wouldn't be the charming, good-natured fellow he is."

"What about more than the just action?"

"Not more than the just action either," he said.

"And would he think it right to outdo the unjust man, and consider that just, or wouldn't he?"

"He'd consider it just," he said, "and think it right, but he wouldn't be able to."

"That's not what I'm asking," I said. "I'm asking whether the just man doesn't think it right, and doesn't want, to have more than 349c the just man, but does want to have more than the unjust."

"That's how it is," he said.

"And what about the unjust man? Does he think it right to outdo the just man and the just action?"

"Of course," he said, "since he thinks it right to have more than everybody."

"So the unjust man will outdo an unjust person and an unjust action too, and will compete to take the most of everything for himself?"

"That's right."

"Then let's put it this way," I said. "The just man doesn't outdo his like, but only his unlike, while the unjust man outdoes both his like and 349d his unlike?"

"Excellently put," he said.

"And the unjust man," I said, "is intelligent and good, and the just man neither?"

"That's well put too," he said.

"So," I said, "the unjust man also resembles the intelligent and the good, and the just man doesn't?"

"How could it be otherwise?" he said. "Someone of that kind must resemble people of that kind, and the other must not."

"Fine. So each of them is of the same kind as those he resembles?"

"What else would he be?" he said.

"Very well, Thrasymachus. You call one man musical, and another 349e unmusical?"

"I do."

"Which of them is intelligent, and which unintelligent?"

"The musical one is intelligent, surely, and the unmusical one unintelligent."

"And good in the things he's intelligent in, and bad in the things he's unintelligent in?"

"Yes."

"And the same with a doctor?"

"The same."

"Now do you think, my excellent friend, that a musician tuning his lyre would want to outdo another musician in tightening and loosening the strings, or think it right to have more?"

"I don't."

"What about outdoing an unmusical man?"

"Necessarily," he said.

"And a doctor? In prescribing food or drink, would he want to outdo a doctor, or medical practice?"

"Certainly not."

"But a non-doctor?"

"Yes."

350a "Now look at every kind of knowledge and ignorance, and see whether you think anyone with knowledge, whoever he is, would want to choose to do or say more than another person with knowledge, rather than the same as someone like himself in the same action."

"Well, perhaps," he said, "it has to be that way."

"And what about the ignorant man? Wouldn't he outdo the knowledgeable 350b and the ignorant alike?"

"Perhaps."

"And the knowledgeable man is wise?"

"I say so."

"And the wise man is good?"

"I say so."

"So the man who is good and wise won't want to outdo his like, but only his unlike and opposite."

"So it seems," he said.

"While the bad and ignorant man will outdo both his like and his opposite."

"Apparently."

"Now, Thrasymachus," I said, "our unjust man outdoes both his unlike and his like? Isn't that what you said?"

"I did," he said. 350c

"And the just man won't outdo his like, but will outdo his unlike?"

"Yes."

"So the just man resembles the wise and good man," I said, "and the unjust man resembles the bad and ignorant one."

"It looks that way."

"But we agreed that each is of the same kind as the one he resembles."

"Yes, we did."

"Then the just man has turned out to be good and wise, and the unjust man ignorant and bad."

Now Thrasymachus agreed to all this, not 350d easily, the way I'm telling it now, but dragged along, reluctantly, sweating an amazing amount, since it was summer as well—and it was then that I saw something I had never seen before: Thrasymachus blushing. But once we had agreed that justice is excellence and wisdom, and injustice badness and ignorance, I said, "All right, let's take that as settled. But we also said that injustice was strong. Or don't you remember, Thrasymachus?"

"I remember," he said. "But I'm not happy with what you're saying now either, and I have something to say about it. Only, if I said it, I know perfectly well 350e you'd say I was making a public speech. So either let me say as much as I like, or, if you want to ask questions, ask them, and I'll say 'very well' to you, the way people do to old women telling stories, and nod yes and shake my head no."

"Not against your own opinion, please," I said.

"Just to please you," he said, "since you won't let me speak. What else do you want?"

"Nothing, by Zeus," I said. "If that's what you're going to do, do it. I'll ask the questions."

"Ask away, then."

"Well, I'm asking the same thing I asked just now, so that we can pursue 351a the argument in order: what sort of thing justice is, compared with injustice. It was said, I think, that injustice is more powerful and stronger than justice. But now," I said, "if justice is wisdom and excellence, it will easily turn out, I think, to be stronger than injustice too, since injustice is ignorance—nobody could fail to see that any longer. Still, I don't want to look at it quite so simply, Thrasymachus; I'd rather look at it this way. 351b Would you say that a city can be unjust, and try to enslave other cities unjustly, and succeed in enslaving them, and hold many of them enslaved under itself?"

"Of course," he said. "And it's the best city, the one that is most perfectly unjust, that will do this most of all."

"I understand," I said, "that this was your position. But here's the point I'm examining: will a city that becomes stronger than another have this power without justice, or must it have it with justice?" 351c

"If it's as you were saying just now," he said, "that justice is wisdom, then with justice; but if it's as I was saying, with injustice."

"I'm delighted, Thrasymachus," I said, "that you aren't just nodding and shaking your head, but giving very fine answers."

"That's to please you," he said.

"And very kind of you. But please me in this too, and tell me: do you think a city, or an army, or a band of robbers or thieves, or any other group that sets out together to do something unjustly, could accomplish anything if its members wronged one another?" 351d

"Certainly not," he said.

"And if they didn't wrong one another? Wouldn't they be better able to?"

"Certainly."

"Because injustice, Thrasymachus, produces factions and hatreds and fights among people, while justice produces unity of mind and friendship. Isn't that so?"

"Let it be so," he said, "so as not to quarrel with you."

"That's good of you, my excellent friend. Now tell me this: if it's the work of injustice to produce hatred wherever it is, then whenever it arises among free men or slaves, won't it make them hate one another and split into factions and be unable to act together with 351e one another?"

"Certainly."

"And what if it arises in two people? Won't they be at odds and hate each other, and be enemies both to each other and to the just?"

"They will," he said.

"And if injustice arises in a single person, my remarkable friend, surely it won't lose its power? Or will it keep it just the same?"

"Let it keep it just the same," he said.

"Then it apparently has a power of this kind: whatever it arises in, whether a city or a clan or an army or 352a anything else at all, it first makes that thing unable to act together with itself, because of faction and disagreement, and then makes it an enemy both to itself and to everything opposed to it, including the just. Isn't that so?"

"Certainly."

"And when it's in a single person too, I suppose, it will do the very things it naturally produces. First it will make him unable to act, being at odds and not of one mind with himself, and then an enemy both to himself and to the just. Isn't that right?"

"Yes."

"And the gods are just too, my friend?"

"Let it be so," he said. 352b

"Then the unjust man will be an enemy to the gods as well, Thrasymachus, and the just man their friend."

"Feast on your argument," he said, "and enjoy it. I won't oppose you, so as not to make enemies of the people here."

"Come on, then," I said, "fill up the rest of my banquet by answering the way you have been. We've seen that the just are wiser and better and more capable of acting, while the unjust can't even act together— 352c and in fact, when we say that people who are unjust have ever vigorously accomplished anything together, what we're saying isn't entirely true. For if they had been completely unjust, they wouldn't have kept their hands off one another. Clearly there was some justice in them, which kept them from wronging one another at the same time as the people they were attacking, and it was through this that they did what they did. They set out on their unjust deeds only half-corrupted by injustice, since the utterly wicked and perfectly unjust are perfectly incapable of acting as well. That this 352d is how things are, I understand, and not as you first proposed. But whether the just also live better than the unjust and are happier—the question we proposed to examine next—is something we must examine. "They do appear to, even now, I think, from what we've said.

Still, we must look into it more carefully. For the argument isn't about some chance matter, but about how one ought to live."

THE FUNCTION OF THE SOUL

Socrates argues justice is the soul's excellence, and Glaucon asks for a fuller defense.

SOCRATES "Look into it, then," he said.

"I am," I said. "Tell me: do you think a horse has some function?" 352e

"I do."

"And would you take the function of a horse, or of anything else, to be what one can do only with it, or best with it?"

"I don't understand," he said.

"Look at it this way: is there anything you could see with except eyes?"

"Certainly not."

"Or hear with, except ears?"

"Not at all."

"So we'd be right to say that these are their functions?"

"Certainly."

353a "And what about this: you could cut off a vine shoot with a knife or a chisel or many other things?"

"Of course."

"But with nothing, I imagine, as well as with a pruning hook made for the purpose."

"True."

"So shall we take this to be its function?"

"Yes, we shall."

"Now I think you'll better understand what I was asking just now, when I wanted to know whether the function of each thing isn't what it alone accomplishes, or accomplishes better than anything else."

"Yes," he said, "I understand, and I think that is the function of each 353b thing."

"Very well," I said. "And do you think there is also an excellence for each thing to which some function is assigned? Let's go back to the same examples. Eyes, we say, have a function?"

"They do."

"So do eyes have an excellence too?"

"An excellence too."

"And ears had a function?"

"Yes."

"And so an excellence too?"

"An excellence too."

"And what about all the other things? Isn't it the same?"

"It is."

"Hold on, then. Could eyes ever perform their function well 353c if they lacked their own proper excellence and had badness instead of excellence?"

"How could they?" he said. "I suppose you mean blindness instead of sight."

"Whatever their excellence may be," I said. "I'm not asking about that yet, only whether things that have a function perform it well through their own proper excellence, and badly through badness."

"That much is true," he said.

"So ears too, deprived of their own excellence, will perform their function badly?"

"Certainly." 353d

"And do we apply the same argument to everything else?"

"I think so."

"Come on, then, and consider this next. Does the soul have a function that you couldn't perform with anything else there is? Something like this: taking care of things, ruling, deliberating, and everything of that sort—is there anything other than a soul to which we could rightly assign these and say they were its own?"

"Nothing else."

"And what about living? Won't we say that's a function of the soul?"

"Most certainly," he said.

"And we also say the soul has an excellence?"

"We do." 353e

"Then will a soul ever perform its functions well, Thrasymachus, if it's deprived of its own proper excellence, or is that impossible?"

"Impossible."

"So a bad soul must rule and take care of things badly, and a good one do all these things well."

"It must."

"And we agreed that justice is the soul's excellence, and injustice its badness?"

"We did."

"So the just soul and the just man will live well, and the unjust man badly."

"So it appears," he said, "by your argument."

"And surely whoever lives well is blessed and happy, and whoever doesn't is the opposite."

354a "Of course."

"So the just man is happy, and the unjust man miserable."

"Let it be so," he said.

"But it doesn't pay to be miserable; it pays to be happy."

"Of course."

"Then injustice, my blessed Thrasymachus, is never more profitable than justice."

"Well, Socrates," he said, "let that be your feast for the Bendidea."[13]

"Provided by you, Thrasymachus," I said, "since you've turned gentle with me and stopped being harsh. Still, I haven't feasted 354b well—through my own fault, not yours. Gluttons snatch a taste of each dish as it's carried round before they've properly enjoyed the one before, and I think I've done the same. Before finding what we were first looking into—what justice is—I let go of that and rushed off to examine whether it is badness and ignorance, or wisdom and excellence. Then later, when the

13 The Bendidea was the festival of Bendis being celebrated that day.

argument that injustice is more profitable than justice burst in, I couldn't keep from leaving the other question and going after this one. So now the upshot of our discussion is that I know 354c nothing. For when I don't know what justice is, I'll hardly know whether it is in fact an excellence or not, or whether the person who has it is unhappy or happy."

Book II

The ring of Gyges, and the founding of a city in words.

SOCRATES 357a When I'd said this, I thought I was done with the discussion. But it turned out, apparently, to have been only a prelude. Glaucon is always extremely bold in everything, and on this occasion too he wouldn't accept Thrasymachus' giving up, but said, "Socrates, do you want to seem to have persuaded us, or to 357b truly persuade us, that it's better in every way to be just than unjust?"

"Truly," I said, "I'd choose that, if it were up to me."

"Then you're not doing what you want," he said. "Tell me: do you think there is a kind of good that we'd welcome having not because we want what results from it, but because we value it for its own sake—like enjoyment, and all the harmless pleasures that bring nothing later on except the enjoyment of having them?"

"I think there is something of that kind," I said. 357c

"And what about the kind we love both for its own sake and for what comes from it—like understanding, and seeing, and being healthy? We welcome things like these, I suppose, for both reasons."

"Yes," I said.

"And do you see a third kind of good," he said, "which includes exercising, and being treated when you're sick, and practicing medicine, and money-making generally? These we'd call burdensome but beneficial to us, and we wouldn't welcome having them for their own sake, 357d but for the sake of the pay and whatever else comes from them."

"Yes, there is this third kind too," I said. "But what of it?"

"In which of these kinds," he said, "do you place justice?"

358a "I think," I said, "in the finest kind—the one that anyone who is going to be blessed must love both for its own sake and for what comes from it."

"That's not what most people think," he said. "They put it in the burdensome kind, which has to be practiced for the sake of pay and the good name that comes from reputation, but in itself is to be avoided as hard."

"I know that's what they think," I said, "and Thrasymachus has been disparaging it as that sort of thing for some time now, and praising injustice. But I seem to be a slow learner." 358b

"Come on, then," he said, "listen to me too, and see if you still think the same. Thrasymachus seems to me to have been charmed by you, like a snake, sooner than he should have been. But I'm not yet satisfied with the demonstration on either side. I want to hear what each of them is, and what power each has, itself by itself, when it's present in the soul, and to say goodbye to the rewards and what comes from them. So here's what I'll do, if you agree. I'll revive 358c Thrasymachus' argument. First I'll say what sort of thing people say justice is, and where it came from. Second, that all who practice it do so unwillingly, as something necessary, not as something good. Third, that it's reasonable for them to act this way, since the life of the unjust man is, it turns out, far better than the life of the just man—so they say. "Not that I think so myself, Socrates. But I'm at a loss, with my ears ringing from listening to Thrasymachus and countless others, while the argument on behalf of justice, that it's 358d better than injustice, I've never yet heard from anyone the way I want to—I want to hear it praised itself by itself—and I think I'm most likely to hear that from you. So I'm going to speak at full stretch in praise of the unjust life, and in doing so I'll show you how I want to hear you, in turn, criticizing injustice and praising justice. But see whether what I'm proposing is what you want."

"More than anything," I said. "What subject could a person with any sense be happier to talk and hear about again and again?" 358e

"Beautifully put," he said. "Then listen to what I said I'd speak about first: what justice is, and where it came from."

WHERE JUSTICE COMES FROM

Glaucon argues that justice is a compromise among the weak, illustrated by the ring of Gyges.

SOCRATES They say that doing wrong is by nature good, and suffering wrong bad, but that the badness of suffering wrong far exceeds the good of doing it. So when people do wrong to one another and suffer it, and get a taste of both, those who can't 359a escape the one and get the other decide it pays to make an agreement with one another neither to do wrong nor to suffer it. From there they begin to make laws and covenants among themselves, and to call what the law commands lawful and just. And this, they say, is the origin and essence of justice. It lies between the best thing, which is to do wrong without paying the penalty, and the worst, which is to suffer wrong without being able to take revenge. The just, lying in the middle between these two, is loved not as 359b a good, but as something honored because people are too weak to do wrong. For anyone able to do it, a real man, would never make an agreement with anyone neither to do wrong nor to suffer it. He'd be mad to. That, Socrates, according to this argument, is the nature of justice, and that is its character, and those are the conditions it naturally arises from.

That even those who practice it do so unwillingly, from inability to do wrong, we'd see most clearly if we did the following 359c in thought. Let's give each of them, the just man and the unjust, the freedom to do whatever he wants, and then follow along and watch where desire will lead each of them. We'd catch the just man red-handed going the same way as the unjust, because of the urge to have more than others. This is what every

nature naturally pursues as good, though law forcibly diverts it into respect for equality. The freedom I mean would be most complete if they got the kind of power 359d that they say once came to the ancestor of Gyges the Lydian. He was, they say, a shepherd in the service of the man who then ruled Lydia. There was a heavy rainstorm and an earthquake, and the ground split open, and a chasm appeared at the spot where he was grazing his flock.[1] He saw it and was amazed, and went down into it, and saw, among the other marvels they tell of, a hollow bronze horse with little doors in it. Stooping and looking in through these, he saw a corpse inside, which looked larger than human size. It had nothing else on, only a gold ring on its 359e hand; he took this off and came out. When the shepherds held their usual meeting to report to the king each month about the flocks, he came too, wearing the ring.

As he sat with the others, he happened to turn the bezel of the ring toward himself, to the inside of his hand, and when this happened 360a he became invisible to those sitting beside him, and they talked about him as if he'd gone away. He was amazed, and fingering the ring again he turned the bezel outward, and as he turned it he became visible. Noticing this, he tested the ring to see whether it really had this power, and it turned out that way: when he turned the bezel inward he became invisible, and when he turned it outward, visible. As soon as he realized this, he arranged to be one of the messengers sent to the king. When he got 360b there, he committed adultery with the king's wife, and with her help attacked the king, killed him, and so took over the kingdom. Now suppose there were two rings like this, and the just man put on one and the unjust man the other. No one, it would seem, would be so steely as to stay in justice and bring himself to keep away from other people's property and not touch it, when he could take whatever he wanted from the marketplace without fear, 360c go into houses and have sex with anyone he wanted, kill or free from prison anyone he wanted, and

1 Gyges seized the throne of Lydia, in western Asia Minor, in the seventh century BC; Herodotus tells a different story of how he did it.

in all other respects act among human beings like a god. Doing this, he'd be acting no differently from the other; both would go the same way. And someone might say this is strong evidence that no one is just willingly, but only under compulsion, since justice isn't a good for a person privately. For wherever each person thinks he'll be able to do wrong, he does wrong. Every man thinks injustice pays him far 360d better privately than justice—and he's right to think so, as the spokesman for this argument will say. For if someone got hold of this kind of freedom and was never willing to do any wrong or touch other people's property, those who knew about it would think him the most miserable and foolish of men. Still, they'd praise him to each other's faces, deceiving one another out of fear of being wronged. So much for that. 360e

THE PERFECTLY JUST AND THE PERFECTLY UNJUST

Glaucon contrasts the perfectly unjust man reputed just with the just man reputed unjust.

SOCRATES As for the actual judgment between the lives we're discussing, we'll be able to judge correctly only if we set the most just man and the most unjust man apart from each other; if not, we won't. So how do we set them apart? Like this: let's take nothing away from the unjust man's injustice, or from the just man's justice, but make each of them complete in his own way of life.

First, then, let the unjust man act the way skilled craftsmen do. An expert ship's captain or doctor, say, can tell what's impossible in his craft and what's possible, 361a and attempts the one and leaves the other alone; and if he does slip up somewhere, he's able to put it right. In the same way, let the unjust man go about his wrongdoing properly and escape notice, if he's going to be thoroughly unjust. Anyone who gets caught must be regarded as a poor practitioner, since the height of injustice is to seem just when you aren't. So we must give the perfectly unjust man the most perfect injustice. We mustn't take anything away

from it: we must let him commit the greatest wrongs while having secured for himself [361b] the greatest reputation for justice. If he does slip up somewhere, he must be able to set it right. He must be a capable enough speaker to persuade people, should any of his wrongdoing come to light, and able to use force wherever force is needed, thanks to his courage and strength and his supply of friends and money. Having set him up like this, let's stand the just man beside him in our argument: a simple, noble man who, in Aeschylus' phrase, wants not to seem good but to be good. So we must take away the seeming. For if he's going to seem just, [361c] honors and rewards will come to him for seeming so, and then it won't be clear whether he's like that for the sake of justice or for the sake of the rewards and honors.[2] He must be stripped of everything except justice and made the exact opposite of the first man. Though he does no wrong, let him have the greatest reputation for injustice, so that his justice may be put to the test by whether it's softened by a bad name and what comes of it. Let him go on unchanged until [361d] death, seeming unjust all his life but being just, so that when both have gone to the extreme, the one of justice and the other of injustice, we can judge which of the two is happier.

"Goodness, my dear Glaucon," I said, "how vigorously you're scouring each of the two men clean for judging, as if they were statues!"

As best I can, he said. And with the two of them like this, I don't think it's hard any more to go through in words what sort of life awaits each [361e] of them. So it must be said. And if it's said rather crudely, Socrates, don't think it's me speaking, but those who praise injustice above justice.

What they'll say is this: that the just man, being so disposed, will be whipped, racked, put in chains, [362a] and have his eyes burned out, and finally, after suffering every evil, he'll be impaled, and he'll realize that one should want not to be just but to seem so. And Aeschylus' line, it turns out, would have been

2 Aeschylus, in *Seven Against Thebes,* says of the seer Amphiaraus that he wished "not to seem the best, but to be it."

far more correctly said of the unjust man. For they'll say that it's really the unjust man, since he pursues something bound up with reality and doesn't live for appearances, who wants not to seem unjust but to be so, "reaping the deep furrow in his mind, [362b] from which his shrewd counsels spring." First, because he seems just, he holds office in the city; then he takes a wife from whatever family he likes and gives his children in marriage to whomever he likes; he makes contracts and partnerships with whomever he wants; and on top of all this he profits and gains, because he has no qualms about doing wrong. So when he enters contests, private or public, he comes out on top and gets the better of his enemies; and by getting the better of them he grows rich, [362c] does good to his friends and harm to his enemies, and offers sacrifices and dedicates offerings to the gods on an ample and magnificent scale. He serves the gods, and whichever men he chooses, far better than the just man does, so that in all likelihood it's more fitting for him, rather than the just man, to be dear to the gods. That, Socrates, is how they say gods and men provide a better life for the unjust man than for the just. [362d]

ADEIMANTUS ON REWARDS AND REPUTATIONS

Adeimantus complains that people praise justice only for its rewards and reputation.

SOCRATES When Glaucon had said this, I had it in mind to say something in reply, but his brother Adeimantus said, "Surely, Socrates, you don't think the case has been adequately stated?"

"Why, what else would I think?" I said.

"The very thing that most needed saying," he said, "hasn't been said."

"Well then," I said, "as the saying goes, let a brother stand by his man. So if Glaucon here is leaving anything out, you come to his aid. And yet what he's said is already enough to throw me flat and leave me unable to help justice." [362e]

And he said: Nonsense. Listen to this as well. We need to go through the arguments opposed to the ones he stated, the ones

that praise justice and blame injustice, so that what I take Glaucon to mean will be clearer.

Fathers, I suppose, tell their sons, and urge them, as do all who have anyone in 363a their care, that one must be just. They don't praise justice itself, but the good name that comes from it, so that someone who seems just may get from that reputation the offices and marriages and everything else Glaucon went through just now, which come to the just man from being well thought of. But these people make even more of reputations. They throw in good standing with the gods, and then they have endless goods to describe, which they say the gods give to the pious. So the noble Hesiod and Homer say. Hesiod says the gods make the oaks 363b for the just "bear acorns at the top and bees in the middle," and "the woolly sheep," he says, "are weighed down with fleece," and many other good things of that kind. The other poet says much the same: "like some blameless king who, fearing the gods, upholds justice, and the black earth bears 363c wheat and barley, the trees are heavy with fruit, the flocks bear young unfailingly, and the sea provides fish." Musaeus and his son give the just even headier goods from the gods than these. In their tales they take them down to Hades, lay them on couches, lay on a drinking party of the pious, and have them spend all 363d eternity drunk, with garlands on their heads, as if they thought eternal drunkenness the finest wage for excellence. Others stretch the wages from the gods out even further: they say that the pious man who keeps his oaths leaves behind his children's children and a line to come after him.[3] With these and similar things they sing the praises of justice. The impious and unjust, on the other hand, they bury in some sort of mud in Hades and force to carry water in a sieve. And while they're still alive, 363e they bring them into disrepute: the punishments Glaucon described for the just who are thought unjust, these they tell of the unjust, and they have nothing else to say. That, then, is how each is praised and blamed.

3 Musaeus was a legendary singer linked with Orpheus; poems and oracles about the afterlife circulated under his name.

Besides this, Socrates, consider yet another kind of talk about justice and injustice, heard both from private people 364a and from poets. They all hymn with one voice that moderation and justice are fine things, but hard and laborious, while self-indulgence and injustice are pleasant and easy to acquire, and shameful only in people's opinion and by convention. They say that unjust deeds are, for the most part, more profitable than just ones. They're quite ready to call bad people happy and to honor them, in public and in private, when they're rich or have other kinds of power, and to dishonor and look down on those who happen to be weak 364b and poor, even though they agree that these are better than the others. Most astonishing of all is what they say about the gods and excellence: that the gods, too, allot misfortune and a bad life to many good people, and the opposite lot to their opposites. Begging priests and seers go to rich men's doors and persuade them that they have a power, supplied by the gods through sacrifices and incantations, to heal with pleasures and festivals any 364c wrong committed by the man himself or by his ancestors; and that if he wants to injure some enemy, at small expense he'll harm just and unjust alike with certain spells and binding curses, since, as they say, they persuade the gods to serve them. For all these claims they bring in poets as witnesses. Some, speaking of badness, present it as easy: "Wickedness can be had in plenty, 364d easily; smooth is the road, and she lives very near; but before excellence the gods have set sweat," and a road that's long, rough and uphill. Others call Homer to witness that gods are swayed by human beings, since he too said: "Even the gods themselves can be moved by prayer; with sacrifices and soothing vows, 364e with libation and the savor of burnt fat, men turn them aside with their pleas, whenever someone oversteps and does wrong."

And they produce a clamor of books by Musaeus and Orpheus, offspring, so they say, of the Moon and the Muses, and by these they perform their rites. They persuade not only individuals but whole cities that there are releases and purifications from wrongdoing, through sacrifices and 365a pleasant games, for

the living and for the dead alike. These they call "initiations": they free us from the evils down there, while terrible things await those who haven't sacrificed.[4]

All these things, my dear Socrates, he said, so many and of such a kind, that are said about excellence and badness, and about how men and gods value them: what do we think they do to the souls of the young who hear them? I mean those who are naturally gifted and able, as it were, to flit over everything they hear and gather from it what sort of person 365b one should be, and what path one should take, to get through life as well as possible. In all likelihood such a young man would say to himself, in Pindar's words, "Shall I by justice climb the higher wall, or by crooked deceits," and so fence myself in and live out my life? For what they say is that if I'm just but don't also seem so, there's no benefit in it, only obvious troubles and penalties; but for the unjust man who has provided himself with a reputation for justice, a godlike life is promised. 365c So since, as the wise make plain to me, "seeming overpowers even truth" and is master of happiness, that's what I must turn to entirely. As a front and facade I must draw around myself a painted illusion of excellence, and trail behind me the fox of that wisest of men, Archilochus, greedy and cunning. "But," someone says, "it isn't easy to be bad and always go unnoticed." Nor is anything else that's great easy, 365d we'll reply. Still, if we're going to be happy, this is the way we must go, where the tracks of the arguments lead. To go unnoticed we'll organize conspiracies and political clubs; and there are teachers of persuasion who offer skill in speaking to the assembly and the courts. With these we'll persuade in some cases and use force in others, so that we can take more than our share and not pay the penalty.[5] "But you can't hide from the gods, or use force on them." Well, if they don't exist, or care nothing for human affairs, why should we 365e care about hiding

4 Orpheus: the legendary singer, under whose name poems circulated teaching rites of purification and what awaits the soul after death.

5 The "wise" quoted is the poet Simonides; Archilochus, a seventh-century BC poet, told fables of the crafty fox.

either? And if they do exist and do care, we know of them, or have heard of them, from nowhere else than the laws and the poets who traced their genealogies; and these same people say that they're the kind who can be swayed and won over "with sacrifices and soothing vows" and offerings. We must believe them on both counts or on neither.

And if we must believe them, then we should do wrong and offer sacrifices 366a from the proceeds. If we're just, we'll merely go unpunished by the gods, and we'll forgo the gains from injustice; if we're unjust, we'll make our gains, and by our pleas as we overstep and do wrong we'll persuade them and get off unpunished. "But in Hades we'll pay the penalty for the wrongs we've done here, either we ourselves or our children's children." But my friend, he'll say, doing his calculations, the initiations have great power, and so do the gods of release, as the 366b greatest cities say, and the children of gods who became poets and prophets of the gods, who reveal that this is how things are.

So on what argument would we still choose justice over the greatest injustice? If we get injustice along with a counterfeit show of decency, we'll fare as we please with gods and men, in life and in death: so goes the account given by the many and by the best authorities. After all that's been said, 366c Socrates, what way is there for anyone with any power, of soul or money or body or birth, to be willing to honor justice, and not laugh when he hears it praised? So if anyone can show that what we've said is false, and is fully convinced that justice is best, he surely has great sympathy for the unjust and isn't angry with them. He knows that, apart from someone who by a divine nature finds wrongdoing repugnant, or who has gained knowledge and 366d keeps away from it, no one else is just willingly. It's through cowardice or old age or some other weakness that people blame wrongdoing, because they're unable to do it. How this is so is clear: the first of such people to come into power is the first to do wrong, as far as he's able. And the cause of all this is nothing other than the point from which this whole argument started, for Glaucon here and for me, when we spoke to you, Socrates:

"You amazing man, of all 366e of you who claim to be praisers of justice, starting from the heroes of old whose words have come down to us and ending with people today, not one has ever blamed injustice or praised justice except for the reputations, honors and rewards that come from them. What each of them does by its own power when it's present in the soul of the one who has it, unnoticed by gods and men, no one has ever adequately gone through in argument, whether in poetry or in prose: that injustice is the greatest of all the evils a soul holds within itself, and justice the greatest good."

367a "If you'd all been talking like this from the start and persuading us of it from our youth, we wouldn't be guarding one another against wrongdoing; each would be his own best guardian, afraid that by doing wrong he'd be living with the greatest evil."

That, Socrates, and perhaps even more than that, is what Thrasymachus, and maybe someone else too, would say about justice and injustice, crudely turning their powers upside down, as it seems to me. But I, for I've no need to hide anything 367b from you, am speaking with all the force I can because I want to hear you argue the opposite. So don't just show us in argument that justice is better than injustice; show us what each of them does, itself through itself, to the one who has it, that makes the one bad and the other good. And take away the reputations, as Glaucon urged. For unless you take away the true reputation from each and attach the false one, we'll say you're praising not being just but seeming so, and blaming not being unjust 367c but seeming so; that you're urging us to be unjust and go unnoticed, and agreeing with Thrasymachus that justice is someone else's good, the advantage of the stronger, while injustice is to one's own advantage and profit, and to the disadvantage of the weaker. You've agreed, then, that justice is among the greatest goods, the ones worth having for the sake of what comes from them, but much more for their own sake, like seeing, 367d hearing, understanding, and of course being healthy, and all the other goods that are productive by their own nature and not by

reputation. So praise justice for just this: the benefit it brings, itself through itself, to the one who has it, and the harm injustice does. Leave wages and reputations for others to praise. I'd put up with others praising justice and blaming injustice in that way, extolling and reviling the reputations and wages that go with them; but not you, unless you told me to, because you've spent your whole life 367e examining nothing but this. So don't just show us in argument that justice is better than injustice; show us too what each of them does, itself through itself, to the one who has it, whether or not gods and men notice, that makes the one good and the other bad.

When I heard this, though I'd always admired the natures of Glaucon and Adeimantus, I was especially 368a delighted on this occasion, and I said, "Sons of that man, it wasn't badly said of you when Glaucon's lover began his elegy, after you'd distinguished yourselves at the battle of Megara, with the words 'Sons of Ariston, godlike offspring of a famous man.' That seems to me well put, my friends. Something truly godlike has happened to you, if you aren't convinced that injustice is better than justice when you can speak for it like that. And I really do believe you 368b aren't convinced. I judge from the rest of your character, since from your words alone I wouldn't trust you. But the more I trust you, the more I'm at a loss what to do.[6] "I can't come to the rescue, since I think I'm not capable of it. My evidence is that you didn't accept what I said to Thrasymachus when I thought I was showing that justice is better than injustice. Yet I can't refuse to help either. I'm afraid it may even be impious to stand by while justice is being slandered 368c and give up on helping her while I still have breath and can speak. So the best thing is to defend her as well as I can."

6 Ariston was the father of Glaucon, Adeimantus and Plato; the battle at Megara was probably fought in 409 BC.

THE CITY AS THE SOUL WRIT LARGE

Socrates proposes to look for justice first in a city, and describes a simple city meeting basic needs.

SOCRATES So Glaucon and the others begged me to help in every way and not let the argument drop, but to search out what each of them is and what the truth is about their benefits. I told them what I thought: that the inquiry we were undertaking was no trivial matter, but one for someone with sharp sight, as it seemed 368d to me. "Since we aren't clever," I said, "I think we should conduct this search the way we would if people without very sharp sight had been told to read small letters from a distance, and then someone noticed that the same letters were written somewhere else too, larger and on a larger surface. It would be a godsend, I think, to read those first and then examine the smaller ones, to see whether they're the same."

"Certainly," said Adeimantus. "But what do you see in our search for justice that's like this, 368e Socrates?"

"I'll tell you," I said. "There's justice, we say, of a single man, but surely also of a whole city?"

"Certainly," he said.

"And a city is bigger than a single man?"

"Bigger," he said.

"Then perhaps there'll be more justice in the bigger thing, and it will be easier to understand. So if you like, let's first look for what it's like in 369a cities, and then examine it in each individual as well, looking for the likeness of the bigger in the form of the smaller."

"I think that's a good idea," he said.

"Then if we watched a city coming into being in argument," I said, "would we also see its justice coming into being, and its injustice?"

"Probably," he said.

"And once that's done, can we hope to see what we're looking for more easily?" 369b

"Much more easily."

"Do you think we should try to carry it through, then? I don't think it's a small job. So think it over."

"We have," said Adeimantus. "Go ahead and do it."

"Well then," I said, "a city comes into being, I think, because none of us happens to be self-sufficient; each of us needs many things. Or do you think a city is founded on any other principle?"

"None," he said. 369c

"So one person takes on another for one need, and another for another; and since they need many things, they gather many people into one place to live as partners and helpers, and to this settlement we've given the name 'city.' Isn't that so?"

"Certainly."

"And whenever they share things with one another, giving or taking, each does it thinking it's better for himself?"

"Certainly."

"Come on, then," I said, "let's make a city in argument from the beginning. And what will make it, it seems, is our need."

"Of course." 369d

"Now the first and greatest of our needs is the provision of food, so that we can exist and live."

"Absolutely."

"The second is housing, and the third clothing and that sort of thing."

"That's right."

"Well then," I said, "how will the city be able to provide so much? Won't one be a farmer, another a builder, and another a weaver? Or shall we add a shoemaker too, or someone else who looks after the needs of the body?"

"Certainly."

"So the barest necessary city would consist of four or five men." 369e

"Apparently."

"What next? Should each of them contribute his own work for all of them in common? Should the farmer, for example, being

one man, provide food for four, spending four times the time and labor on providing food and sharing it with the others? Or should he not bother about them, and produce a quarter of this 370a food for himself alone in a quarter of the time, and spend the other three quarters providing a house, a cloak and shoes, not having the trouble of sharing with others but minding his own business by himself and for himself?"

And Adeimantus said, "Maybe, Socrates, the first way is easier than the other."

"By Zeus," I said, "that's not at all surprising. Now that you say it, it occurs to me too that, first of all, each of us is born not at all 370b like anyone else, but different in nature, one suited to one job and another to another. Don't you think so?"

"I do."

"Well then, would someone do better working at many crafts on his own, or when one person works at one?"

"When one works at one," he said.

"And this too is clear, I think: if someone misses the right moment for a job, it's ruined."

"Yes, that's clear."

"For the work, I think, isn't willing to wait until the worker has time; the worker has to keep up with the work 370c and not treat it as a sideline."

"He has to."

"So from this it follows that more of each thing gets done, and better and more easily, when one person does one thing, in accordance with his nature and at the right time, free of other tasks."

"Absolutely."

"Then we need more citizens than four, Adeimantus, to provide the things we mentioned. For the farmer, it seems, won't make his own plow, if it's to be a good one, 370d or his hoe, or any of the other tools for farming. Nor will the builder, who also needs many things. The same goes for the weaver and the shoemaker, doesn't it?"

"True."

"So carpenters and smiths and many other craftsmen of that sort will join our little city and make it quite populous."

"Certainly."

"But it still wouldn't be very big if we added cowherds and shepherds and other herdsmen, so that 370e the farmers would have oxen for plowing, the builders, along with the farmers, would have draft animals for hauling, and the weavers and shoemakers would have hides and wool."

"It wouldn't be a small city either," he said, "if it had all that."

"And yet," I said, "it's practically impossible to found the city itself in a place where it won't need imports."

"Yes, it's impossible."

"So it will need still others, who'll bring it what it needs from another city."

"It will."

"And if the one who serves it goes empty-handed, taking nothing that those people 371a need from whom they're getting what they need themselves, he'll come back empty-handed, won't he?"

"I think so."

"So at home they must produce not only enough for themselves, but also goods of the kind and in the quantity those others need."

"They must."

"Then our city needs more farmers and other craftsmen."

"Yes, more."

"And also, surely, other servants, to import and export each kind of goods. These are merchants, aren't they?"

"Yes."

"So we'll need merchants too."

"Certainly."

"And if the trade goes by sea, it will need a good many 371b others as well, who know about work at sea."

"A good many, yes."

"And what about in the city itself? How will they share with one another what each of them produces? It was for this, after all, that we formed a partnership and founded a city."

"Clearly," he said, "by selling and buying."

"So from this we'll get a marketplace, and money as a token for the sake of exchange."

"Certainly." 371c

"Then if the farmer, or any other craftsman, brings some of his produce to the marketplace and doesn't arrive at the same time as those who need to exchange with him, will he sit in the marketplace idle, neglecting his own craft?"

"Not at all," he said. "There are people who see this and appoint themselves to this service. In well-run cities they're usually those who are weakest in body and no use for any other work. They have to stay 371d right there around the marketplace and give money in exchange for goods to those who need to sell something, and goods in exchange for money to all who need to buy something."

"So this need," I said, "brings shopkeepers into being in our city. Or don't we call those who provide the service of buying and selling, set up in the marketplace, shopkeepers, and those who travel from city to city merchants?"

"Certainly." 371e

"And there are still other servants, I think, who wouldn't be very worthwhile partners where the mind is concerned, but have enough bodily strength for hard labor. They sell the use of their strength and call the price a wage, and so they're called, I think, wage earners. Isn't that so?"

"Certainly."

"So wage earners too, it seems, help make up the full complement of a city."

"I think so."

"Well, Adeimantus, has our city now grown to completion?"

"Perhaps."

"Then where in it would justice and injustice be? And along with which of the things we've looked at did they come into it?"

"I can't think, Socrates," he said, "unless perhaps it's somewhere in the need these very people have of one another."

"Perhaps you're right," I said. "We must look into it and not shrink from it."

372a "First, then, let's look at how people provided for in this way will live. Won't they produce grain and wine and clothes and shoes? They'll build houses, and in summer they'll mostly work stripped and barefoot, and in 372b winter adequately clothed and shod. For food they'll make barley meal from their barley and flour from their wheat, baking some and kneading some, and they'll set out fine barley cakes and loaves on reeds or clean leaves. Reclining on beds strewn with bryony and myrtle, they'll feast, they and their children, drinking wine afterwards, wearing garlands and singing hymns to the gods. They'll enjoy one another's company, and won't have more 372c children than their means allow, guarding against poverty or war."

And Glaucon broke in. "Your men seem to be feasting on plain bread," he said, "with nothing to go with it."

"That's true," I said. "I forgot that they'll have things to go with it: salt, obviously, and olives and cheese, and they'll boil onions and greens, the sort of things people boil in the country. And we'll set out desserts for them, of figs and chickpeas and beans, and they'll roast myrtle-berries and acorns 372d in the fire, drinking in moderation. And so, living out their lives in peace and good health, as you'd expect, they'll die old and hand on another life just like it to their descendants."

And he said, "If you were founding a city of pigs, Socrates, what else would you fatten them on but this?"

"Well, how should they live, Glaucon?" I said.

"The customary way," he said. "If they aren't going to be miserable, I think they should recline on couches and dine off tables, 372e and have the dishes and desserts people have nowadays."

THE FEVERISH CITY AND ITS GUARDIANS

Glaucon demands luxuries, and the enlarged city needs an army of guardians with the right natures.

SOCRATES "Very well," I said. "I understand. It seems we're examining not only how a city comes into being, but how a luxurious city does. Perhaps that's no bad thing: by examining a city like that too, we might well see how justice and injustice take root in cities. Now the true city, I think, is the one we've described, the healthy one, as it were. But if you want, let's also look at a city with a fever. Nothing stops us.

373a "For some people, it seems, these things won't be enough, and neither will this way of life. Couches will be added, and tables and other furniture, and dishes too, and perfumes and incense, and courtesans and pastries, and every one of these in every variety. And the things we mentioned first, houses and clothes and shoes, can no longer be counted as the necessities; we'll have to set painting and embroidery going, and acquire gold and ivory and everything of that kind. Isn't that so?" 373b

"Yes," he said.

"Then we have to make the city bigger again. The healthy one is no longer adequate; now it has to be filled with a mass and multitude of things that are no longer in cities because they're needed. All the hunters, for instance, and the imitators: many concerned with shapes and colors, many with music; poets and their assistants, rhapsodes, actors, chorus-dancers, contractors; and makers of all kinds of goods, including those 373c for women's adornment. We'll need more servants too. Or don't you think we'll need children's attendants, wet nurses, nannies, hairdressers, barbers, and cooks and butchers as well? And we'll need swineherds besides. There were none in our earlier city, since there was no need of them, but in this one we'll need them

too.[7] "And we'll need a great many other animals as well, if people are going to eat them. Won't we?"

"Of course." 373d

"And living like this, we'll have far more need of doctors than before?"

"Far more."

"And the land, I suppose, which was enough to feed the people back then, will now be too small instead of enough. Or what do we say?"

"Just that," he said.

"Then we'll have to cut off a slice of our neighbors' land, if we're going to have enough for pasture and plowing, and they'll want a slice of ours, if they too give themselves over to the unlimited acquisition of wealth and overstep the limit of what's necessary?" 373e

"That's quite inevitable, Socrates," he said.

"So next we'll go to war, Glaucon? Or how will it be?"

"Like that," he said.

"And let's not say yet," I said, "whether war does any harm or any good, but only this much: that we've now found the origin of war too. It comes from the very things that, whenever they arise, are the chief source of evils in cities, both for individuals and for the community."

"Certainly."

"Then the city needs to be bigger still, my friend, and not by a little, 374a but by a whole army, which will march out and fight off invaders in defense of all its property and of everything we were just talking about."

"Why?" he said. "Aren't the citizens themselves enough?"

"No," I said, "not if you and the rest of us were right in what we agreed when we were shaping the city. We agreed, if you remember, that it's impossible for one person to practice many crafts well."

"That's true," he said. 374b

7 Rhapsodes were professional performers who recited epic poetry, especially Homer.

"Well then," I said, "doesn't fighting a war seem to be a matter of skill?"

"Very much so," he said.

"Should we care more about shoemaking than about the art of war?"

"Not at all."

"Yet we wouldn't let the shoemaker try to be a farmer at the same time, or a weaver or a builder; he was to be a shoemaker, so that our shoemaking would be done well. And in the same way we gave each of the others one job, the one he was naturally suited for, which he was to work at all his life, free 374c of the others, not letting the right moments slip by, and so do it well. Now isn't it of the greatest importance that the business of war be done well? Or is it so easy that someone who farms, or makes shoes, or practices any other craft whatever, can be a soldier at the same time, when nobody could become even a competent player of board games or dice if he didn't practice that very thing from childhood but treated it as a sideline? 374d "Will someone who picks up a shield, or any other weapon or instrument of war, be a competent fighter that very day, in the heavy infantry or any other kind of battle war involves, when no other tool, just by being picked up, will make anyone a craftsman or an athlete, or be any use to someone who hasn't acquired the knowledge of it or put in enough practice?"

"If that were so," he said, "tools would be worth a great deal."

"Then," I said, "the more important the guardians' work is, 374e the more it would need freedom from other occupations, and the greatest skill and care."

"I certainly think so," he said.

"And won't it also need a nature suited to that very pursuit?"

"Of course."

"Then it would be our job, it seems, if we're up to it, to pick out which natures, and what sort, are suited to guarding a city."

"It is our job, yes."

"By Zeus," I said, "it's no small task we've taken on. Still, we mustn't lose heart, as far as our strength allows."

"No, we mustn't," he said.

"Do you think," I said, "that when it comes to guarding, the nature of a well-bred puppy is any different from that of a well-born young man?"

"What do you mean?"

"Well, each of them has to be sharp at noticing things, quick at chasing down what he's noticed, and strong as well, if he has to fight once he's caught it."

"Yes," he said, "they need all of these."

"And brave too, surely, if he's going to fight well."

"Of course."

375a "But will a horse or a dog or any other animal be willing to be brave if it isn't spirited? Haven't you noticed how 375b irresistible and invincible spirit is? When it's present, every soul is fearless and unconquerable in the face of anything."

"I have noticed."

"Then it's clear what the guardian must be like in body."

"Yes."

"And in soul too: he must be spirited."

"That too."

"Then how, Glaucon," I said, "will people with natures like that keep from being savage to one another and to the rest of the citizens?"

"By Zeus," he said, "it won't be easy." 375c

"And yet they have to be gentle toward their own people and harsh toward their enemies. Otherwise they won't wait for others to destroy them; they'll get there first and do it themselves."

"True," he said.

"What are we to do, then?" I said. "Where will we find a character that is gentle and high-spirited at once? A gentle nature is surely the opposite of a spirited one."

"So it seems."

"But if he lacks either of these, he'll never be a good guardian. And having both looks impossible, and so 375d it turns out that a good guardian can't exist."

"It looks that way," he said.

I was at a loss too, but after thinking over what we'd said before, I said, "We deserve to be at a loss, my friend. We've abandoned the comparison we put forward."

"What do you mean?"

"We didn't notice that there are natures of the kind we thought didn't exist, with both these opposite qualities."

"Where?"

"You could see it in other animals too, but not least 375e in the one we compared with the guardian. You know, I'm sure, that this is the natural character of well-bred dogs: to be as gentle as can be toward the people they're used to and know, and the opposite toward strangers."

"Yes, I know."

"So it's possible," I said, "and it's not against nature to look for a guardian like that."

"It seems not."

"Then do you think the one who's going to be a guardian needs something more as well: to be not only spirited but also philosophical by nature?"

376a "How so?" he said. "I don't follow."

"You'll see this in dogs too," I said, "and it's something in the animal that deserves our admiration."

"What's that?"

"When it sees someone it doesn't know, it gets angry, though it has never suffered any harm from him; but when it sees someone it knows, it welcomes him, even if it has never had anything good from him. Haven't you ever marveled at that?"

"I've never really paid attention to it until now," he said. "But obviously they do that."

"Well, this trait of its nature looks like a clever one, 376b and truly philosophical."

"In what way?"

"In that it tells a friendly face from a hostile one by nothing else than that it has come to know the one and doesn't know the other," I said. "And surely a creature that marks off what's its

own from what's foreign by knowledge and ignorance must be a lover of learning?"

"It can't be otherwise," he said.

"But surely," I said, "the love of learning and philosophy are the same thing?"

"The same," he said.

"Then may we confidently lay it down for a human being too, that if he's going to 376c be gentle toward his own people and those he knows, he must be philosophical and a lover of learning by nature?"

"Let's lay it down," he said.[8]

"So the one who's going to be a fine, good guardian of our city will be philosophical, spirited, fast and strong by nature."

"Absolutely," he said.

"Then that's what he'll be to begin with. But how are they to be brought up and educated? And will looking into that help us see what 376d our whole inquiry is aimed at, how justice and injustice come to be in a city? We don't want to leave out anything that matters, or go through a long, drawn-out discussion."

STORIES ABOUT THE GODS

Socrates says the guardians' education must begin with stories, and censors false tales about the gods.

SOCRATES And Glaucon's brother said, "Certainly. I fully expect this inquiry will help with that."

"By Zeus, my dear Adeimantus," I said, "then we mustn't drop it, even if it turns out rather long."

"No, we mustn't."

"Come on, then. Let's educate these men in our discussion, as if we were telling a story and had time on our hands." 376e

"We should."

"So what will their education be? Or is it hard to find a better one than the one discovered over a long time? That, I suppose, is physical training for the body and music for the soul."

8 The Greek word *philosophos* means literally "lover of wisdom."

"Yes, it is."[9]

"And won't we begin educating them in music before physical training?"

"Of course."

"Do you count stories as part of music," I said, "or not?"

"I do."

"And stories are of two kinds, true and false?"

"Yes."

"And they must be educated in both, but first in the false ones?"

"I don't understand what you mean," he said.

"Don't you understand," I said, "that the first thing we do is tell children tales? Taken as a whole, these are false, though there's some truth in them too. And we use tales with children before we use exercise."

"That's so."

377a "That's what I meant when I said we must take up music before physical training."

"Rightly," he said.

"Now you know that the beginning is the most important part of any task, 377b especially with anything young and tender? That's when it's most easily shaped, and takes on whatever stamp one wants to impress on it."

"Exactly."

"Then shall we just casually let the children hear any old tales made up by any old people, and take into their souls opinions that are mostly the opposite of the ones we'll think they ought to have when they're grown up?"

"We won't allow that at all."

"First, then, it seems, we must supervise the makers of tales, 377c and accept any fine tale they make, and reject any that isn't. And we'll persuade nurses and mothers to tell the children the ones we've accepted, and to shape their souls with tales far more

9 *Mousikē*, "the art of the Muses," covered poetry, stories and song as well as music in the narrow sense.

than they shape their bodies with their hands. Most of the ones they tell now will have to be thrown out."

"Which ones?" he said.

"We'll see the lesser ones in the greater," I said. "The greater and the lesser have to be of the same stamp and have the same 377d effect. Don't you think so?"

"I do," he said. "But I don't see which ones you mean by the greater either."

"The ones Hesiod and Homer told us," I said, "and the other poets. They made up false tales and told them to people, and still do."

"Which ones do you mean," he said, "and what fault do you find with them?"

"The fault one should find first and foremost," I said, "especially when the lie isn't a fine one."

"What's that?" 377e **10**

"When someone gives a bad likeness in words of what gods and heroes are like, like a painter whose picture looks nothing like the things he means to paint."

"Yes," he said, "it's right to find fault with things like that. But what do we mean, and what sort of things?"

"First," I said, "the greatest lie, about the greatest matters, and not a fine lie either: the story that Uranus did what Hesiod says he did, and that Cronus 378a took his revenge on him. As for what Cronus did, and what he suffered at the hands of his son, even if it were true I wouldn't think it should be told so casually to young people who don't know any better. It would be best to keep quiet about it, and if there were some need to tell it, as few people as possible should hear it, in secret, after sacrificing not a pig but some huge victim that's hard to come by, so that as few as possible would get to hear it."[11]

"Yes," he said, "those stories are hard ones." 378b

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10 Hesiod (around 700 BC) ranked with Homer as the great early poet; his *Theogony* tells how the gods came to be.

11 In Hesiod's *Theogony* Uranus (Sky) keeps his children imprisoned and is castrated by his son Cronus, who is in turn overthrown by his own son Zeus.

"And they mustn't be told in our city, Adeimantus," I said. "Nor must a young person be told, as he listens, that if he committed the worst crimes he'd be doing nothing remarkable, or if he punished his father for wrongdoing by any means he could, but would only be doing what the first and greatest of the gods did."

"No, by Zeus," he said, "I don't think those things are fit to be told either."

"Nor, in fact," I said, "that gods make war on gods 378c and plot against them and fight them, since it isn't even true, if the people who are going to guard our city are to think it utterly shameful to fall out with one another lightly. The last thing we should do is tell them tales of the battles of the giants, or embroider them on robes, or the many feuds of every kind between gods and heroes and their own kin and families. No, if we're somehow going to persuade them that no citizen has ever hated another, and that doing so is impious, then that's the kind of thing old men and old women should tell 378d the children from the very start, and as they grow older, the poets too must be made to compose stories along these lines. But Hera's being tied up by her son, and Hephaestus' being hurled out of heaven by his father when he was going to defend his mother from a beating, and all the battles of the gods that Homer composed, must not be admitted into the city, whether they were composed with hidden meanings or without.[12] "A young person can't judge what's a hidden meaning and what isn't, and whatever opinions he takes in at that age tend to become hard to wash out 378e and impossible to change. Perhaps that's why we should do everything we can to make sure that the first stories they hear are told as finely as possible, to lead them toward excellence."

"That makes sense," he said. "But if someone were to ask us about this too, what these things are and which tales we mean, what would we say?"

And I said, "Adeimantus, you and I aren't poets 379a at the moment, but founders of a city. Founders ought to know the pat-

terns the poets must follow when they tell their tales, and not permit them to depart from those patterns in what they compose; but it isn't the founders' job to make up tales themselves."

"Right," he said. "But that's exactly the question: what would the patterns be for talk about the gods?"

"Something like this, I suppose," I said. "God must always be portrayed as he really is, whether in epic, in lyric, or in tragedy."

"He must." 379b

"Now god really is good, and must be described that way?"

"Of course."

"But nothing good is harmful, is it?"

"I don't think so."

"And does what isn't harmful do harm?"

"Not at all."

"And does what does no harm do anything bad?"

"No, not that either."

"And what does nothing bad can't be the cause of anything bad?"

"How could it be?"

"Well then: is the good beneficial?"

"Yes."

"So it's the cause of doing well?"

"Yes."

"Then the good isn't the cause of everything. It's the cause of things that are as they should be, but not responsible for bad things." 379c

"Absolutely," he said.

"Then god, since he's good," I said, "can't be the cause of everything either, as most people say. He's the cause of a few things in human life, and not responsible for many, since we have far fewer good things than bad. The good things we must attribute to no one else, but for the bad things we have to look for some other causes, not god."

"What you say seems to me entirely true," he said.

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12 "Hidden meanings": allegorical readings of Homer, already current in Plato's day, treated such stories as symbols of physical or moral truths.

"Then we mustn't accept from Homer or any other [379d] poet this foolish mistake about the gods, when he says that 'two jars stand on the floor of Zeus's house, full of fates, one of good ones and the other of bad,' and that the man to whom Zeus gives a mixture of both 'meets sometimes with bad fortune, sometimes with good,' while the man to whom he gives not a mixture but one kind unmixed, 'him evil hunger drives over the shining earth'; [379e] nor that Zeus is for us the 'dispenser of both good and evil.'[13]

"And if anyone says that the breaking of the oaths and the truce, which Pandarus brought about, happened through Athena and Zeus, we won't approve; nor that strife and judgment among the gods [380a] came about through Themis and Zeus. Nor again must we let the young hear what Aeschylus says, that 'god makes guilt grow among mortals when he wants to ruin a house entirely.'[14] "But if anyone composes a work with these iambic lines in it, about the sufferings of Niobe, or of the house of Pelops, or the Trojan War, or anything else of that kind, either we mustn't let him say they are the work of a god, or, if they are, he must find pretty much the kind of account we're now looking for, and [380b] say that the god did what was just and good, and that they benefited from being punished. What we mustn't let the poet say is that those who paid the penalty were miserable, and that the one who did this to them was a god.[15] "If they said that the wicked were miserable because they needed punishment, and that in paying the penalty they were benefited by the god, we should let them. But as for saying that god, who is good, becomes the cause of evils for anyone, we must fight in every way to stop anyone from saying these things in his own city, if it's going to be well governed, and anyone from hearing them, [380c] young or old, whether the tale is told in verse or in prose.

13 The two jars come from Achilles' words to Priam in *Iliad* 24; the line about Zeus as dispenser is not in our text of Homer.

14 In *Iliad* 4 the Trojan Pandarus, urged on by Athena, breaks a sworn truce by shooting an arrow at Menelaus.

15 The lines come from Aeschylus' lost *Niobe*. Niobe boasted of her children to the goddess Leto, whose children Apollo and Artemis then killed them.

Saying these things would be impious, and they would be neither to our advantage nor consistent with themselves."

"I'll vote with you for this law," he said. "I like it."

"Then this," I said, "would be one of the laws and patterns about the gods, which speakers must follow in what they say and poets in what they compose: that god is not the cause of everything, but only of good things."

"That's quite enough," he said. 380d

"Now what about this second one? Do you think god is a sorcerer, who shows himself by design in different forms at different times, sometimes actually changing, altering his own form into many shapes, and sometimes deceiving us and making us believe such things about him? Or is he simple, and less likely than anything to depart from his own form?"

"I can't say," he said, "at least not offhand."

"Well, what about this? If anything departs from its own 380e form, isn't it necessarily changed either by itself or by something else?"

"Necessarily."

"Now aren't things in the best condition the least altered and moved by something else?

"For instance, a body is affected by food and drink and exertion, and every plant by the sun's heat and winds and things of that kind. Isn't the healthiest and strongest 381a least altered?"

"Of course."

"And the soul that is bravest and has the most understanding: wouldn't it be least disturbed and altered by anything outside it?"

"Yes."

"And the same reasoning surely applies to everything that's put together, furniture and buildings and clothes: those that are well made and in good condition are least altered by time and other influences."

"That's so." 381b

"So everything in good condition, whether by nature or by craft or both, is least open to change by something else."

"So it seems."

"But god and what belongs to god are in the best condition in every way."

"Of course."

"So in this respect god would be the least likely to take many shapes."

"The least likely, certainly."

"But would he change and alter himself?"

"Obviously," he said, "if he's altered at all."

"Then does he change himself into something better and more beautiful, or into something worse and uglier than himself?" 381c

"It must be into something worse," he said, "if he's altered at all. For surely we won't say that god is lacking in beauty or excellence."

"You're quite right," I said. "And that being so, Adeimantus, do you think anyone, god or human, would willingly make himself worse in any way?"

"Impossible," he said.

"Then it's impossible," I said, "even for a god to want to alter himself. Each of them, it seems, being as beautiful and as good as can be, remains forever and simply in his own shape."

"That seems to me absolutely necessary," he said. 381d

"Then, my excellent friend," I said, "let none of the poets tell us that 'the gods, in the likeness of strangers from other lands, taking every kind of shape, go roaming through cities'; and let no one tell lies about Proteus and Thetis, or bring Hera onstage, in tragedy or any other poetry, transformed into a priestess collecting alms 'for the life-giving children of Inachus, the river of Argos'; 381e and let them not tell us many other lies like these. And mothers mustn't be won over by the poets and frighten their children by telling the tales badly, saying that certain gods go around at night looking like all sorts of strangers from every-

where. That way they won't blaspheme against the gods and make their children more cowardly at the same time."[16]

"No, they mustn't," he said.

"But perhaps," I said, "while the gods themselves can't change, they make us think they appear in all sorts of forms, deceiving us and casting spells on us?"

"Perhaps," he said.

"Well then," I said, "would a god be willing to lie, either in words or by holding out an illusion in action?"

"I don't know," he said.

"Don't you know," I said, "that the true lie, if one can call it that, is hated by all gods and humans?"

"What do you mean?" he said.

382a "This," I said: "no one is willing to be deceived in the most important part of himself about the most important things. That's where he's most afraid of all to have falsehood lodged."

"I still don't understand," he said. 382b

"That's because you think I'm saying something profound," I said. "All I'm saying is that to be deceived in one's soul about the things that are, to be misled and ignorant, and to have and hold falsehood there, is what everyone would least accept. That's where people hate falsehood most."

"Very much so," he said.

"But as I was just saying, this is what would most rightly be called the true lie: the ignorance in the soul of someone who has been deceived. The lie in words is a kind of imitation of that condition in the soul, an image that comes after it, not a completely 382c pure lie. Isn't that so?"

"Certainly."

"So the real lie is hated not only by gods but by human beings too."

"I think so."

"But what about the lie in words? When is it useful, and to whom, so that it doesn't deserve to be hated? Isn't it useful

16 Proteus and Thetis were sea divinities famous for changing their shapes; the first quotation is from Homer's *Odyssey*.

against enemies, and with so-called friends when madness or some folly leads them to try to do something bad? Then it becomes useful as a medicine to turn them away from it. And in the tales we were just 382d talking about, since we don't know the truth about ancient events, don't we make it useful by making the falsehood as much like the truth as we can?"

"Very much so," he said.

"Then for which of these reasons would a lie be useful to god? Would he lie, making up likenesses of the truth, because he doesn't know about ancient events?"

"That would be ridiculous," he said.

"So there's no lying poet in god."

"I don't think so."

"Then would he lie because he's afraid of his enemies?" 382e

"Far from it."

"Because of the folly or madness of his friends, then?"

"But no one foolish or mad is dear to the gods," he said.

"Then there's no reason why a god would lie."

"There isn't."

"Then everything divine, whether spirit or god, is entirely free of lies."

"Absolutely," he said.

"Then god is entirely simple and true in deed and in word. He doesn't change himself, and he doesn't deceive others—not by apparitions, not by words, not by sending signs, whether waking or dreaming." 383a

"That's how it looks to me too," he said, "now that you say it."

"So do you agree," I said, "that this is the second pattern within which we must speak and compose poetry about gods: that they are not sorcerers who transform themselves, and they don't mislead us with falsehoods in word or deed?"

"I agree."

"So although we praise much in Homer, this we won't praise: Zeus sending the dream to Agamemnon. Nor will we praise Aeschylus when his Thetis says that Apollo, singing at her 383b wedding, dwelt on her happiness in her children: 'Lives long and

untouched by sickness, and calling my fortunes in every way dear to the gods, he raised a song of triumph and gladdened my heart. And I believed the holy mouth of Phoebus, brimming with the prophetic art, was free of lies. Yet he who sang, he who sat at the feast, he who said these things—he himself is the one who killed my son.' 383c When anyone says such things about gods, we'll be angry and won't grant him a chorus, and we won't let teachers use it to educate the young—if our guardians are to become god-fearing and godlike, as far as a human being possibly can."[17]

"I agree with these patterns completely," he said, "and I would treat them as laws."

17 In Athens a public official "granted a chorus" to the playwrights selected to compete at a dramatic festival.

Book III

The education of the guardians.

SOCRATES 386a "So where the gods are concerned," I said, "these, it seems, are the sorts of things that people should and shouldn't hear from childhood on, if they're going to honor the gods and their parents and not think lightly of their friendship with one another."

"And I think," he said, "we're right about that."

"What if they're to be courageous? Mustn't we tell them these things, and also things that will make them least afraid of death? 386b Or do you think anyone could ever become courageous with this terror inside him?"

"No, by Zeus," he said, "I don't."

"And what about this? If someone believes that the things in Hades are real and terrible, do you think he'll be fearless of death and choose death in battle over defeat and slavery?"

"Not at all."

"Then it seems we must supervise those who undertake to tell these stories too, and ask them not simply to disparage the things in Hades like this but rather to praise them, since what they say is 386c neither true nor beneficial to those who are going to be fighters."

"Yes, we must," he said.

"Then we'll strike out," I said, "all passages like this, starting with this verse: 'I would rather be a laborer on the land, serving another man, some man with no land and not much to live on, than be king over all the dead who have perished.' And this: 386d 'and lest his house be revealed to mortals and immortals, dread-

ful and moldering, which even the gods abhor.' And: 'Ah me, so there is something even in the house of Hades, a soul and a phantom, but no mind in it at all.' And this: 'He alone has his wits; the others flit about as shadows.' And: 'His soul flew from his limbs and went to Hades, bewailing its fate, leaving manhood and youth behind.'[1]

387a "And this: 'His soul went beneath the earth like smoke, shrieking.' And: 'As when bats in the depths of an eerie cave flit about shrieking, when one has fallen from the cluster off the rock and they cling to one another, so they went together, shrieking.' 387b We'll ask Homer and the other poets not to be angry if we cross out these and all such passages—not because they aren't poetic and pleasant for most people to hear, but because the more poetic they are, the less they should be heard by boys and men who are meant to be free and to fear slavery more than death."

"Absolutely."

"Then we must also throw out all the terrible and frightening names connected with these things—Cocytus and Styx, 387c 'those below' and 'the withered dead,' and all the other names of this sort which make everyone who hears them shudder—or so the poet supposes. Perhaps they're fine for some other purpose. But we're afraid for our guardians: that shudders like these will make them more heated and softer than they should be."

"And we're right to be afraid," he said.

"So they must be removed?"

"Yes."

"And the opposite pattern must be used in speaking and in poetry?"

"Obviously." 387d [2]

1 The verses in this passage come from Homer's *Odyssey* and *Iliad*; in the first, the ghost of Achilles is speaking in the underworld.

2 Cocytus and Styx were rivers of the underworld.

HEROES WHO LAMENT AND LAUGH

Socrates removes from poetry scenes of heroes lamenting, laughing or behaving intemperately.

SOCRATES "Then we'll also remove the wailing and lamentation of famous men?"

"We must," he said, "if we removed the earlier things."

"Consider, then," I said, "whether we'll be right to remove them or not. We say that a decent man won't think death a terrible thing for another decent man whose friend he is."

"We do say that."

"Then he wouldn't lament for him as though he had suffered something terrible."

"Certainly not."

"And we also say this: that such a man is, more than anyone, sufficient in himself for living well, and that he, above all 387e others, has the least need of anyone else."

"True," he said.

"So for him it's least terrible of all to be deprived of a son or a brother, or money, or anything else of that kind."

"Least of all, certainly."

"Then he laments least, too, and bears it as calmly as he can when some such misfortune overtakes him."

"Very much so."

"So we'd be right to remove the dirges of famous men and give them to women—and not to the serious ones at that— 388a and to men of poor character, so that those we say we're raising to guard the country will be disgusted at the idea of behaving like them."

"Right," he said.

"Once again, then, we'll ask Homer and the other poets not to portray Achilles, the son of a goddess, 'lying now on his side, now on his back, and now on his face, then getting up and wandering distraught along 388b the shore of the barren sea,' nor 'taking the sooty dust in both hands and pouring it over his head,'

nor weeping and lamenting in all the ways and as often as Homer made him do; nor Priam, a near descendant of the gods, begging and 'rolling in the dung, calling on each man by name.'[3] "Much more still, we'll ask them not to portray gods lamenting and saying, 388c 'Ah me, poor wretch, ah me, unhappy mother of the best of men!' And if they must portray gods, at least they mustn't dare to represent the greatest of the gods so unlike himself as to say, 'Alas, a man dear to me is being chased around the city, I see it with my own eyes, and my heart grieves,' and, 'Ah me, that it is fated for Sarpedon, dearest of men to me, 388d to be brought down by Patroclus, son of Menoetius!' For, my dear Adeimantus, if our young people listened to things like this seriously and didn't laugh at them as unworthy, they would hardly think such things beneath themselves, being merely human, or rebuke themselves if it occurred to them to say or do anything of the sort. Instead, without shame or endurance, they'd sing many dirges and laments over small misfortunes." 388e [4]

"What you say is very true," he said.

"But that mustn't happen, as our argument just showed us—and we must be persuaded by it until someone persuades us with a better one."

"No, it mustn't."

"Nor should they be fond of laughter. For when someone gives in to violent laughter, it tends to bring on a violent swing the other way."

"So it seems to me," he said.

"Then if anyone portrays people of any account overcome by 389a laughter, we mustn't accept it—much less if it's gods."

"Much less," he said.

"Then we won't accept things like this from Homer about the gods either: 'Unquenchable laughter arose among the blessed

3 Achilles is mourning his friend Patroclus; Priam, king of Troy, is mourning his son Hector.

4 The first line is spoken by Thetis, Achilles' mother; the others by Zeus, watching Hector and his own son Sarpedon go to their deaths.

gods when they saw Hephaestus bustling through the hall.' By your argument we mustn't accept it."

"If you want to call it mine," he said. "Anyway, it mustn't 389b be accepted."

"But we must also value truth highly. If we were right just now, and falsehood really is useless to gods but useful to human beings as a kind of medicine, then clearly something like that must be left to doctors, and private individuals mustn't touch it."

"Clearly," he said.[5]

"Then if anyone is entitled to lie, it's the rulers of the city, in dealing with enemies or citizens for the city's benefit; nobody else may touch such a thing. 389c For a private individual to lie to such rulers, we'll say, is as great a mistake as—no, a greater one than—for a patient not to tell his doctor the truth about the condition of his own body, or an athlete his trainer, or for a sailor not to tell the captain the facts about the ship and the crew, and how he himself or one of his shipmates is doing."

"Very true," he said. 389d

"So if the ruler catches anyone else in the city lying—'any of those who are craftsmen, a prophet, or healer of ills, or joiner of timber'—he'll punish him for introducing a practice that capsizes and destroys a city just as it would a ship."

"He will," he said, "if deeds are to follow words."

"What next? Won't our young people need moderation?"

"Of course."

"And for most people, aren't these the most important parts of moderation: to obey the rulers, 389e and themselves to rule over the pleasures of drink, sex and food?"

"I think so."

"Then we'll say, I think, that things like what Diomedes says in Homer are well said: 'Friend, sit in silence and do as I say,' and the lines that go with it: 'The Achaeans marched breathing fury, in silence, fearing their commanders,' and everything else like that."

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5 Hephaestus, the lame smith-god, was hobbling about serving wine to the other gods.

"Well said."

"What about things like this: 'Heavy with wine, with a dog's eyes and a deer's heart,' 390a and the lines after it? Are they well said—or any other insolence toward rulers from people under them that anyone has uttered in prose or verse?"

"No, they're not."[6]

"No, because I don't think they're fit for young people to hear—not for the sake of moderation, anyway. That they provide some other pleasure is no surprise. How does it look to you?"

"Just so," he said.

"And what about making the wisest of men say that the finest thing of all, in his view, is when 'the tables beside them are loaded 390b with bread and meat, and the wine-server draws wine from the mixing bowl and carries it round and pours it into the cups'? Do you think that's fit for a young man to hear, for his self-control? Or this: 'To die of hunger and meet one's fate is the most pitiful thing'? Or Zeus—while the other gods and men were asleep and he alone was awake—easily 390c forgetting everything he'd planned because of his sexual desire, and so overwhelmed at the sight of Hera that he isn't even willing to go to their bedroom but wants to lie with her right there on the ground, saying he's gripped by desire as never before—not even when they first went to each other 'without their parents knowing'? Or Hephaestus binding Ares and Aphrodite for similar reasons?"[7]

"No, by Zeus," he said, "it doesn't seem fit to me." 390d

"But where famous men show endurance in the face of everything, in word or deed," I said, "that should be watched and heard—like this: 'He struck his chest and rebuked his heart: Endure, my heart; you've endured worse before now.'"

"Absolutely," he said.

"And we certainly mustn't let our men take bribes or love money." 390e

"Not at all."

6 "Achaeans" is Homer's name for the Greeks at Troy. The insult is Achilles' attack on his commander, Agamemnon.

7 The "wisest of men" is Odysseus, speaking at a feast in the *Odyssey*.

"Nor must they sing to them, 'Gifts persuade gods, gifts persuade revered kings.' Nor must we praise Achilles' tutor Phoenix as speaking sensibly when he advised him to take gifts and defend the Achaeans, but not to give up his wrath without gifts.

"Nor will we think it right, or agree, that Achilles himself was such a lover of money that he took gifts from Agamemnon, and again that he accepted payment for a corpse [391a] and released it, but otherwise refused."

"Well, it's certainly not right," he said, "to praise things like that."[8]

"Out of respect for Homer," I said, "I hesitate to say that it isn't even pious to say these things against Achilles, or to believe others who say them. But these things mustn't be believed either: that he said to Apollo, 'You've thwarted me, Far-shooter, most destructive of all the gods; I'd pay you back, if only I had the power'; [391b] that he defied the river, a god, and was ready to fight it; and that of the locks of hair consecrated to the other river, the Spercheus, he said, 'Let me give my hair to the hero Patroclus to take with him'—who was a corpse—and that he did it. And Hector dragged around Patroclus' tomb, and the captives slaughtered on the pyre: we'll say that none of this is truly told, and we won't let [391c] our people believe that Achilles—son of a goddess and of Peleus, the most moderate of men and third in descent from Zeus, and brought up by the wise Chiron—was so full of turmoil that he had in him two diseases opposed to each other: a meanness that went with love of money, and at the same time arrogance toward gods and men."[9]

"You're right," he said.

"Then let's not believe this either," I said, "or allow it to be said: that Theseus son of Poseidon and Pirithous son of Zeus [391d] set out on terrible abductions, or that any other child of a god, any hero, would have dared to do the terrible and impious deeds people now falsely tell of them. Let's compel the poets either to

8 The corpse is Hector's, ransomed from Achilles by Priam.
9 Achilles' hair had been vowed to the Spercheus, a river of his homeland, for his safe return. Chiron was the wise centaur who raised him.

deny that these deeds were theirs or to deny that they were children of gods, and not to say both—and not to try to persuade our young people that the gods produce evil and that heroes are no better than human beings. As we said earlier, [391e] these things are neither pious nor true; for we showed, I think, that evil can't come from gods."[10]

"Of course not."

"What's more, they're harmful to those who hear them. Everyone will excuse himself for being bad once he's persuaded that such things are done, and were done, by 'the gods' close kin, near to Zeus, whose altar of ancestral Zeus stands high in the air on Ida's peak,' and 'in whom the blood of divinities has not yet faded.'

"For these reasons such stories must be stopped, in case they breed in our young people a great [392a] readiness for wickedness."

"Absolutely," he said.[11]

"Then what kind of speech is still left for us," I said, "as we lay down what may and may not be said? We've said how gods should be spoken of, and divinities, heroes and the things in Hades."

"Certainly."

"Then what remains would be about human beings?"

"Obviously."

"But we can't settle that at present, my friend."

"Why not?"

"Because I think we'll say that poets and prose writers alike [392b] speak badly about human beings on the most important matters: that many unjust people are happy and many just people wretched, that injustice pays if it goes undetected, and that justice is someone else's good and one's own loss. We'll forbid them to say such things and order them to sing and tell stories of the opposite. Don't you think so?"

"I know it well," he said.

10 Theseus and Pirithous tried to carry off Helen and Persephone.

11 The quoted lines come from Aeschylus' lost play *Niobe*.

"Then if you agree that I'm right, shall I say you've agreed to what we've been looking for all along?"

"You've understood rightly," he said. 392c

NARRATION AND IMITATION

Socrates distinguishes plain narration from imitation and limits what the guardians may imitate.

SOCRATES "So we'll agree that such stories must be told about human beings only when we've discovered what justice is, and how by nature it benefits its possessor, whether he seems just or not?"

"Very true," he said.

"Then let that be the end of what concerns content. Next, I think, we must examine style, and then we'll have fully examined both what must be said and how."

And Adeimantus said, "I don't understand what you mean by that." 392d

"Well, you should," I said. "Maybe you'll understand better this way. Isn't everything told by storytellers or poets a narration of things past, present or future?"

"What else could it be?" he said.

"And don't they carry it out by plain narration, or by narration that works through imitation, or by both?"

"This too," he said, "I need to understand more clearly."

"I seem to be a ridiculous and unclear teacher," I said. "So, like people who are bad at explaining, I won't take the whole thing, but I'll take 392e one part and try to show you in it what I mean.

"Tell me: do you know the beginning of the *Iliad*, where the poet says that Chryses begged Agamemnon to release his daughter, that Agamemnon was angry, and that Chryses, since 393a he didn't get what he asked, prayed to the god against the Achaeans?"

"I do."[12]

"Then you know that up to these lines—'and he begged all the Achaeans, and most of all the two sons of Atreus, marshals of the people'—the poet himself is speaking, and doesn't even try to turn our minds elsewhere, as if the speaker were someone other than himself. But after that he speaks as though he himself were Chryses, and tries as hard as he can 393b to make us think that the speaker isn't Homer but the priest, an old man. And he's composed nearly all the rest of his narration this way, about what happened at Troy, and in Ithaca, and in the whole *Odyssey*."

"Certainly," he said.

"Now it's narration both when he gives the speeches and when he gives what comes between the speeches?"

"Of course." 393c

"But when he gives a speech as though he were someone else, won't we say that he then makes his own style as much like each speaker he introduces as he can?"

"We will—what else?"

"And isn't making oneself like someone else, in voice or in bearing, imitating the person one makes oneself like?"

"Of course."

"In a case like that, then, it seems, he and the other poets produce their narration through imitation."

"Certainly."

"But if the poet never hid himself anywhere, his whole poem and narration 393d would have come about without imitation. And so you won't say again that you don't understand, I'll explain how that would happen. If Homer, after saying that Chryses came bringing a ransom for his daughter, as a suppliant to the Achaeans and especially the kings, had gone on speaking not as though he had become Chryses but still as Homer, you know it wouldn't be imitation but plain narration. It would go something like this—I'll put it without meter, since I'm no poet: The priest came 393e and prayed that the gods would grant that

12 Chryses was a priest of Apollo whose daughter had been taken captive by the Greeks.

they capture Troy and come home safe themselves, and that they would release his daughter to him, accepting the ransom and respecting the god.

"When he had said this, the others were respectful and agreed, but Agamemnon grew savage, ordering him to leave now and not come back, or the staff and the god's wreaths would be no help to him. Before his daughter was set free, he said, she would grow old with him in Argos. He told him to go away and not provoke him, 394a if he wanted to get home safe. When the old man heard this he was afraid and left in silence. But once he had withdrawn from the camp he prayed at length to Apollo, calling on the god by his titles and reminding him, and asking for a return if he had ever given him a gift that pleased him, whether in building temples or in sacrificing victims. In return for these, he prayed, let the Achaeans pay for his tears with the god's arrows. That, my friend," I said, "is how plain narration without 394b imitation comes about."

"I understand," he said.

"Then understand," I said, "that the opposite of this comes about when someone takes out the poet's words between the speeches and leaves only the exchanges."

"I understand this too," he said. "That's the way it is with tragedy."

"You've taken it exactly right," I said, "and I think I can now make clear to you what I couldn't before: that one kind of poetry and storytelling 394c works entirely through imitation—tragedy and comedy, as you say; another through the report of the poet himself—you'd find it mostly, I suppose, in dithyrambs; and another through both, in epic poetry and in many other places too, if you follow me."

"Yes, now I see," he said, "what you meant then."[13]

"Then remember what came before this too: we said that what must be said had already been discussed, but how it must be said was still to be examined."

13 A dithyramb was a choral song, traditionally in honor of Dionysus, performed at Athenian festivals.

"I remember." 394d

"Well, this is exactly what I meant: that we have to come to an agreement whether we'll let the poets produce their narrations for us by imitating, or by imitating in some parts and not in others—and which parts in each case—or not imitating at all."

"I have a hunch," he said, "you're considering whether or not we'll admit tragedy and comedy into the city."

"Perhaps," I said, "and perhaps even more than that. I don't know yet myself; but wherever the argument carries us, like a wind, that's where we must go."

"And you're right," he said. 394e

"Then consider this, Adeimantus: should our guardians be imitators or not? Or does this too follow from what we said before—that each person would practice one pursuit well, but not many, and if he tried, by dabbling in many he would fail at them all, and never make a name for himself in any?"

"Of course it follows."

"And doesn't the same argument hold for imitation—that the same person can't imitate many things as well as he can one?"

"No, he can't."

"Then he'll hardly practice any pursuit worth mentioning while at the same time imitating many things and being an imitator. After all, even with two kinds of imitation that seem close to each other, the same people can't do both well—writing comedy and tragedy, for instance. Didn't you just call these two imitations?"

"I did. And you're right that the same people can't do both."

"Nor can they be rhapsodes and actors at once."

"True."

395a "And the same actors don't even perform comedy and 395b tragedy. Yet all these are imitations, aren't they?"

"Imitations."

"And human nature, Adeimantus, seems to me to be minted into even smaller change than this, so that it can't imitate many things well, or do the very things of which the imitations are likenesses."

"Very true," he said.

"Then if we're to preserve our first argument—that our guardians must be released from all other crafts and be very exact 395c craftsmen of the city's freedom, pursuing nothing that doesn't contribute to it—then they shouldn't do or imitate anything else. And if they do imitate, they should imitate from childhood what suits them—people who are courageous, moderate, pious, free, and everything of that kind. What is unfree they should neither do nor be clever at imitating, nor anything else shameful, so that they don't get a taste of the real thing 395d from the imitation. Or haven't you noticed that imitations, if they're kept up from youth on for a long time, settle into habits and nature—in the body, the voice and the mind?"

"Very much so," he said.

"Then we won't allow those we say we care for," I said, "and who must become good men, to imitate a woman, since they are men—whether young or older, whether railing at her husband, or quarreling with gods and boasting because she thinks 395e she's happy, or caught up in misfortunes, grief and lamentation. Still less one who's sick, or in love, or in labor."

"Absolutely," he said.

"Nor female and male slaves doing what slaves do."

"Not that either."

"Nor bad men, it seems, cowards who do the opposite of what we just described—insulting and mocking one another and using foul language, drunk or 396a even sober—or any of the other ways such people offend in word and deed against themselves and others. And I don't think they should get used to making themselves like madmen in word or deed either. For one has to recognize madmen and wicked people, both men and women, but must not do or imitate anything of theirs."

"Very true," he said.

"What about this?" I said. "Should they imitate smiths or other craftsmen at work, 396b or men rowing triremes or calling the stroke for them, or anything else connected with these?"

"How could they," he said, "when they won't even be allowed to pay attention to any of these things?"

"And what about horses neighing and bulls bellowing, rivers roaring and the sea crashing, and thunder, and all such things—will they imitate them?"

"No," he said. "They've been forbidden to be mad or to make themselves like madmen."[14]

"Then if I understand what you mean," I said, "there is one kind of style and narration that a truly fine and good man 396c would use whenever he had to say something, and another kind, unlike it, that a man of the opposite nature and upbringing would always keep to and use in his narration."

"What are they?" he said.

"I think," I said, "that when a moderate man comes in his narration to some speech or action of a good man, he'll be willing to report it as if he himself were that man, and won't be ashamed of that kind of imitation. He'll imitate the good man most 396d when he is acting steadily and sensibly, and less, and less readily, when he's been tripped up by illness or love, or by drink or some other misfortune. But when he comes to someone unworthy of himself, he won't be willing to model himself seriously on someone worse than he is—except briefly, when that person does something good. Instead he'll be ashamed, both because he has no practice in imitating such people and because he can't stand molding himself on the patterns of worse men and 396e fitting himself into them. He holds it in contempt in his mind—except as play."

"Likely enough," he said.

"So he'll use the kind of narration we went through a little while ago in connection with Homer's epics. His style will share in both, imitation and plain narration, but with only a small portion of imitation in a long stretch of speech. Or am I talking nonsense?"

14 The trireme was the standard Greek warship, rowed by about 170 oarsmen kept in time by a caller.

"Not at all," he said. "That's exactly the pattern such a speaker must follow."

397a "And the one who isn't like that," I said, "will narrate anything at all, the more so the worse he is, and think nothing beneath him. So he'll undertake to imitate everything, in earnest and in front of a crowd, including the things we were just mentioning: thunder, the noise of wind and hail, of axles and pulleys, the voices of trumpets and pipes and panpipes and every instrument, and even the cries of dogs, sheep and birds. 397b His whole style will be imitation, by voice and gesture, with perhaps a little narration in it?"

"That must follow too," he said.

"These, then," I said, "are the two kinds of style I meant."

"Yes, they are," he said.

"Now one of the two involves only small variations. If you give the style a fitting mode and rhythm, someone speaking it correctly ends up speaking in pretty much the same mode throughout—a single mode, since the variations are small—and likewise in 397c a rhythm that stays roughly the same. Isn't that so?"

"That's exactly how it is," he said.

"What about the other kind? Doesn't it need the opposite—every mode and every rhythm—if it's to be delivered in a way that suits it, since it contains every sort of variation?"

"Very much so."

"Then do all poets, and everyone who says anything, hit on one or the other of these patterns of style, or on some mixture of the two?"

"Necessarily," he said. 397d

"So what shall we do?" I said. "Shall we admit all of these into the city, or one of the unmixed kinds, or the mixed one?"

"If my vote wins," he said, "the unmixed imitator of the decent man."

"And yet, Adeimantus, the mixed kind is pleasant too. And by far the most pleasant, to children and their attendants and to the great mass of people, is the opposite of the one you choose."

"Yes, it's the most pleasant."

"But perhaps," I said, "you'd say it doesn't suit our 397e constitution, because among us there's no double man, nor a manifold one, since each person does one thing."

"No, it doesn't suit it."

"So that's why it's only in a city like ours that we'll find the shoemaker a shoemaker, and not a ship's pilot on top of his shoemaking; the farmer a farmer, and not a juror on top of his farming; the soldier a soldier, and not a moneymaker on top of his soldiering; and so with everyone?"

"True," he said.

398a "So it seems that if a man whose wisdom let him become every sort of thing and imitate anything at all were to arrive in our city, wanting to put himself and his poems on show, we would bow down to him as someone holy, wonderful and delightful. But we'd tell him that there's no such man in our city, and that it isn't lawful for one to arise there; and we'd send him off to another city, after pouring myrrh over his head and crowning him with wool. For ourselves, for our own benefit, we'd employ a harsher and less pleasing poet 398b and storyteller, one who would imitate the style of the decent man and would say what he says in the patterns we laid down at the start, when we set out to educate our soldiers."[15]

MODES AND RHYTHMS

Socrates admits only modes and rhythms suited to a brave and orderly life.

SOCRATES "We certainly would," he said, "if it were up to us."

"And now, my friend," I said, "it looks as though we've completely finished with the part of music that concerns speeches and stories. We've said both what must be said and how."

"I think so too," he said. 398c

"So what's left after this is the manner of song and melody?"

15 Anointing with perfumed oil and wreathing with wool were honors paid to sacred objects such as statues of the gods.

"Obviously."

"Couldn't anyone at all work out by now what we have to say about them—what they must be like—if we're going to be consistent with what we've said already?"

Glaucon laughed and said, "Well, Socrates, I'm afraid your 'anyone at all' leaves me out. At the moment I can't quite infer what sort of thing we ought to say—though I have my suspicions."

"Well, at any rate," I said, "you can surely say this much 398d to begin with: that a song is composed of three things—words, mode and rhythm."

"Yes," he said, "that much I can."

"And as far as it's words, it surely doesn't differ at all from words that aren't sung, in having to be spoken according to the same patterns we laid down just now, and in the same way?"

"True," he said.

"And the mode and the rhythm must follow the words."

"Of course."

"But we said we had no need of dirges and laments in our speeches."

"No, we don't." 398e

"Which modes are the mournful ones, then? Tell me—you're the musician."

"Mixolydian," he said, "and Tense Lydian, and others like them."

"Then these must be removed?" I said. "They're useless even for women who are meant to be decent, let alone for men."

"Certainly."

"And drunkenness is utterly unfitting for guardians, and so are softness and idleness."

"Of course."[16]

"Which of the modes are soft and suited to drinking parties?"

16 Greek music used a number of modes (*harmoniai*), scales named after peoples or regions—Lydian, Ionian, Dorian, Phrygian—each thought to have its own emotional character.

"Ionian," he said, "and some Lydian ones, the kind called 'slack.'"

"Then will you have any use for these, my friend, with men who are warriors?"

"None at all," he said. "It looks as if you're left with Dorian and Phrygian."

399a "I don't know the modes," I said, "but leave that mode which would fittingly imitate the voice and the accents of a brave man engaged in warfare, or in any forced undertaking—a man who, when he fails, whether he's going to meet wounds or 399b death or has fallen into some other misfortune, in all these cases wards off his fortune steadily and with endurance. And leave another for a man engaged in peaceful action, not forced but voluntary: persuading someone of something and making a request of them—a god in prayer, or a human being by teaching and advice—or, conversely, submitting himself to someone else who makes a request of him, or teaches him, or tries to change his mind; and who, having achieved what he intended as a result, doesn't become arrogant, but in all this 399c acts with moderation and measure and is content with how things turn out. "These two modes, the forced and the voluntary, which will best imitate the voices of men in misfortune and in good fortune, of the moderate and of the brave: leave these."

"Well," he said, "the ones you're asking me to leave are none other than the ones I just mentioned."

"Then," I said, "we won't need a multitude of strings, or instruments that play in every mode, for our songs and melodies."

"It seems not to me," he said.

"Then we won't support craftsmen who make triangular harps and lutes and all the instruments that are 399d many-stringed and many-moded."

"Apparently not."

"Well then, will you admit pipe-makers or pipers into the city? Isn't the pipe the most 'many-stringed' of all, and aren't the all-mode instruments themselves really imitations of the pipe?"

"Clearly," he said.[17]

"So you're left with the lyre and the cithara, for use in the city," I said, "and in the countryside there might be some sort of panpipe for the shepherds."

"That, at any rate, is what our argument indicates," he said. 399e

"We're doing nothing new, my friend," I said, "in preferring Apollo and Apollo's instruments to Marsyas and his."

"No, by Zeus," he said, "I don't think we are."

"And by the dog," I said, "without noticing it we've been purging once again the city we called luxurious a little while ago."

"That shows our moderation," he said.[18]

"Come on, then," I said, "let's purge the rest too."

"Next after modes we'd have rhythms. We shouldn't go after intricate ones, or every kind of metrical foot, but should see which rhythms belong to an orderly and courageous life. Once we've seen them, we must make the 400a foot and the melody follow the words of such a life, not make the words follow the foot and the melody. As for which rhythms these are, it's your job to tell us, just as you did with the modes."

"No, by Zeus," he said, "I can't tell you. That there are some three kinds from which the feet are woven, just as there are four among the notes from which all the modes arise—that I could tell you, since I've studied it. But which are imitations of which sort of life, I can't say." 400b

"Well," I said, "we'll consult Damon about this too: which feet suit meanness and insolence, or madness and other badness, and which rhythms must be left for their opposites. I think I heard him—not clearly—naming a composite 'enoplion,' and a 'dactyl,' and a 'heroic,' arranging it in some way I don't understand, making it equal up and down as it passes into short and long; and, I think, he named an 'iamb,' and another a 'trochee,'

17 The pipe (*aulos*) was a reed instrument, usually played in pairs; its range and flexibility let a player move between many modes.

18 Marsyas, a satyr and piper, challenged Apollo, the lyre-player, to a musical contest and lost.

and attached longs and 400c shorts to them. And in some of these, I think, he blamed or praised the tempo of the foot no less than the rhythms themselves—or some combination of the two; I can't say. But, as I said, let's refer these matters to Damon. Sorting them out would take no small discussion. Or do you think otherwise?"[19]

"By Zeus, not I."

"But this much you can determine: that grace and gracelessness follow good rhythm and bad rhythm?"

"Of course." 400d

"And good rhythm follows fine style and becomes like it, and bad rhythm the opposite; and likewise with being in tune and out of tune—if, that is, rhythm and mode follow the words, as we were saying just now, and not the words them."

"Yes, certainly," he said, "these must follow the words."

"What about the manner of the style," I said, "and the words? Don't they follow the character of the soul?"

"Of course."

"And everything else follows the style?"

"Yes."

"So good speech, being in tune, grace and good rhythm 400e follow good-heartedness—not the kind that's really foolishness, which we politely call 'good-hearted,' but a mind that has truly been furnished with a good and fine character."

"Absolutely," he said.

"Then mustn't the young pursue these qualities everywhere, if they're to do their own work?"

"They must."[20]

401a "And surely painting is full of them, and every craft of that kind; so is weaving, and embroidery, and building, and all the manufacture of other furnishings; and so too is the nature of bodies and of other living things. In all of these there is grace or

19 Damon was an Athenian music theorist of the fifth century BC, associated with Pericles, who taught that music shapes character.

20 The Greek word here (*euētheia*) literally means "good character" but in everyday use meant "simple-mindedness"; Socrates plays on both senses.

gracelessness. And gracelessness, bad rhythm and being out of tune are sisters of bad speech and bad character, while their opposites are sisters and imitations of the opposite—a moderate and good character."

"Entirely so," he said. 401b

"Then is it only the poets we must supervise, compelling them to put the image of good character into their poems or else not compose among us? Or must we supervise the other craftsmen too, and prevent them from putting this bad character—licentious, mean and graceless—into images of living things, or into buildings, or into anything else they make, and not allow anyone who can't comply to practice his craft among us? That way our 401c guardians won't be raised among images of badness, as if in bad pasture, every day cropping and grazing a little from many plants, until without realizing it they build up one great evil in their own souls. Mustn't we seek out instead those craftsmen with a gift for tracking down the nature of what is fine and graceful, so that the young, as if living in a healthy place, will benefit from everything—from whatever part of fine works strikes their eyes or ears, like a breeze bringing health from 401d wholesome places—and from childhood on, without their noticing, it will lead them into likeness, friendship and harmony with the beauty of reason?"

"Yes," he said, "that would be by far the finest way to raise them."

"Then isn't that why, Glaucon," I said, "upbringing in music is most decisive? Because rhythm and mode sink deepest into the inner part of the soul and take the strongest hold on it, bringing grace with them and making a person graceful, 401e if he's brought up rightly, and if not, the opposite?

"And also because someone brought up in it as he should be would be quickest to perceive what has been left out, or badly crafted, or has grown badly; and, feeling a proper distaste, he would praise fine things, and delight in them, and take them into his soul, and be nourished by them and 402a become fine and good himself; while ugly things he would rightly blame and hate

while he's still young, before he's able to grasp the reason. And when reason comes, the person brought up this way would welcome it most of all, recognizing it through its kinship with him?"

"It seems to me, at least," he said, "that it's for reasons like these that upbringing is in music."

"Well," I said, "it's just as it was with learning to read. We were competent only when the letters didn't escape us—few as they are—in all the words where they turn up, and when we didn't dismiss them, in small words 402b or large, as not needing to be noticed, but were eager to recognize them everywhere, knowing we'd never be literate until we could do that—"

"True."

"And we won't recognize images of letters, either, if they appear in water or in mirrors, until we know the letters themselves—doesn't that belong to the same skill and practice?"

"Absolutely."

"Then, by the gods, isn't it as I say? In the same way we won't be educated in music either, 402c neither we ourselves nor the guardians we say we must educate, until we recognize the forms of moderation, courage, generosity, magnificence, and all their kin, and their opposites too, turning up everywhere; and perceive them in whatever they're present in, both the things themselves and their images; and don't dismiss them in small things or in large, but believe it all belongs to the same skill and practice?"

"That's absolutely necessary," he said. 402d

"Then," I said, "when someone has a fine character in his soul, and in his appearance features that agree and harmonize with it, sharing the same stamp, wouldn't that be the most beautiful sight for anyone able to see it?"

"By far."

"And what is most beautiful is most lovable?"

"Of course."

"Then the person educated in music would love people of this kind above all; but if someone were out of harmony, he wouldn't love him."

"Not if he were lacking something in his soul," he said. "But if it were something in his body, he'd put up with it and be willing 402e to embrace him."

"I understand," I said. "You have, or had, a beloved like that, and I'll grant the point. But tell me this: does moderation have anything in common with excessive pleasure?"

"How could it," he said, "when such pleasure drives people out of their minds no less than pain does?"

"With the rest of excellence, then?"

"Not at all."

"Well, with wantonness and licentiousness?"

"More than anything."

"Can you name any pleasure greater or keener than sexual pleasure?"

"No," he said, "nor any more insane."

"And isn't right love, by its nature, a moderate and musical love of what is orderly and beautiful?"

403a "Very much so," he said.

"Then nothing mad or akin to licentiousness should come near right love?"

"It shouldn't." 403b

"Then this pleasure mustn't come near it, and lover and beloved who love and are loved rightly must have no part in it?"

"No, by Zeus, Socrates," he said, "it certainly mustn't come near it."

"So it seems you'll lay down a law in the city we're founding: a lover may kiss his beloved, spend time with him and touch him as he would a son, for the sake of what is fine, if the boy consents; but in all other respects he must associate with the one he cares for in such a way that he'll never seem to go further 403c than this. Otherwise he'll be open to reproach for being unmusical and lacking in taste."

"Just so," he said.

"Then does it seem to you as well," I said, "that our discussion of music has reached its end? It has ended, at any rate, where it

ought to end, since music surely ought to end in the love of the beautiful."

"I agree," he said.

PHYSICAL TRAINING AND MEDICINE

Socrates prescribes simple physical training and criticizes medicine that prolongs idle, sickly lives.

SOCRATES "After music, the young men must be brought up on physical training."

"Of course."

"In this too they must be carefully trained, from childhood throughout 403d their lives. And here's how it is, I think—but you consider it too. It doesn't seem to me that a sound body, by its own excellence, makes the soul good; it's the other way around: a good soul, by its own excellence, makes the body as good as it can be. How does it seem to you?"

"The same to me," he said.

"Then if we took adequate care of the mind and handed over to it the detailed care of the body, while we ourselves only outlined the 403e patterns, so as not to talk at length, would we be doing right?"

"Certainly."

"Now we said they must keep away from drunkenness. Anyone rather than a guardian can be allowed to get drunk and not know where on earth he is."

"Yes," he said, "it would be ridiculous for a guardian to need a guardian."

"And what about food? These men are athletes in the greatest of contests, aren't they?"

"Yes."

404a "Then would the condition of today's athletes be suitable for them?"

"Perhaps."

"But," I said, "it's a sleepy sort of condition, and precarious for health. Don't you see that these athletes sleep their lives

away, and if they depart even a little from their prescribed regimen, they fall seriously and violently ill?"

"I do see that."

"Then our warrior-athletes need a more refined kind of training," I said. "Like dogs, they must be wakeful and see and hear as sharply as possible; and on campaign, going through many changes of water 404b and other food, of summer heat and winter storms, they mustn't be precariously balanced in their health."

"So it seems to me."

"Then would the best physical training be a sister of the simple music we described a little earlier?"

"What do you mean?"

"A simple and decent physical training, especially the kind for war."

"How so?"

"One could learn such things even from Homer," I said. "You know that when his heroes feast on campaign he doesn't treat them to fish, even though they're 404c by the sea at the Hellespont, or to boiled meat, but only to roasted, which is what soldiers could most easily come by. Just about everywhere it's easier to use the fire itself than to carry pots around."

"Very much so."

"Nor, I think, did Homer ever mention sauces. Or is this something even other athletes know, that a body meant to be in good condition must keep away from all such things?"

"Yes," he said, "and they're right to know it and keep away." 404d

"Then it seems you don't approve, my friend, of a Syracusan table and the Sicilian variety of dishes, if you think this is right."

"I don't think I do."

"Then you also disapprove of men who mean to be in good physical condition having a Corinthian girl as a mistress."

"Absolutely."

"And of the supposed delights of Attic pastries?"

"Necessarily."

"Yes, for I think we'd be right to compare such food and such a way of life as a whole to melody and song composed in every mode and in every 404e rhythm."[21]

"Of course."

"There, variety bred licentiousness, and here it breeds disease; whereas simplicity in music produces moderation in souls, and in physical training, health in bodies?"

"Very true," he said.

"And when licentiousness and diseases multiply in a city, don't many law courts and doctors' offices open up, and don't the arts of the courtroom and of medicine give themselves airs, once even many free men take them very seriously?"

"How could they not?"

405a "And could you find any greater proof of bad and shameful education in a city than the need for first-rate doctors and judges, not only among the lowly and the manual workers, but also among those who pretend to have been brought up as free men? 405b Don't you think it shameful, and a great proof of lack of education, to be forced to rely on a justice imported from others, as if they were your masters and judges, for lack of any of your own?"

"That's the most shameful thing of all," he said.

"Or do you think this is even more shameful," I said, "when someone not only wears away the greater part of his life in the courts, as defendant and prosecutor, but through lack of taste is even persuaded to pride himself on this very thing—on being clever 405c at doing wrong and able to twist through every turn, slip out through every loophole and wriggle his way free, so as not to pay the penalty—and all for small and worthless things, not knowing how much finer and better it is to arrange his life so that he has no need of a drowsy juror?"

"No, the other isn't the most shameful," he said. "This is more shameful still."

"And needing medicine," I said, "not for wounds, or because some seasonal illness has come along, but because of 405d idle-

ness and the sort of regimen we described, filling up with fluids and gases like a marsh, and forcing the clever sons of Asclepius to give diseases names like 'flatulence' and 'catarrh'—don't you think that's shameful?"

"Very," he said. "Those really are strange, newfangled names for diseases."[22]

"The kind that didn't exist in Asclepius' day, I think," I said. 405e "My evidence is that at Troy his sons didn't find fault with the woman who gave the wounded Eurypylus Pramnian wine to drink, with plenty of barley meal sprinkled on it 406a and cheese grated over it—things thought to produce phlegm—nor did they criticize Patroclus, who was treating him."

"It certainly is a strange drink for someone in that state," he said.[23]

"Not if you bear in mind," I said, "that before Herodicus came along, the sons of Asclepius, so they say, made no use of today's medicine, which tends diseases like a child's attendant. Herodicus was a physical trainer who became sickly, and by mixing physical training 406b with medicine he wore out first and foremost himself, and later many others as well."

"How so?" he said.[24]

"By making his death a long one," I said. "He dogged his disease, which was fatal, but I don't think he was able to cure himself. So he spent his whole life doctoring himself, with no time for anything else, in torment whenever he departed at all from his usual regimen; and, finding it hard to die thanks to his wisdom, he reached old age."

"A fine prize his skill won him, then," he said. 406c

"A fitting one," I said, "for someone who didn't know that it wasn't out of ignorance or inexperience of this kind of medicine

21 Syracuse and Sicily were bywords for luxurious cooking, and Corinth was famous for its courtesans.

22 Asclepius was the god of healing; doctors were called "Asclepiads," sons of Asclepius, as members of a guild claiming descent from him.

23 In the *Iliad* (Book 11) this drink is actually given to Machaon, one of Asclepius' sons, while Patroclus tends Eurypylus elsewhere; Plato merges the two scenes.

that Asclepius didn't reveal it to his descendants. It was because he knew that among all well-governed peoples each person has been assigned a particular task in the city, which he has to do, and nobody has the leisure to spend his life being ill and doctoring himself. Ridiculously, we recognize this in the case of craftsmen, but don't recognize it in the case of the rich and supposedly happy."

"How so?" he said. 406d

"A carpenter," I said, "when he's ill, expects the doctor to give him a drug to drink so he can vomit up the illness, or else to be purged from below, or to be rid of it by cautery or surgery. But if someone prescribes a long regimen for him, putting little felt caps on his head and all that goes with them, he quickly says he has no time to be ill, and that it doesn't pay to live like that, paying attention to an illness and neglecting the work in front of him. And after that he says goodbye 406e to that sort of doctor, goes back to his usual regimen, gets healthy and lives doing his own work. Or if his body can't bear up, he dies and is rid of his troubles."

"Yes," he said, "and for a person like that it seems fitting to use medicine in this way."

"Is that because," I said, "he had some work to do, and if he didn't do it, life wasn't worth living?"

"Obviously," he said.

"But the rich man, we say, has no such work set before him that would make life unlivable if he were forced to keep away from it."

"So it's said, at any rate."

"That's because you haven't been listening to Phocylides," I said, "who says that once a person has a livelihood, he ought to practice excellence."

"I think he ought to before that too," he said.[25]

24 Herodicus of Selymbria, a fifth-century BC trainer and physician, treated illness with exercise and strict regimen.

25 Phocylides of Miletus was a sixth-century BC poet known for short moral maxims.

407a "Let's not fight with him about that," I said, "but let's teach ourselves whether the rich man must practice this, and whether life is unlivable for one who doesn't, 407b or whether nursing illness is a hindrance to attending to carpentry and the other crafts, but no hindrance at all to following Phocylides' advice."

"Yes, by Zeus," he said. "Just about the greatest hindrance of all is this excessive care of the body that goes beyond physical training. It's a nuisance for running a household, for going on campaign, and for holding a settled office in the city."

"And most important of all, it makes any kind of learning, 407c reflection or private study difficult. It's always suspecting headaches and dizziness and blaming philosophy for them, so that wherever excellence is practiced and tested in this way, it's a hindrance in every respect. It makes a person always think he's ill, and never stop agonizing over his body."

"Likely enough," he said.

"Then shall we say that Asclepius knew this too? For people whose bodies were healthy by nature and regimen, 407d but who had some specific disease in them—for them and for this condition he revealed the art of medicine, driving out their diseases with drugs and surgery and prescribing their usual regimen, so as not to harm their life as citizens. But with bodies diseased through and through inside, he didn't try, by regimens that drain off and pour in a little at a time, to make a long and miserable life for the person, and to let him father offspring likely to be the same. Instead, he thought that someone unable to live in the established 407e course of life shouldn't be treated, since he's of no use either to himself or to the city?"

"You're making Asclepius a statesman," he said.

"Clearly," I said. "And his sons, because he was that kind of man— 408a don't you see how they too proved good at war at Troy, and practiced medicine the way I describe? Don't you remember how, with the wound Pandarus gave Menelaus, 'they sucked out the blood and sprinkled soothing drugs on it'? But what he should drink or eat afterward they no more prescribed for him than for Eurypylus, since they thought drugs were enough to

heal men who before their wounds had been healthy and 408b orderly in their way of life, even if they happened to drink a heavy mixed drink on the spot. But a man sickly by nature and undisciplined, they thought, profited neither himself nor anyone else by living. Their art wasn't meant for such people, and they shouldn't be treated, not even if they were richer than Midas."[26]

"They were very sophisticated, these sons of Asclepius you describe," he said.

"As was fitting," I said. "And yet the tragic poets and Pindar, refusing to obey us, say that Asclepius was the son of Apollo, and that he was bribed with gold to heal a rich man who was already 408c dying, and that this is why he was struck by lightning. But we, in keeping with what we said before, won't believe them on both counts. If he was the son of a god, we'll say, he wasn't greedy for gain; and if he was greedy for gain, he wasn't the son of a god."

"That much is quite right," he said. "But what do you say about this, Socrates? Don't we need to have good doctors in our city? And the best would presumably be those who 408d have handled the most healthy people and the most sick ones; and likewise with judges, those who have dealt with every sort of nature."

"Good ones, certainly," I said. "But do you know whom I consider such?"

"If you tell me," he said.

"I'll try," I said. "But you asked about two dissimilar things in the same question."

"How so?" he said.

"Doctors," I said, "would become most skilled if, starting from childhood, besides learning their art, they had dealings with as many bodies as possible, and the most unhealthy ones, and if they themselves suffered every 408e disease and weren't very healthy by nature. For it's not with the body, I think, that they

26 Eurypylus is the wounded hero of 405e–406a, given the heavy drink of wine, barley and cheese.

treat the body—if it were, their own bodies could never be allowed to be or become bad—but with the soul; and a soul that has become bad, and is bad, can't treat anything well."

"Right," he said.

409a "But a judge, my friend, rules soul with soul. And it won't do for his soul to have been brought up from youth among wicked souls, to have kept company with them, and to have gone through every kind of wrongdoing itself, so that it can sharply infer other people's wrongdoings from its own, as one infers diseases in the body. No: if it's to be fine and good and judge soundly what is just, it must have been inexperienced in bad characters and untouched by them while young. That's why decent people seem simple when they're young, and are easily deceived 409b by the unjust: they have no models within themselves of what the wicked feel."

"Yes," he said, "that's certainly what happens to them."

"That's why," I said, "a good judge must be not young but old. He must have learned late what injustice is like, not perceiving it as something of his own, present in his own soul, but having studied it for a long time as something alien in the souls of others, so as to discern what sort of evil it naturally is—using knowledge, not 409c his own experience."

"Such a judge, at any rate, seems the most noble," he said.

"And good as well," I said, "which is what you were asking, since the man with a good soul is good. But that clever, suspicious man, who has done much wrong himself and thinks himself cunning and wise, seems clever when he associates with his own kind, because he's on his guard, looking to the models within himself. But when he comes among good people and his elders, he looks foolish 409d in his turn, distrusting them at the wrong moment and failing to recognize a sound character, since he has no model of one. Yet because he meets the wicked more often than the decent, he seems wise rather than ignorant, both to himself and to others."

"That's entirely true," he said.

"Then it's not this sort of man," I said, "that we should look for as the good and wise judge, but the earlier one. For wickedness could never know both excellence and itself, whereas excellence, in a nature educated over time, will come to have knowledge 409e of both itself and wickedness. So it's this man, in my view, who becomes wise, and not the bad one."

"I agree," he said.

"Then will you establish by law in the city both medicine of the kind we described and judging of this kind? They will care for 410a those of your citizens whose bodies and souls are naturally good; as for those who aren't, they'll let die those whose bodies are that way, while those whose souls are naturally bad and incurable they'll put to death themselves."

"That at least has been shown to be best," he said, "both for those who suffer it and for the city."

"And your young people," I said, "will obviously be careful not to need the law courts, since they'll practice that simple music which, we said, engenders moderation."

"Of course," he said. 410b

"And won't the musical man, following these same tracks, pursue physical training and catch it, if he wants to, so that he won't need medicine except when he must?"

"I think so."

"And in his exercises and exertions themselves he'll look to the spirited part of his nature and work to rouse it, rather than to strength. He won't manage his diet and his exertions for the sake of strength, as other athletes do."

"Quite right," he said.

"Then, Glaucon," I said, "those who established 410c education in music and physical training didn't do it for the reason some people suppose, did they—to care for the body with the one and the soul with the other?"

"What was it for, then?" he said.

"It looks as if they established both mainly for the sake of the soul," I said.

"How so?"

"Haven't you noticed," I said, "the cast of mind of those who spend their lives in physical training and never touch music? Or of those who are disposed the opposite way?"

"What are you talking about?" he said. 410d

"Savagery and harshness," I said, "and on the other side softness and gentleness—"

"I have noticed," he said. "Those who practice physical training unmixed turn out more savage than they should, while those who practice only music become softer than is good for them."

"And yet," I said, "the savagery would come from the spirited part of their nature. Rightly nurtured, it would be courage; but strung tighter than it should be, it would likely become harsh and difficult."

"I think so," he said. 410e

"And what about gentleness? Wouldn't the philosophic nature have it? If it were relaxed too much it would be softer than it should be, but if well nurtured it would be gentle and orderly."

"That's so."

"And we say the guardians must have both these natures."

"They must."

"Then mustn't the two be harmonized with each other?"

"Of course."

"And when they're harmonized, the 411a soul is moderate and courageous?"

"Certainly."

"And when they aren't, it's cowardly and boorish?"

"Very much so."

"Now when someone lets music play the pipe over him and pour into his soul through his ears, as through a funnel, those sweet, soft, mournful modes we were just speaking of, and he spends his whole life humming and bright with the delight of song, at first, if he had any spirit, he softens it like iron and makes it useful 411b instead of useless and brittle. But when he keeps at it without letting up and is spellbound, then he begins to melt and dissolve it, until he has melted his spirit away, cut it

out of his soul like a sinew, and made himself 'a feeble spearman.'"[27]

"Certainly," he said.

"And if," I said, "he was spiritless by nature from the start, this happens quickly. But if he was spirited, it weakens his spirit and makes it volatile, quickly roused by small things 411c and quickly quenched. Such people become irritable and quick-tempered instead of spirited, full of bad temper."

"Exactly."

"And what if, instead, he works hard at physical training and eats very well, but never touches music or philosophy? First, being in good bodily condition, won't he be filled with confidence and spirit, and become braver than he was?"

"Very much so."

"And what if he does nothing else and has nothing to do with the Muse 411d at all? Even if there was some love of learning in his soul, since it never tastes any learning or inquiry, and never takes part in discussion or the rest of music, doesn't it become weak, deaf and blind, because it's never awakened or nourished and its perceptions are never purified?"

"Just so," he said.

"Such a man, I think, becomes a hater of argument and unmusical. He no longer makes any use of persuasion through words, but gets everything done by force and 411e savagery, like a wild beast, and lives in ignorance and clumsiness, without rhythm or grace."

"That's exactly how it is," he said.

"So it seems that for these two things, I for one would say, some god has given human beings two arts, music and physical training—for the spirited part and the philosophic part, not for the soul and the body, except incidentally, but for those two, so that 412a they may be harmonized with each other, tightened and relaxed to the proper degree."

"So it seems," he said.

"Then the one who blends physical training with music most finely and applies them to the soul in the best measure is the one we'd most rightly call perfectly musical and well harmonized—far more than the man who tunes strings to one another."

"Reasonably so, Socrates," he said.

"Then in our city too, Glaucon, won't we always need some such overseer, if the constitution is to be preserved?" 412b

"We certainly will, as much as possible."

"These, then, would be the outlines of their education and upbringing. Why go through their dances, their hunting, their chasing with hounds, their athletic contests and horse races? It's pretty clear that these must follow the outlines, and they're no longer hard to discover."

"Perhaps," he said, "they aren't hard."

CHOOSING THE RULERS

Socrates selects rulers from the most devoted guardians and proposes the myth of the metals.

SOCRATES "Very well," I said. "What's the next thing we must determine? Isn't it which of these people will rule and which be ruled?" 412c

"Of course."

"Isn't it clear that the rulers must be older and the ruled younger?"

"It's clear."

"And that they must be the best of them?"

"That too."

"And the best farmers are the ones most skilled at farming, aren't they?"

"Yes."

"And now, since they must be the best of the guardians, mustn't they be the most skilled at guarding the city?"

"Yes."

27 "A feeble spearman" is Homer's taunt at Menelaus (*Iliad* 17.588).

"Then for this they must be sensible and capable, and must also care for the city?" 412d

"That's so."

"And one cares most for what one happens to love."

"Necessarily."

"And one would love something most when one believes that the same things benefit it and oneself, and thinks that when it does well one does well oneself, and when it doesn't, the opposite."

"Just so," he said.

"Then we must select from among the other guardians men of this sort: men who, when we examine them, appear most of all, throughout their 412e lives, to do with complete eagerness whatever they think benefits the city, and to be unwilling by any means to do what doesn't."

"Yes, they'd be the suitable ones," he said.

"Then I think they must be watched at every age, to see whether they guard this conviction, and never, under bewitchment or force, forget and cast out the opinion that they must do what is best for the city."

"What do you mean by casting out?" he said.

"I'll tell you," I said. "It seems to me that an opinion departs from the mind either willingly or unwillingly: willingly, when it's a false one 413a and a person learns better; unwillingly, whenever it's a true one."

"I understand the willing case," he said, "but I need to learn about the unwilling one."

"What? Don't you too believe," I said, "that people are deprived of good things unwillingly and of bad things willingly? Isn't being deceived about the truth a bad thing, and having the truth a good one? Or don't you think that believing what is, is having the truth?"

"You're right," he said, "and I do think people are deprived of true opinion unwillingly." 413b

"And don't they suffer this by being robbed, bewitched, or forced?"

"I don't understand this either," he said.

"I'm afraid I'm talking like a tragedian," I said. "By 'robbed' I mean those who are talked out of their opinions and those who forget: in the one case argument, in the other time, takes the opinion away without their noticing. Now I take it you understand?"

"Yes."

"And by 'forced' I mean those whom some pain or suffering makes change their opinion."

"I understand that too," he said, "and you're right." 413c

"And the 'bewitched,' I think you'd agree, are those who change their opinion because they're charmed by pleasure or frightened by some fear."

"Yes," he said, "everything that deceives seems to bewitch."

"Well then, as I was saying just now, we must look for those who are the best guardians of their own conviction that they must do whatever they think, at any time, is best for the city. We must watch them right from childhood, setting them tasks in which a person would be most likely to forget such a conviction or be deceived out of it. The one who remembers 413d and is hard to deceive we must select; the one who isn't, we must reject. Isn't that so?"

"Yes."

"And again, we must set them labors, pains and contests, and watch for these same things in them."

"Right," he said.

"Then," I said, "we must also hold a contest for them in the third kind, bewitchment, and watch them. Just as people lead colts into noise and commotion to see whether they're skittish, so we must bring these while they're young among terrors, and then switch 413e them to pleasures, testing them much more thoroughly than gold is tested in fire, to see whether someone proves hard to bewitch and graceful in everything, a good guardian of himself and of the music he learned, showing himself rhythmical and harmonious in all these things—the kind of man who would be most useful both to himself and to the city.

"And the one who is tested again and again, as a child, as a youth and as a man, 414a and comes through unblemished, must be appointed ruler and guardian of the city and be given honors both in life and after death, receiving the greatest privileges of tombs and other memorials. The one who isn't like that must be rejected. Something like this, Glaucon," I said, "seems to me to be how the rulers and guardians are to be selected and appointed—described in outline, not in precise detail."

"It seems that way to me too, more or less," he said. 414b

"Then wouldn't it truly be most correct to call these people complete guardians—against enemies outside and friends within, so that the friends won't want to do harm and the enemies won't be able to—and to call the young, whom we were just now calling guardians, auxiliaries and supporters of the rulers' convictions?"

"I think so," he said.

"Then how," I said, "might we devise one of those falsehoods that come about in case of need, which we were talking about just now—one noble 414c falsehood—to persuade above all the rulers themselves, or failing that, the rest of the city?"

"What sort of thing?" he said.

"Nothing new," I said, "but a sort of Phoenician tale—something that has happened in many places before, as the poets say, and they've made people believe it; but it hasn't happened in our time, and I don't know if it could, and it would take a lot of persuasion to make it believed."

"You seem reluctant to tell it," he said.

"You'll think my reluctance quite reasonable," I said, "once I've told it."

"Tell it," he said, "and don't be afraid." 414d [28]

"I'll tell it, then—though I don't know what daring or what words I'll use in the telling. I'll try to persuade first the rulers themselves and the soldiers, and then the rest of the city, that

28 The "Phoenician tale" probably alludes to Cadmus, the Phoenician founder of Thebes, who sowed a dragon's teeth from which armed men sprang up out of the earth.

the upbringing and education we gave them—all of it—they only seemed to experience and undergo, as in dreams; that in truth they were at that time under the earth, being formed and nurtured within it, themselves and their 414e weapons, and the rest of their equipment being crafted; and that when they were completely finished, the earth, being their mother, sent them up. And now they must plan for and defend the land they live in as their mother and nurse, if anyone attacks it, and think of the other citizens as their brothers, born of the earth."

"No wonder," he said, "you were so ashamed all this time to tell the falsehood."

415a "With good reason," I said. "But still, hear the rest of the story. 'All of you in the city are brothers,' we'll tell them in our tale, 'but the god, when he formed you, mixed gold into the making of those of you who are fit to rule, which is why they are the most honored; silver into the auxiliaries; and iron and bronze into the farmers and the other craftsmen. Since you're all related, you'll mostly beget children like yourselves, 415b but sometimes a silver child may be born from gold, or a golden one from silver, and so on, all of them from one another. "'So upon the rulers, first and above all, the god lays this command: there is nothing they are to guard so well, or watch so closely, as their offspring, to see which of these metals has been mixed into their souls. And if a child of their own is born with bronze or iron in it, they must by no 415c means pity it, but give it the rank proper to its nature and thrust it out among the craftsmen or farmers. And if, again, a child with gold or silver in it is born among these, they must honor it and raise it up, some to guardianship and others to the auxiliaries, since there is an oracle that the city will be destroyed when an iron or bronze guardian guards it.' So do you have any way of getting them to believe this tale?" 415d

"None," he said, "for these people themselves; but for their sons, and those who come after, and the rest of humanity later on, perhaps."

"Well, even that," I said, "would do some good in making them care more for the city and for one another. I think I pretty much understand what you mean.

HOW THE GUARDIANS ARE TO LIVE

The guardians live in common without private property, and Adeimantus asks if they will be happy.

SOCRATES "Now this will go wherever rumor carries it. But let's arm these earthborn men and lead them forward, with the rulers at their head. When they get there, let them look for the best place in the city to make camp, from which they could best 415e restrain those within, if anyone refused to obey the laws, and ward off those without, if an enemy should come like a wolf upon the flock. And when they've made camp and sacrificed to the proper gods, let them make their beds. Or how should it be?"

"Like that," he said.

"And these must be adequate to shelter them in winter and summer?"

"Of course. You seem to me to mean dwellings," he said.

"Yes," I said, "soldiers' dwellings, not moneymakers'."

"And what difference do you mean between them?" he said.

"I'll try to tell you," I said. "Surely the most terrible and shameful thing of all is for shepherds to rear dogs to help guard their flocks in such a way, and of such a kind, that from lack of discipline, or hunger, or some other bad habit, the dogs themselves set about harming the sheep and become like wolves instead of dogs."

"Terrible," he said. "Of course it is." 416b

"Then mustn't we guard in every way against our auxiliaries doing anything like that to the citizens, since they're stronger than them, and becoming like savage masters instead of kindly allies?"

"We must," he said.

"And wouldn't they have the greatest safeguard in place, if they've really been finely educated?"

"But they have been," he said.

And I said, "That's not worth insisting on, my dear Glaucon. What is worth insisting on is what we were saying just now: that they must 416c get the right education, whatever it is, if they're to have what matters most for being gentle toward one another and toward those they guard."

"Quite right," he said.

"Now anyone with sense would say that, besides this education, their dwellings and other property must be arranged so as not to stop them from being the best possible guardians 416d or provoke them to do harm to the other citizens."

"And he'd be right to say so."

"Then see," I said, "whether they should live and dwell in some such way as this, if they're to be the kind of people we said. First, none of them is to own any private property unless it's absolutely necessary. Next, no one is to have any dwelling or storeroom that anyone who wishes can't enter. As for provisions —whatever moderate and 416e courageous athletes of war need— they are to receive them from the other citizens by agreed assessment, as wages for their guardianship, in such amount that they have neither surplus at the end of the year nor shortfall. They are to go to common meals and live together, like soldiers in camp.

"As for gold and silver, we'll tell them that they have divine gold and silver from the gods always in their souls and have no further need of the human kind; and that it isn't holy to pollute their possession of the divine by mixing it with the possession of mortal gold, because many unholy deeds have been done over the 417a currency of the many, while theirs is pure. For them alone of all in the city it is forbidden to handle or touch gold and silver, or to go under the same roof with it, or wear it as an ornament, or drink from silver or gold. "In this way they would be saved and would save the city. But whenever they acquire private land, houses and money, they'll be householders and farmers instead of guardians, 417b and hostile masters instead of allies of the other citizens. They'll spend their whole lives hating

and being hated, plotting and being plotted against, far more afraid, and more often, of the enemies within than of those outside; and by then they and the rest of the city will be racing very close to ruin. So for all these reasons," I said, "shall we say that the guardians must be provided for in this way, with regard to housing and the rest, and shall we make these our laws, or not?"

"Certainly," said Glaucon.

Book IV

Justice in the city and in the soul.

SOCRATES 419a Adeimantus broke in here. "What will you say in your defense, Socrates," he said, "if someone says you're not making these men very happy at all, and that it's their own doing? The city really belongs to them, and yet they enjoy nothing good from it, as others do who own lands, build fine big houses and acquire furnishings to match, offer private sacrifices to the gods, entertain guests, and, above all, as you were just saying, own gold and silver and everything that's thought necessary for anyone who is going to be blessed.

"Instead, he might say, they seem simply to sit around like hired auxiliaries in 420a the city, doing nothing but standing guard."

"Yes," I said, "and for their keep alone, without even getting wages on top of their food like the others, so that they can't travel abroad privately if they want to, or give gifts to courtesans, or spend money wherever else they might wish, the way people who are thought happy spend it. These and many other points like them you're leaving out of the charge."

"Well," he said, "let these be added to the charge too." 420b

"Then you're asking what our defense will be?"

"Yes."

"If we follow the same path," I said, "we'll find, I think, what to say. We'll say that it wouldn't be surprising if these men too were happiest as they are; but that we aren't founding the city with an eye to making any one group in it exceptionally happy, but the whole city as happy as possible. For we thought that we'd

be most likely to find justice in a city like this, and injustice, again, in the worst-governed 420c one, and that by observing them we could decide what we've long been looking for. For now, then, we're shaping what we take to be the happy city—not picking out a few people in it and making them happy, but the whole. Shortly we'll look at its opposite. "It's as if we were painting a statue and someone came up and criticized us, saying that we weren't putting the most beautiful colors on the most beautiful parts of the figure—the eyes, the most beautiful part, had been painted not purple but black. We'd think it a reasonable defense 420d to say to him: 'My dear fellow, don't think we should paint the eyes so beautifully that they don't even look like eyes, or the other parts either. Look instead at whether, by giving each part what belongs to it, we make the whole beautiful. And so now, too, don't force us to attach to the guardians the kind of happiness that will make them anything rather 420e than guardians. "'We know how to dress the farmers in fine robes, hang gold on them, and tell them to work the land only as their pleasure dictates; and how to have the potters recline on couches by the fire, passing the cup to the right and feasting, with their wheel set beside them for doing as much pottery as they like; and how to make everyone else blessed in the same way, so that the whole city may be happy.

"'But don't advise us to do that. For if we listen to you, the farmer won't be a farmer, 421a nor the potter a potter, nor will anyone else keep any of the roles that make up a city. With the others it matters less: if cobblers become bad and corrupt and pretend to be what they aren't, it's nothing terrible for a city. But guardians of the laws and of the city who aren't really guardians but only seem to be—you see that they destroy the whole city utterly, while they alone, in turn, hold the key to its being well governed and happy.' Now if we are making true guardians, 421b the least likely to harm the city, while the one who says that other thing is talking about some sort of farmers, happy banqueters as if at a festival rather than in a city, he'd be talking about something other than a city. "So we must consider

whether, in establishing the guardians, we're aiming at this—that the greatest possible happiness should arise in them—or whether we should look to the city as a whole and see whether happiness arises in it, and compel and persuade these auxiliaries and 421c guardians to do the other thing: to be the best possible craftsmen at their own work, and the same for everyone else. And so, as the whole city grows and is well founded, we must leave it to nature to give each class its share of happiness."

"Well," he said, "I think you put that well."

"Then will you think I'm speaking reasonably," I said, "if I say something closely related to this as well?"

"What exactly?" 421d

"Consider whether the following things corrupt the other craftsmen too, so that they actually become bad."

"What things are these?"

"Wealth," I said, "and poverty."

"How so?"

"Like this. Once a potter gets rich, do you think he'll still be willing to attend to his craft?"

"Not at all," he said.

"Won't he become lazier and more careless than he used to be?"

"Much."

"So he becomes a worse potter?"

"Yes," he said, "much worse."

"And then again, if poverty leaves him unable to provide himself with tools or anything else his craft needs, the work he turns out will be shoddier, 421e and he'll teach his sons, or whoever else he teaches, to be worse craftsmen."

"Of course."

"So from both of them, poverty and wealth, the products of the crafts get worse, and so do the craftsmen themselves."

"Evidently."

"Then it seems we've found other things for the guardians, which they must guard against in every way, so that these never slip into the city without their noticing."

"What are they?"

WEALTH, POVERTY AND THE UNITY OF THE CITY

Socrates says the city must avoid both wealth and poverty, stay unified and protect its education.

SOCRATES 422a "Wealth," I said, "and poverty. The one produces luxury, idleness, and revolution; the other, meanness and bad workmanship, as well as revolution."

"Certainly," he said. "But consider this, Socrates. How will our city be able to wage war when it has no money, especially if it's forced to fight a large and wealthy city?"

"Clearly," I said, "against one such city it's harder, 422b but against two it's easier."

"What do you mean?" he said.

"First of all," I said, "if they have to fight, won't they be fighting against rich men, while they themselves are athletes of war?"

"Yes, that much is true," he said.

"Well then, Adeimantus," I said, "don't you think one boxer, trained as well as possible for the job, could easily fight two men who aren't boxers but are rich and fat?"

"Maybe not both at once," he said.

"Not even," I said, "if he could retreat and then turn and strike whichever one 422c came at him first, and did this again and again in the blazing sun and stifling heat? Wouldn't a man like that overpower even more than two of them?"

"No doubt," he said. "That would be nothing surprising."

"And don't you think the rich have more share, in knowledge and experience, in boxing than in warfare?"

"I do," he said.

"Then in all likelihood our athletes will easily fight twice or three times their own number."

"I'll grant you that," he said, "since I think you're right." 422d

"And what if they send an embassy to the other city and tell the truth: 'We have no use for gold or silver, nor is it lawful for

us, though it is for you. So join us in the war, and keep what belongs to the other side'? Do you think anyone who heard that would choose to make war on hard, lean dogs rather than join the dogs against fat, tender sheep?"

"I don't think so. But if the wealth of all the others," he said, "is gathered into a single city, 422e watch out that it doesn't pose a danger to the city that isn't wealthy."

"How fortunate you are," I said, "to think anything deserves to be called a city other than the sort we've been founding."

"Why, what else?" he said.

"The others," I said, "need a bigger name. Each of them is a great many cities, not a city, as in the game.[1]

"Whatever else is true, each contains two, at war with each other, 423a one of the poor and one of the rich, and within each of these there are a great many. If you treat them as one, you'll miss the mark entirely; but if you treat them as many, handing over the money and power, or even the persons, of one group to the others, you'll always have many allies and few enemies. And as long as your city is governed with moderation, in the way it was just now arranged, it will be the greatest—I don't mean in reputation, but truly the greatest—even if it has only a thousand men to fight for it. You won't easily find a single city so great among either Greeks or non-Greeks, 423b though you'll find many that seem to be, and many times its size. Or do you think otherwise?"

"No, by Zeus," he said.

"Then this would also be the best limit for our rulers," I said, "on how large they should make the city, and how much land they should mark off for a city of that size, letting the rest go."

"What limit?" he said.

"I think," I said, "this one: let it grow as far as it can while still being one, and no further." 423c

"And a fine one," he said.

1 Probably an allusion to a board game called "Cities," whose board was divided into many small "cities."

"Then we'll give the guardians this further order as well: to guard in every way against the city's being either small or great in appearance only; it must be adequate, and one."

"And a trivial order, I suppose," he said, "that we'll be giving them."

"And here's one still more trivial," I said, "which we mentioned earlier, when we said that if an inferior child is born to the guardians, it must be sent off [423d] to the others, and if a good one is born to the others, it must go to the guardians. This was meant to show that the other citizens too must each be brought to the one job each is naturally suited for, so that each, practicing his own single pursuit, may become not many but one, and so the whole city may grow to be one and not many."

"Yes," he said, "that's a smaller matter than the other."

"Really, my good Adeimantus," I said, "these orders we're giving them aren't, as someone might think, many and great; [423e] they're all trivial, provided they guard the one great thing, as the saying goes—or rather, not great but sufficient."

"What's that?" he said.

"Education," I said, "and upbringing. If they're well educated and become reasonable men, they'll easily see through all this, and other things we're passing over now: the possession of women, marriage, and having children—that [424a] all these must be made, as far as possible, 'common among friends,' as the proverb has it."

"Yes," he said, "that would be the most correct way."

"What's more," I said, "once a constitution gets off to a good start, it keeps growing, like a circle. Good upbringing and education, when preserved, produce good natures, and good natures in turn, taking hold of such an education, grow up better than those before them, in other respects and also in [424b] producing offspring, just as with other animals."

"That's likely," he said.

"To put it briefly, then, those in charge of the city must hold fast to this, and guard it above everything, so that it isn't corrupted without their noticing: there must be no innovation in gym-

nastics and music contrary to the established order; they must guard it as closely as they can. And whenever someone says that people care most for the song 'that circles newest among the singers,' they must be afraid 424c that people may take the poet to mean not new songs but a new manner of song, and praise that. One shouldn't praise such a thing, or take the poet that way. For one must beware of changing to a new form of music, since this puts everything at risk: the modes of music are never disturbed without the greatest laws of the city being disturbed too, as Damon says and as I'm convinced."[2]

"Count me among the convinced as well," said Adeimantus. 424d

"So it seems," I said, "that the guardians must build their guardhouse somewhere here, in music."

"Lawlessness of this kind, anyway," he said, "easily slips in unnoticed."

"Yes," I said, "as if it were just a form of play and did no harm."

"And it doesn't do any," he said, "except that, having settled in little by little, it quietly seeps into people's characters and ways of life. From these it emerges, grown larger, into their dealings with one another; and from their dealings, Socrates, it advances on 424e the laws and constitutions with great insolence, until in the end it overturns everything, private and public."

"Well," I said, "is that really how it is?"

"I think so," he said.

"Then, as we said at the start, mustn't our children take part in more lawful play right from the beginning, since if play becomes lawless, and the children too, it's impossible for them to grow up into law-abiding and serious 425a men?"

"Of course," he said.

"So when children make a good start in their play and take in good order through music, then—the reverse of the others—it goes with them in everything and makes them grow, setting right anything in the city that had fallen before."

2 The verse adapts Homer, *Odyssey* 1.351–2.

"That's true," he said.

"And so these people also rediscover the seemingly minor customs that their predecessors had entirely lost."

"What sort?" 425b

"Things like these: the silence the young should keep in the presence of their elders; giving up their places to them and standing up when they come in; taking care of parents; and also haircuts, clothes, shoes, and the whole bearing of the body, and everything else of the kind. Don't you think so?"

"I do."

"But I think it's naive to legislate about them. Such rules surely don't come about, and wouldn't last, if they're laid down in words and in writing."

"How could they?"

"It looks, at any rate, Adeimantus," I said, "as if the direction someone sets out in from education 425c determines what follows. Doesn't like always summon like?"

"Of course."

"And in the end, I think, we'd say it turns out as one complete and vigorous whole, either good or the opposite."

"Why not?" he said.

"That's why," I said, "I wouldn't try any longer to legislate about such things."

"Reasonably enough," he said.

"And, for heaven's sake," I said, "what about business matters: the contracts people make with one another in the marketplace, 425d and, if you like, contracts for manual work, slander and assault, the filing of lawsuits and the appointment of jurors, and any tolls that may need to be collected or imposed in markets or harbors, and in general all the regulations of markets, city, and harbors, and everything else of the kind—shall we venture to legislate about any of that?"

"No," he said, "it isn't worth dictating to men who are fine and good. 425e They'll easily find out for themselves, I imagine, most of what needs to be legislated."

"Yes, my friend," I said, "if a god grants them the preservation of the laws we went through before."

"If not," he said, "they'll spend their lives constantly laying down many such rules and amending them, thinking they'll hit on the best."

"You mean," I said, "that such people will live like those who are sick but, from intemperance, unwilling to give up a bad way of life."

"Exactly." 426a

"And a charming life they lead! For all their doctoring they achieve nothing, except to make their illnesses more complicated and worse, and they're always hoping that whatever drug someone recommends will make them healthy."

"Yes," he said, "that's just how people ill in that way behave."

"Well," I said, "and isn't this charming of them: they regard as their worst enemy the person who tells them the truth—that until they stop drinking, gorging, indulging in sex, and idling, 426b neither drugs nor cautery nor surgery, nor spells or amulets or anything else of the kind, will do them any good?"

"Not charming at all," he said. "There's nothing charming about being angry with someone who gives good advice."

"You don't seem to be an admirer of such men," I said.

"No, by Zeus, I'm not."

"Then you won't admire the city either, as we were just saying, if as a whole it does this sort of thing. Or don't you think the badly governed cities are doing the same as these men, when they warn 426c their citizens not to disturb the city's whole established order, on pain of death for anyone who does, while whoever serves them most pleasantly as they're governed this way, and gratifies them by fawning on them, anticipating their wishes and being clever at fulfilling them—he's the one who'll be a good man and wise in great matters, and honored by them?"

"Yes," he said, "I think they do the same, and I don't approve of it in the least." 426d

"And what about those who are willing, even eager, to serve such cities? Don't you admire their courage and readiness?"

"I do," he said, "except for those who've been taken in by them and think they're truly statesmen because the many praise them."

"What do you mean? Don't you forgive the men?" I said. "Or do you think it's possible for a man who doesn't know how to measure, when many others 426e like him tell him he's six feet tall, not to believe it about himself?"

"No," he said, "not that, anyway."

"Then don't be hard on them. Surely such people are the most charming of all: they legislate on the sort of things we just went through and keep amending them, always thinking they'll find some end to the wrongdoing in contracts and the other things I was just talking about, not knowing that in reality they're cutting at a Hydra."

"Yes," he said, "that's exactly what they're doing."

427a "So I, for my part," I said, "wouldn't have thought the true lawgiver should trouble himself with this kind of law and constitution, whether the city is badly governed or well—in the one because it's useless and achieves nothing, in the other because some of it anyone at all could discover, and the rest follows of its own accord from the practices already established." 427b

"Then what," he said, "would still be left for us in the way of legislation?"

And I said, "For us, nothing; but for Apollo at Delphi, the greatest, finest, and first of laws."

"What are they?" he said.

"The founding of temples, sacrifices, and other forms of service to gods, divinities, and heroes; and again, the burial of the dead, and all the services we must render to those in the other world to keep them gracious. We ourselves know nothing about such things, and in founding a city 427c we won't trust anyone else, if we have any sense, or use any interpreter but our ancestral one. For surely this god is the ancestral interpreter of such matters for all mankind, and he gives his interpretations seated at the navel, in the center of the earth."

"You're right," he said, "and that's what we must do."[3]

WISDOM, COURAGE AND MODERATION IN THE CITY

Socrates locates wisdom in the rulers, courage in the soldiers and moderation in the whole city.

SOCRATES "Well, son of Ariston," I said, "your city [427d] may now be considered founded. Next, get yourself enough light from somewhere and look inside it—you yourself, and call in your brother and Polemarchus and the others—to see if we can somehow discover where justice might be and where injustice, how they differ from each other, and which of the two a person must have if he's going to be happy, whether or not all gods and men are aware of it."

"Nonsense," said Glaucon. "You promised to search yourself, [427e] saying it would be impious of you not to come to justice's aid in every way you could."

"That's a true reminder," I said, "and I must do so; but you must all help too."

"We will," he said.

"Then I hope," I said, "to find it this way. I think our city, if it's been rightly founded, is completely good."

"It must be," he said.

"Clearly, then, it is wise, courageous, moderate, and just."

"Clearly."

"Then whichever of these we find in it, what's left will be the one not yet found?"

"Of course."

"It's as with any other four things: if we were looking for one of them in something, and recognized that one first, that would be enough for us; but if we recognized the other three first, by that very fact the one we were looking for would have been identified, since clearly it could be nothing but the one left over."

3 Delphi was held to be the center of the earth, marked by a sacred stone called the navel (*omphalos*).

"You're right," he said.

"So with these too, since there happen to be four, we should search in the same way?"

"Clearly."

428a "Well, the first thing I think is plainly visible in it 428b is wisdom, and there's something odd about it."

"What?" he said.

"The city we've described really does seem wise to me, since it's good at deliberating, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"And this very thing, good deliberation, is clearly a kind of knowledge, since it's surely not by ignorance but by knowledge that people deliberate well."

"Clearly."

"But there are many kinds of knowledge, of every sort, in the city."

"Of course."

"Then is it because of the carpenters' knowledge that the city should be called wise and good at deliberating?" 428c

"Not at all," he said. "Because of that it would be called good at carpentry."

"So it isn't because of its knowledge about wooden articles, when it deliberates how they'd be best, that a city should be called wise."

"Certainly not."

"What about knowledge of bronze articles, or anything else of that kind?"

"None of them," he said.

"Nor the knowledge of growing crops from the earth: because of that it's good at farming."

"I think so."

"Well then," I said, "is there some knowledge in the city we've just founded, among some of the citizens, by which it deliberates not about some particular thing 428d in the city, but about the city itself as a whole, how it can best conduct its relations both with itself and with other cities?"

"There certainly is."

"What is it," I said, "and in whom?"

"It's guardianship," he said, "and it's in those rulers we just now called complete guardians."

"Then because of this knowledge, what do you call the city?"

"Good at deliberating," he said, "and truly wise."

"Now do you think," I said, "there'll be more smiths 428e in our city, or more of these true guardians?"

"Far more smiths," he said.

"And of all the others who have some knowledge and get a name from it, these would be the fewest?"

"By far."

"So it's because of its smallest group and part, and the knowledge in it—the part that leads and rules—that a city founded according to nature would be wise as a whole. And this, it seems, is by nature 429a the smallest class, the one whose place it is to share in this knowledge, which alone of all kinds of knowledge should be called wisdom."

"Very true," he said.

"So we've found—I don't know quite how—this one of the four, both what it is and where in the city it has its seat."

"I think, anyway," he said, "it's been found well enough."

"And courage, too—both what it is and where in the city it lies, making the city deserve to be called courageous—isn't very hard to see."

"How so?" 429b

"Who," I said, "would call a city cowardly or courageous by looking to anything but the part that fights for it and goes to war on its behalf?"

"No one," he said, "would look to anything else."

"No, for I don't think," I said, "that the others in it, whether cowardly or courageous, would decide whether it is one or the other."

"No, they wouldn't."

"So a city is courageous, too, by a certain part of itself, because in that part it has a power that will preserve through

everything its opinion about 429c what is to be feared: that these are the things, and things of this kind, that the lawgiver proclaimed in their education. Or don't you call this courage?"

"I didn't quite understand what you said," he said. "Say it again."

"I'm saying," I said, "that courage is a kind of preservation."

"What kind of preservation?"

"Preservation of the opinion, produced by law through education, about what things, and what kinds of things, are to be feared. And by preserving it 'through everything' I meant keeping it safe and not throwing it out, whether one is in pains or in 429d pleasures, in desires or in fears. If you like, I'm willing to show you what I think it resembles."

"I'd like that."

"You know," I said, "that dyers, when they want to dye wool purple, first pick out, from all the many colors, the one kind that is white; then they prepare it beforehand, treating it with no small preparation so that it will take the color as well as possible, and only then do they dye it. 429e Whatever is dyed in this way becomes colorfast, and no washing, with cleansers or without, can take the color out of it. But you know what happens to things that aren't, whether someone dyes other colors or dyes these without treating them first."

"I know," he said. "They wash out and look ridiculous."

"Then suppose," I said, "that we too were doing something like this, as far as we could, when we selected our soldiers and 430a educated them in music and gymnastics. Don't think we were contriving anything but this: that, persuaded by us, they would take in the laws as well as possible, like a dye, so that their opinion about what is to be feared, and about everything else, would become colorfast, because they had the right nature and upbringing; and so that those cleansers wouldn't wash the dye out of them, formidable as they are at scouring—pleasure, more formidable at this than any soda 430b or lye, and pain, fear, and desire, more than any other cleanser. This power, then, this preservation through everything of right and lawful opinion about

what is and isn't to be feared, is what I call courage, and set down as such, unless you have something else to say."

"No, I have nothing else to say," he said. "For I take it that right opinion about these same things that arises without education—the kind found in beasts and slaves—you don't consider altogether lawful, and you call it something other than courage." 430c

"Very true," I said.

"Then I accept that this is courage."

"Yes, accept it," I said, "as civic courage, anyway, and you'll be right to. We'll go through it more thoroughly another time, if you like. At present it isn't this we're looking for, but justice; and for the search for that, I think, this is enough."

"You're right," he said.

"Now two things are still left," I said, "that we must make out in the 430d city: moderation, and the thing for whose sake we're looking for them all, justice."

"Certainly."

"How could we find justice, so as not to have to bother any more about moderation?"

"Well, I don't know," he said, "and I wouldn't want justice to come to light first, if we're not going to look into moderation after all. If you want to do me a favor, look at this one before that one." 430e

"I'm certainly willing," I said, "unless it would be wrong of me."

"Then look," he said.

"We must look," I said. "And seen from here, it resembles a kind of concord and harmony more than the others did."

"How?"

"Moderation," I said, "is surely a kind of order, a mastery of certain pleasures and desires. People speak of someone as 'stronger than himself,' though I don't know quite what they mean by it, and other such expressions are used that are like traces of it. Isn't that so?"

"Very much so," he said.

"But isn't 'stronger than himself' ridiculous? The one who is stronger than himself would also, I suppose, be weaker than himself, and the weaker would be stronger, 431a since it's the same person spoken of in all these expressions."

"Of course."

"But it seems to me," I said, "that this expression means that in the person himself, in his soul, there's a better part and a worse; and when the naturally better part is in control of the worse, that's what is meant by 'stronger than himself'—it's praise, at any rate. But when, through bad upbringing or bad company, the better part, being smaller, 431b is overpowered by the mass of the worse, this is criticized as something shameful, and the person in that condition is called weaker than himself and undisciplined."

"Yes, that seems right," he said.

"Now look at our new city," I said, "and you'll find the first of these in it. You'll say it's rightly called stronger than itself, if what has its better part ruling its worse is to be called moderate and stronger than itself."

"I'm looking," he said, "and what you say is true."

"And again, the many desires of every kind, 431c and pleasures and pains, are found above all in children, women, and household slaves, and, among the so-called free, in the many and inferior."

"Certainly."

"But the simple and measured ones, which are guided by reasoning with the help of intelligence and right opinion, you'll meet only in a few, those with the best natures and the best education."

"True," he said.

"And don't you see that these too are present in your city, and that there the desires in the many and 431d inferior are mastered by the desires and the understanding in the fewer and more decent?"

"I do," he said.

"So if any city is to be called stronger than its pleasures and desires, and than itself, this one should be."

"Absolutely," he said.

"And isn't it also moderate, on all these counts?"

"Very much so," he said.

"And again, if in any other city rulers 431e and ruled share the same opinion about who should rule, that would be present in this one too. Don't you think so?"

"Very much so," he said, "absolutely."

"Then in which of the citizens will you say moderation is present, when they're in this condition? In the rulers or the ruled?"

"In both, I suppose," he said.

"So do you see," I said, "that we guessed pretty well just now when we said moderation resembles a kind of harmony?"

"Why is that?"

"Because it doesn't work the way courage and wisdom do. Each of those resided in one part of the city 432a and made it wise or courageous respectively. Moderation doesn't act like that. It stretches straight through the whole city, across the entire scale, and makes the weakest, the strongest and those in between all sing the same tune together—whether you rank them by understanding, or by strength, or, if you like, by numbers or wealth or anything else of the sort. So we'd be quite right to say that this unanimity is moderation: the natural concord between worse and better about which of them should rule, both in a city and in each individual." 432b

"I entirely agree," he said.

"Well then," I said, "we've spotted three of them in our city, at least as far as it looks at this stage. So what could the remaining form be, the one that would give the city a further share in excellence? Obviously it's justice."

"Obviously."

"Well, Glaucon, now's the time for us to station ourselves in a circle around the thicket like hunters, and keep our wits about us, so that justice doesn't slip away somewhere and vanish from

sight. 432c It's clearly somewhere around here. So look, and do your best to catch sight of it—maybe you'll see it before I do and can point it out to me."

"If only I could," he said. "But you'll be making quite reasonable use of me if you treat me as a follower who can see what's pointed out to him."

"Follow, then," I said, "once you've said a prayer with me."

"I will," he said. "Just lead the way."

"The place certainly looks hard going," I said, "and overgrown. It's dark, at any rate, and difficult to search. Still, we have to go on." 432d

"We do," he said.

Then I caught sight of something. "Aha! Aha, Glaucon!" I said. "It looks as though we've found a track, and I don't think it's going to get away from us now."

"Good news," he said.

"Honestly," I said, "we've been behaving like dullards."

"How so?"

"It's been rolling around at our feet all along, my dear fellow, right from the start, and we never saw it. We were utterly ridiculous. Like people who sometimes go looking for what they're holding 432e in their hands, we didn't look at the thing itself but gazed off somewhere into the distance—which is probably just why it escaped us."

"What do you mean?" he said.

"This," I said: "I think we've been talking about it and hearing about it for a long time without realizing that we ourselves were, in a way, describing it."

"That's a long preamble," he said, "for someone who's eager to hear."

JUSTICE IN THE CITY: DOING ONE'S OWN

Socrates defines justice in the city as each class doing its own work.

SOCRATES 433a "Listen, then," I said, "and see whether I'm making sense. What we laid down at the start as something that had

to be done in every case, when we were founding the city—that, I think, or some form of it, is justice. We laid down, surely, and said often, if you remember, that each person must practice one of the city's occupations, the one for which his nature is best suited."

"Yes, we said that."

"And further, that doing one's own work and not meddling is justice—we've heard that from many 433b others and have often said it ourselves."

"We have said it."

"Then this, my friend," I said, "doing one's own work, when it comes about in a certain way, looks as if it's justice. Do you know what my evidence is?"

"No—tell me," he said.

"I think," I said, "that what's left in the city, beyond the things we've examined—moderation, courage and understanding—is the thing that gave all of them the power to arise in the first place, and that preserves them once they've arisen, as long as it's 433c present. And we did say that justice would be what was left over once we'd found the three."

"It must be," he said.

"And yet," I said, "if we had to decide which of these would do most to make our city good by its presence, it would be hard to judge. Is it the agreement in opinion between rulers and ruled? Or the preservation, in the soldiers, of the lawful opinion about what is and isn't to be feared? Or the understanding and vigilance present in 433d the rulers? Or is what most makes the city good the fact, present in child and woman, slave and free, craftsman, ruler and ruled, that each did his own work as one person and didn't meddle?"

"Hard to judge," he said. "Of course it is."

"So it seems that, when it comes to a city's excellence, the power of each person in it to do his own work rivals its wisdom, moderation and courage."

"Very much so," he said.

"Then wouldn't you count justice as the thing that rivals these in contributing to the excellence 433e of a city?"

"Absolutely."

"Now look at it this way too and see whether you'll agree. Will you assign the rulers in the city to judge lawsuits?"

"Of course."

"And will their aim in judging be anything other than this: that no one should have what belongs to others or be deprived of what's his own?"

"No, just that."

"Because that's just?"

"Yes."

"So in this way too, the having and 434a doing of what is one's own and belongs to oneself would be agreed to be justice."

"That's right."

"Now see whether you agree with me. Suppose a carpenter tries to do a shoemaker's work, or a shoemaker a carpenter's; or they swap tools or honors; or the same man tries to do both jobs —with all the rest swapped around like that, do you think it would do the city much harm?"

"Not much," he said.

"But when someone who is by nature a craftsman or some other kind of moneymaker 434b gets carried away by wealth or numbers or strength or something like that and tries to move into the class of warriors, or one of the warriors tries to move into the class of counselors and guardians when he's unworthy of it, and these people swap each other's tools and honors—or when the same man tries to do all these things at once—then, I think you'll agree too, this interchange and meddling among them is the ruin of the city."

"Absolutely."

"So when there are three classes, meddling among them and interchange from one 434c to another is the greatest harm to the city, and would quite rightly be called the worst of crimes."

"Exactly."

"And won't you say that the worst crime against one's own city is injustice?"

"Of course."

"So that is injustice. Now let's put it the other way round. The opposite of that—when the moneymaking, auxiliary and guardian classes each mind their own business, each doing its own work in the city—wouldn't that be justice, and make the city just?" 434d

"I think it's that," he said, "and nothing else."

"Let's not state it with complete confidence just yet," I said. "If this form, when we apply it to each individual human being as well, is agreed to be justice there too, then we'll grant it—what else could we say? If not, we'll look into something else. For now, let's finish the inquiry we undertook in the belief that, if we first tried to observe justice in some larger thing that has it, it would be easier to see what it's like in a single person. And 434e we decided that this larger thing was a city, and so we founded the best one we could, knowing well that justice would be found in the good one, at any rate. So let's apply what came to light there to the individual. If it agrees, well and good.

"But if something different shows up in the individual, we'll go back to the city and test it there, and 435a perhaps, by looking at the two side by side and rubbing them together, we might make justice blaze out, as fire does from fire-sticks. And once it's come to light, we'll confirm it for ourselves."

"Well," he said, "that's a sound way to proceed, and we should do it."

"Now," I said, "when you call two things, one bigger and one smaller, by the same name, are they unlike in the respect in which they're called the same, or alike?"

"Alike," he said. 435b

"Then a just man won't differ at all from a just city with respect to the form of justice itself; he'll be like it."

"Like it," he said.

"But the city seemed to be just when the three kinds of natures present in it each did their own work; and it was moder-

ate, courageous and wise because of certain other conditions and states of those same classes."

"True," he said.

"In that case, my friend, we'll expect the individual to have these same 435c forms in his own soul, and to be rightly called by the same names as the city because they're in the same conditions."

"It has to be so," he said.

"Well, my remarkable friend," I said, "here we've stumbled on another trivial little question about the soul: does it have these three forms in it or not?"

"It doesn't look trivial to me at all," he said. "Perhaps the saying is true, Socrates, that fine things are hard."

"Evidently," I said. "And you should know, Glaucon, that in my 435d opinion we'll never get an exact grasp of this by methods like the ones we're now using in our discussion—the road that leads there is a different one, longer and fuller. But perhaps we can manage it in a way that lives up to what we've already said and examined."

"Isn't that enough to be content with?" he said. "For me, at present anyway, it would be enough."

"Well," I said, "it will certainly do for me too."

"Then don't lose heart," he said. "Carry on with the inquiry." 435e

"Well," I said, "aren't we absolutely bound to agree that the same forms and characteristics are present in each of us as in the city? They surely didn't get there from anywhere else.

"It would be absurd for anyone to think that the spirited part didn't come into cities from the individuals who are credited with it—the people of Thrace and Scythia, for instance, and pretty much the whole northern region—or the love of learning, which one would chiefly credit to our part 436a of the world, or the love of money, which one might say is found especially among the Phoenicians and the people of Egypt."

"Very much so," he said.

"So that's how that is," I said, "and it's not hard to recognize."

"Certainly not."[4]

"But this is hard: whether we do each of these things with the same thing, or with three different things, one for each. Do we learn with one of the things in us, get angry with another, and with a third have appetites for the pleasures of food and procreation and whatever is akin to 436b them? Or do we act with the whole soul in each case, whenever we set about them? That's what will be hard to determine in a way that does the question justice."

"I think so too," he said.

"Then let's try to settle whether they're the same as one another or different, in this way."

"How?"

THE THREE PARTS OF THE SOUL

Socrates argues that the soul has three parts: reason, spirit and appetite.

SOCRATES "It's clear that the same thing won't be willing to do or undergo opposite things at the same time, in the same respect and in relation to the same thing. So if we find this happening among these things, we'll know that there wasn't one thing 436c but more."

"Very well."

"Then consider what I'm about to say."

"Go on," he said.

"Is it possible," I said, "for the same thing to stand still and move at the same time in the same respect?"

"Not at all."

"Let's make our agreement still more precise, so that we don't end up disputing it as we go on. If someone said of a man who is standing still but moving his hands and head that the same man is standing still and moving at the same time, we wouldn't, I think, accept that as the right 436d way to put it; we'd say that one

4 Thrace and Scythia lay to the north and north-east of Greece; the Greeks thought of their peoples as warlike.

part of him is standing still and another part is moving. Isn't that so?"

"It is."

"And if the person saying this got even more playful and argued ingeniously that spinning tops, at least, stand still and move as wholes at the same time, when they spin with the peg fixed in one spot—or that anything else that goes around in a circle in the same place does the same—we wouldn't accept it, since in such cases it isn't in the same parts 436e of themselves that they're at rest and in motion. We'd say they have in them an axis and a circumference, and that with respect to the axis they're standing still, since it doesn't tilt at all, while with respect to the circumference they're moving in a circle; and when the axis tilts to the right or the left, forward or backward, while it's spinning, then it isn't standing still in any way."

"Quite right," he said.

"So none of these objections will throw us, or do anything more to persuade us that the same thing could ever, at the same time, in the same 437a respect and in relation to the same thing, undergo or be or do opposite things."

"They won't persuade me, anyway," he said.

"All the same," I said, "so that we're not forced to spend a long time going through all these objections and proving them false, let's assume that this is so and move on—agreeing that if it ever turns out otherwise, everything we've concluded from it will be void."

"Yes, that's what we should do," he said. 437b

"Then would you put nodding yes and shaking one's head no, reaching out to take something and refusing it, drawing something toward oneself and pushing it away—all such things—among opposites, whether as things one does or things one undergoes? That won't make any difference here."

"Yes," he said, "among opposites."

"Well then," I said, "thirst and hunger and the appetites in general, and again wishing and wanting—wouldn't you put all these 437c somewhere among the kinds we just mentioned? For

instance, won't you say that the soul of someone with an appetite always either reaches out for what it has an appetite for, or draws toward itself what it wants to have; or again, insofar as it wishes something to be provided for it, nods yes to it, as if someone had asked, in its longing for it to come about?"

"I will."

"And what about not wanting, not wishing and not having an appetite? Won't we put these under pushing away and driving off from the soul, and among all the opposites of the others?" 437d

"Of course."

"Since that's so, shall we say that the appetites form a kind, and that the most conspicuous of them are what we call thirst and hunger?"

"We shall," he said.

"One for drink, the other for food?"

"Yes."

"Now insofar as it's thirst, would it be an appetite in the soul for anything more than what we've said? For instance, is thirst thirst for hot drink or cold, or much or little—in a word, for some particular kind of drink? Or rather, if some heat is added to 437e the thirst, that would bring in an appetite for something cold as well, and if coldness, for something hot; and if the thirst is great because greatness is present, it will bring in the appetite for a lot, and if small, for a little? But thirst itself will never be an appetite for anything other than its natural object, drink itself—and hunger, likewise, for food?"

"Yes," he said, "each appetite itself is only for its own natural object, and it's what is added that makes it for this or that kind."

"Then let no one catch us off our guard," I said, "and throw us into confusion by saying that nobody has an appetite for drink but for good drink, and not for food but for good food—since everyone, after all, has an appetite for good things; so if thirst is an appetite, it would be for good drink, or good whatever it's an appetite for, and the same with the others."

"Well," he said, "the person who says that might seem to have a point."

438a "All the same," I said, "among things that are such as to be relative to 438b something, those of a particular kind are relative to something of a particular kind, it seems to me, while those that are just themselves are relative only to things that are just themselves."

"I don't follow," he said.

"Don't you follow," I said, "that the greater is such as to be greater than something?"

"Certainly."

"Than the less?"

"Yes."

"And the much greater than the much less, right?"

"Yes."

"And the once greater than the once less, and what will be greater than what will be less?"

"What else?" he said. 438c

"And more in relation to fewer, double to half, and everything of that sort; and again heavier to lighter, faster to slower, and hot to cold as well, and everything like them—isn't it the same with them?"

"Certainly."

"And what about the kinds of knowledge? Isn't it the same pattern? Knowledge itself is knowledge of learning itself, or of whatever it is we should take knowledge to be of; whereas a particular kind of knowledge 438d is of a particular kind of thing. I mean something like this. When there came to be a knowledge of making houses, didn't it differ from the other kinds of knowledge, so that it was called housebuilding?"

"Of course."

"Wasn't that because it was of a particular kind, as none of the others was?"

"Yes."

"And it became of a particular kind itself because it was of something of a particular kind? And the same goes for the other crafts and kinds of knowledge?"

"That's so."

"Then take this," I said, "to be what I meant earlier, if you've understood it now: of things that are relative to something, those that are just themselves are relative only to things that are just themselves, while things of a particular kind are relative to things of a particular kind. 438e And I don't mean that they're of the same kind as the things they're relative to—as if knowledge of what's healthy and diseased were itself healthy and diseased, or knowledge of bad and good things were itself bad and good. I mean that when knowledge came to be not of the very thing knowledge is of, but of something of a particular kind—in this case the healthy and the diseased—it turned out to be of a particular kind itself; and that made it no longer be called simply knowledge but, with the particular kind added, medicine."

"I understand," he said, "and I think that's so."

"Then what about thirst?" I said. "Won't you put it among the things that are what they are by being relative to something? Thirst is surely thirst for—"

"I will," he said. "For drink."

"So for a particular kind of drink there's a particular kind of thirst; but thirst itself isn't for much or little, or good or bad, or in a word for any particular kind, but thirst itself is naturally only for drink itself?"

"Absolutely."

439a "So the soul of someone who is thirsty, insofar as it's thirsty, wants nothing other 439b than to drink; that's what it longs for and strives toward."

"Clearly."

"Then if something ever pulls it back when it's thirsty, that would be something in it different from the thing that's thirsty and drives it like a beast to drink? Because, we say, the same thing can't do opposite things with the same part of itself, concerning the same thing, at the same time."

"No, it can't."

"In the same way, I think, it isn't right to say of an archer that his hands push the bow away and pull it toward him at the same

time; rather, one hand pushes it away and the other draws it in." 439c

"Absolutely," he said.

"Now, shall we say that some people are sometimes thirsty and yet unwilling to drink?"

"Certainly," he said, "many people, and often."

"Then what should one say about them?" I said. "Isn't it that there's something in their soul urging them to drink and something forbidding them, something different that overpowers what's urging them?"

"I think so," he said.

"And doesn't what forbids such things arise, when 439d it does arise, from reasoning, while what drives and drags them on comes through feelings and diseased states?"

"Evidently."

"Then it won't be unreasonable," I said, "for us to claim that they are two, and different from each other, calling the part of the soul with which it reasons the reasoning part, and the part with which it loves and hungers and thirsts and is stirred up by the other appetites the unreasoning and appetitive part, companion of certain satisfactions and pleasures." 439e

"No," he said, "it would be quite reasonable for us to think so."

"Well then," I said, "let's take it that these two forms present in the soul have been marked off. But what about spirit, the thing with which we get angry? Is it a third, or would it be of the same nature as one of these two?"

"Perhaps," he said, "as one of them—the appetitive part."

"But I once heard a story," I said, "and I believe it. Leontius son of Aglaion was coming up from the Piraeus, along the outside of the North Wall, when he noticed corpses lying by the executioner. He had an appetite to look at them, but at the same time he was disgusted and tried to turn himself away. For a while he struggled and covered his face, 440a but in the end, overcome by the appetite, he forced his eyes wide open, ran up to the corpses and said, 'There you are, you wretches—take your fill of the fine sight!'"

"I've heard it myself," he said.

"Yet this story," I said, "shows that anger sometimes makes war on the appetites, as one thing against another."[5]

"Yes, it does," he said.

"And in many other cases," I said, "don't we notice that when appetites 440b force someone against his reasoning, he reproaches himself and is angry at the thing in him that's forcing him, and that, as if two factions were at war, the spirit of such a person becomes the ally of reason? But spirit making common cause with the appetites when reason has decided it mustn't be opposed—I don't think you'd say you had ever noticed that sort of thing happening in yourself, or, I imagine, in anyone else."

"No, by Zeus," he said. 440c

"And what about when someone thinks he's in the wrong?" I said. "Isn't it true that the nobler he is, the less able he is to be angry at suffering hunger or cold or anything else of the kind at the hands of someone he thinks is justly doing this to him—and his spirit, as I say, refuses to be roused against that person?"

"True," he said.

"And what about when someone thinks he's being wronged? Doesn't he seethe and chafe in that case, and fight on the side of what seems just? And through hunger and cold and every suffering of that kind, 440d doesn't he hold out and win, and not give up his noble efforts until he either succeeds, or dies, or is called back by the reason within him and calmed, like a dog by a shepherd?"

"It's very like what you describe," he said. "And in fact in our city we made the auxiliaries like dogs, obedient to the rulers, who are like the city's shepherds."

"You've understood very well what I mean," I said. "But have you also taken note of this?" 440e

"What?"

"That what we're now seeing about the spirited part is the opposite of what we thought just now. Then we supposed it was

5 The North Wall was one of the Long Walls joining Athens to the Piraeus.

something appetitive; now we say it's far from that, and that in the soul's civil war it much rather takes up arms on the side of the reasoning part."

"Absolutely," he said.

"Then is it different from that as well, or a form of the reasoning part, so that there are two forms in the soul, not three—the reasoning and the appetitive? Or, just as three 441a classes held the city together—moneymaking, auxiliary and deliberative—is the spirited part a third thing in the soul too, by nature the auxiliary of the reasoning part, unless it's corrupted by a bad upbringing?"

"It must be a third," he said.

"Yes," I said, "provided it turns out to be something other than the reasoning part, as it turned out to be different from the appetitive."

"But that's not hard to show," he said. "You can see it even in small children: they're full of spirit right from birth, whereas some of them, it seems to me, never get a share of reason, 441b and most get one only late."

"Yes, by Zeus," I said, "well put. And you could also see in animals that what you say is so. Besides, the line of Homer that we quoted somewhere back there will bear witness: 'He struck his breast and rebuked his heart with words.' For here Homer has clearly represented 441c the part that has reasoned about better and worse as something different, rebuking the part that is unreasoningly angry."

"You're quite right," he said.[6]

JUSTICE IN THE SOUL

Justice in the soul is each part doing its own work, with reason ruling, like health in the body.

SOCRATES "So we've managed to swim through that, though barely," I said, "and we've reached reasonable agreement that

6 The line is *Odyssey* 20.17: Odysseus, back home in disguise, restrains his anger at the disloyal maids. It was quoted earlier, in Book 3.

the same classes are present in the city and in the soul of each individual, and equal in number."

"That's so."

"Then doesn't it follow necessarily that the individual is wise in the same way, and by the same part, as the city was wise?"

"Of course." 441d

"And that the city is courageous by the same part and in the same way as the individual is courageous, and that both stand alike in everything else that has to do with excellence?"

"Necessarily."

"And so, Glaucon, I think we'll say that a man is just in the same way that the city was just."

"That too is entirely necessary."

"But surely we haven't forgotten that the city was just because each of the three classes in it did its own work."

"I don't think we've forgotten," he said.

"Then we must remember that each of us, too, will be just and do his own work when each of the parts 441e within him does its own work."

"Yes," he said, "we must remember that."

"So isn't it fitting for the reasoning part to rule, since it's wise and exercises foresight on behalf of the whole soul, and for the spirited part to obey it and be its ally?"

"Certainly."

"Then, as we were saying, won't a blend of music and gymnastics bring them into harmony, tightening the one and 442a nourishing it with fine words and studies, and loosening the other, soothing it and taming it with harmony and rhythm?"

"Exactly," he said.

"And once these two have been reared like this, and have truly learned their own work and been educated in it, they will be put in charge of the appetitive part—which is the largest part of the soul in each of us, and by nature the most insatiable for money. They will watch over it, so that it doesn't get filled up with the so-called pleasures of the body, grow large and strong, and then 442b stop doing its own work, and instead try to enslave

and rule over things its kind has no business ruling, and so overturn the whole life of all of them."

"Very much so," he said.

"And wouldn't these two," I said, "also do the finest job of guarding against enemies from outside, on behalf of the whole soul and body—the one by deliberating, the other by fighting in front of it, following the ruler and carrying out its decisions through its courage?"

"That's right."

"And I think we call each individual 442c courageous because of this part, when his spirited part preserves, through pains and pleasures alike, what reason has declared is to be feared and what is not."

"Rightly," he said.

"And wise because of that small part, the one that ruled in him and issued those declarations—the part which, for its own share, has within it the knowledge of what benefits each part and the whole community of all three."

"Certainly."

"And what about this: isn't he moderate because of the friendship and concord of these same parts, when the ruling part and the two that are ruled 442d share the opinion that the reasoning part should rule, and don't rebel against it?"

"Moderation, at any rate," he said, "is nothing other than that, in a city and in an individual."

"And he'll be just, surely, in the way and by the means we keep describing."

"He has to be."

"Well then," I said, "is our picture of justice getting blurred at all, so that it seems to be something other than what it turned out to be in the city?"

"Not to me, it doesn't," he said.

"Here's how we could make completely sure," I said, 442e "if anything in our soul still has doubts: by testing it against commonplace cases."

"What sort of cases?"

"For instance, suppose we had to agree about that city, and about the man who resembles it by nature and upbringing, whether such a man, if entrusted with a deposit of gold or silver, would make off with it. Who do you think would suppose 443a that he would do it, rather than people who aren't like him?"

"No one would," he said.

"And wouldn't he have nothing to do with temple robbery, theft and betrayal, whether of friends in private life or of cities in public life?"

"Nothing to do with them."

"And he wouldn't break faith in any way at all, either over oaths or over any other agreements."

"How could he?"

"And adultery, neglect of parents, and failure to serve the gods are more typical of anyone else than of a man like this."

"Of anyone at all," he said. 443b

"And isn't the cause of all this that each of the parts within him does its own work, in ruling and in being ruled?"

"That's the cause, and nothing else."

"Then are you still looking for justice to be anything other than this power, which produces men and cities like these?"

"No, by Zeus," he said, "I'm not."

"So our dream has come completely true—our suspicion, as we said, that right at the start of founding the city, 443c with some god's help, we had probably hit upon a first principle and a kind of outline of justice."

"Absolutely."

"In fact, Glaucon, that principle—and this is why it was useful—was a kind of image of justice: that the man who is by nature a shoemaker should rightly make shoes and do nothing else, the carpenter do carpentry, and so on."

"Evidently."

"But the truth, it seems, is that justice was something like this, though not concerned with someone's outward doing of his own work but with 443d the inward: with what truly concerns himself and what is his own. The just man doesn't allow each

part within him to do the work of another, or the kinds in his soul to meddle with one another. Instead he truly puts his own house in good order, rules himself, sets himself in order and becomes his own friend. He harmonizes the three parts exactly like the three fixed notes of a musical scale—highest, lowest and middle—and any others that happen to lie in between. "He binds all of these 443e together and becomes entirely one instead of many, moderate and harmonized. Only then does he act, if he acts at all—whether in making money, caring for his body, doing something political, or in private contracts. In all these he believes and calls just and fine the action that preserves and helps to produce this condition, and wisdom the knowledge that oversees that action; and he believes and calls unjust 444a whatever action tends to destroy this condition, and ignorance the opinion that in turn oversees that."

"What you say is entirely true, Socrates," he said.

"Very well," I said. "If we claimed to have found the just man, the just city, and what justice actually is in them, I don't think we'd seem to be lying at all."

"By Zeus, we certainly wouldn't," he said.

"Shall we claim it, then?"

"Let's claim it."

"So be it," I said. "Next, I think, we have to examine injustice."

"Clearly." 444b

"Mustn't it, in turn, be a kind of civil war among these three parts—meddling, doing what belongs to others, the rebellion of one part against the whole of the soul so that it can rule in it when that isn't its place? For that part is by nature fit to be a slave, while the other, belonging to the ruling kind, is fit not to be a slave. Something like this, I think, is what we'll say: that the turmoil and wandering of these parts is injustice, and licentiousness, and cowardice, and ignorance—in a word, badness of every kind."

"That's exactly it," he said. 444c

"Then," I said, "doing unjust things and doing wrong, and again doing just things—aren't all these perfectly clear by now, if injustice and justice are?"

"How so?"

"Because," I said, "they're no different from healthy and unhealthy things: what those are in the body, these are in the soul."

"In what way?" he said.

"Healthy things, I take it, produce health, and unhealthy things disease."

"Yes."

"And doesn't doing just things produce justice, 444d and doing unjust things injustice?"

"Necessarily."

"To produce health is to arrange the parts of the body so that they master and are mastered by one another in accordance with nature, while to produce disease is to arrange them so that one rules and another is ruled contrary to nature."

"So it is."

"Then again," I said, "to produce justice is to arrange the parts of the soul so that they master and are mastered by one another in accordance with nature, and to produce injustice is to arrange them so that one rules and another is ruled contrary to nature?"

"Exactly," he said.

"Excellence, then, it seems, would be a kind of health, 444e beauty and good condition of the soul, and badness a disease, ugliness and weakness."

"That's so."

"And don't fine practices lead to the acquisition of excellence, and shameful ones to badness?"

"Necessarily."

"So what remains for us to examine now, it seems, is 445a whether it pays to do just things, practice fine ones and be just, whether or not anyone knows you're like that; or to do wrong and be unjust, provided you don't pay the penalty and aren't made better by being punished."

"But Socrates," he said, "to me the inquiry is starting to look ridiculous at this point. When the body's nature is ruined, life doesn't seem worth living, not even with every kind of food and drink and all the wealth and power in the world. Yet when the nature of the very thing we live by is thrown into turmoil and 445b ruined, is life going to be worth living—so long as a person can do whatever he likes, except the one thing that will rid him of badness and injustice and win him justice and excellence? That is, now that each of them has turned out to be the sort of thing we've described."

"It is ridiculous," I said. "But still, since we've come this far, we mustn't grow weary before we see as clearly as we can that this is how things are."

"By Zeus," he said, "growing weary is the last thing we should do." 445c

"Come along, then," I said, "so that you can see how many forms badness has, as I see it—the ones, at least, that are worth looking at."

"I'm following," he said. "Just tell me."

"Well," I said, "now that we've climbed this high in the argument, I seem to see, as if from a lookout, that there is one form of excellence but countless forms of badness, and among them four worth mentioning."

"What do you mean?" he said.

"There are probably as many types of soul," I said, "as there are types of constitution with distinct forms."

"How many is that?" 445d

"Five types of constitution," I said, "and five of soul."

"Tell me which they are," he said.

"I say," I said, "that one type of constitution is the one we've described, though it could be called by two names: if one outstanding man arises among the rulers, it would be called kingship; if more than one, aristocracy."

"True," he said.

"So I count this as one form," I said. "Whether 445e there were several such men or one, none of them would alter any of the

city's laws worth mentioning, if they had the upbringing and education we described."

"Not likely," he said.

Book V

Women, the family, and philosopher-kings.

SOCRATES 449a "So I call a city and constitution like this good and correct, and a man like this too. And if this one is correct, I call the others bad and mistaken, both in how they manage cities and in how they shape the character of individual souls. They fall into four forms of badness."

"Which ones are those?" he said.

I was about to list them in order, as each seemed to me to develop 449b out of the one before. But Polemarchus—who was sitting a little way from Adeimantus—reached out his hand and took hold of Adeimantus' cloak at the top, by the shoulder, drew him close, and leaning forward himself said something to him in a low voice. We didn't catch any of it except this: "Shall we let it go," he said, "or what shall we do?"

"Certainly not," said Adeimantus, speaking aloud now.

And I said, "What exactly is it you're not letting go?"

"You," he said. 449c

"Why me," I said, "exactly?"

"We think you're shirking," he said, "and cheating us out of a whole part of the argument, and not the smallest part, to avoid going through it. You thought you'd get away with it by saying, offhandedly, that where women and children are concerned it's obvious to everyone that 'what friends have will be held in common.'"

"Well, wasn't that right, Adeimantus?" I said.[1]

"Yes," he said. "But this 'right,' like everything else, needs explaining: what form will this sharing take? There could be many. 449d So don't pass over the one you mean. We've been waiting a long time, expecting you to say something about producing children—how they'll produce them, and how they'll raise them once they're born—and about this whole sharing of women and children you speak of. We think it makes a great difference, all the difference, to a constitution whether this is done rightly or not.

"So now, since you're taking up another constitution before you've dealt with this adequately, we've decided what 450a you heard: not to let you go until you've gone through all of it, just as you did the rest."

"Count me in on this vote too," said Glaucon.

"Don't worry, Socrates," said Thrasymachus. "Take it that we've all decided this."

"What a thing you've done," I said, "seizing on me like this! What a huge argument about the constitution you're starting up again, as if from the beginning. I was delighted to think I'd already finished with it, and glad if anyone would let it be and accept what was said at the time. By calling for it now, 450b you don't know what a swarm of arguments you're stirring up. I saw it then and passed it by, so as not to cause a great deal of trouble."

"What?" said Thrasymachus. "Do you think these people came here to go prospecting for gold, and not to listen to arguments?"

"Yes," I said, "but in moderate measure."[2]

"For people with sense, Socrates," said Glaucon, "the measure for listening to arguments like these is a whole lifetime. But never mind about us. Don't grow weary of going through, in the

1 A Greek proverb, "friends have all things in common," which Socrates applied to women and children in Book IV (423e–424a).

2 "Prospecting for gold" was a proverbial phrase for being lured away from the business at hand by hopes of a fortune.

way 450c that seems best to you, what we're asking: what sharing of children and women there will be among our guardians, and how the children will be raised while they're still young, in the period between birth and education, which seems to be the most demanding of all. So try to tell us how it should be done."

"It isn't easy to go through, my fortunate friend," I said. "It raises many doubts, even more than what we discussed before. People might doubt that what's proposed is possible; and even if it could be done perfectly, they'll doubt, on that score too, that it would be for the best. 450d That's why I hesitate to touch on it, my dear friend: I'm afraid the argument may seem to be mere wishful thinking."

"Don't hesitate," he said. "Your audience won't be unreasonable, or distrustful, or ill-disposed."

And I said, "My excellent friend, are you saying that to encourage me?"

"I am," he said.

"Then you're doing just the opposite," I said. "If I were confident that I knew what I was talking about, your encouragement would be fine. When you're among sensible people who are your friends, it's safe and reassuring to speak the truth you know about the most important and 450e dearest things;

but to make arguments while you're still in doubt and searching, as 451a I'm doing, is frightening and risky. It isn't that I'm afraid of being laughed at—that would be childish—but that I'll slip from the truth and lie there fallen, dragging my friends down with me, in matters where slipping matters most. I bow to Adrasteia, Glaucon, for what I'm about to say. I really do think it a lesser offense to kill someone unintentionally than to deceive people about what is fine, good and just in laws and customs. That's a risk better run among enemies than 451b among friends. So you're a fine one to encourage me!"[3]

3 Adrasteia ("the Inescapable") was a goddess of retribution; people bowed to her to avert punishment for a bold remark.

Glaucon laughed and said, "Well, Socrates, if the argument does us any harm, we'll release you, as in a case of homicide: you'll be clean, and not our deceiver. So take heart and speak."

"Well," I said, "in that case, too, the one who is released is clean, as the law says; and if it holds there, it likely holds here as well."

"Then speak," he said, "as far as that's concerned."

THE FIRST WAVE: WOMEN AS GUARDIANS

Socrates argues that women with the right natures should be educated and serve as guardians like men.

SOCRATES "I have to go back now, then," I said, "and say what perhaps 451c should have been said in its proper place earlier. But maybe this is the right way: after the men's drama has been played through to the end, to play the women's in turn, especially since you're calling for it like this.

"For people born and educated as we described, in my view there's no right way to acquire and deal with children and women except by following the path on which we first set out. We tried, I think, in our argument, to make the men guardians of a flock."

"Yes." 451d [4]

"Then let's follow that up by giving them a birth and upbringing to match, and see whether it suits us or not."

"How?" he said.

"Like this. Do we think the female guard dogs should guard what the males guard, hunt with them, and do everything else in common? Or should the females stay indoors, as if they were unfit because they bear and rear the puppies, while the males work and have the whole care of the flocks?" 451e

"Everything in common," he said, "except that we treat the females as weaker and the males as stronger."

4 Possibly an allusion to the mimes of the Sicilian writer Sophron, which were grouped as "men's mimes" and "women's mimes."

"Is it possible," I said, "to use any animal for the same things, if you don't give it the same upbringing and education?"

"It isn't possible."

"So if we're going to use the women for the same things as the men, we have to teach them the same things too." 452a

"Yes."

"Now, the men were given music and physical training."

"Yes."

"Then the women too must be given these two arts, and what pertains to war, and must be used in the same ways."

"That's what follows from what you say," he said.

"Perhaps," I said, "since it goes against custom, a lot of what we're now saying would look ridiculous if it were carried out as we describe."

"Very much so," he said.

"What do you see as the most ridiculous part of it?" I said. "Isn't it obviously the women exercising naked in the wrestling schools alongside 452b the men—not only the young ones, but the older ones too, like the old men in the gymnasiums who, wrinkled and unpleasant to look at, still love their exercise?"

"By Zeus, yes," he said. "That would look ridiculous, at least as things are now."

"Still," I said, "since we've set out to speak, we mustn't be afraid of the jokes of the wits—all the many things they'd say about such a change in physical training 452c and in music, and not least about women bearing arms and riding horses."

"You're right," he said.

"But since we've begun to speak, we must press on to the rough part of the law. We'll ask the wits to give up their usual business for once and be serious, and we'll remind them that it wasn't long ago that the Greeks thought it shameful and ridiculous, as most non-Greeks still do now, for men to be seen naked. When first the Cretans and then the Spartans began exercising naked, 452d the wits of that time were free to make a comedy of the whole thing. Don't you think so?"

"I do."

"But once it became clear, I think, to those who practiced it that stripping was better than covering up all such parts, what looked ridiculous to the eye melted away before what reason had shown to be best. And this showed that anyone is foolish who thinks anything ridiculous except what is bad; who tries to raise a laugh by looking to any sight as ridiculous except that of folly 452e and badness; and who, again, earnestly pursues the fine with his eye on any target other than the good."

"Absolutely," he said.

"Then mustn't we first reach agreement on whether these things are possible or not, and let anyone who wants to dispute it, whether in jest or in earnest, argue the question: 453a is female human nature capable of sharing in all the tasks of the male kind, or in none, or in some but not others? And which group does war belong to? Isn't that the finest way to start, and so, most likely, the finest way to finish?"

"By far," he said.

"Would you like us, then," I said, "to argue against ourselves on the others' behalf, so that the opposing case doesn't fall to a siege undefended?" 453b

"Nothing's stopping us," he said.

"Then let's say on their behalf: 'Socrates and Glaucon, there's no need for anyone else to dispute with you. You yourselves, at the start of founding the city you were founding, agreed that each person must do the one job that is his own by nature.'"

"We did agree, I think. Of course we did."

"'Can it be that a woman doesn't differ enormously from a man in nature?'"

"Of course she differs."

"'Then isn't it right to assign each of them a different job too, 453c the one that suits its own nature?'"

"Certainly."

"'Then how can you not be making a mistake now, and contradicting yourselves, when you say that men and women must do the same things, though their natures are as far apart as can

be?' Will you have any defense to offer against that, my remarkable friend?"

"Not very easily, on the spur of the moment," he said. "But I'll ask you—I'm asking you now—to set out the argument on our side too, whatever it is."

"These are the things, Glaucon," I said, "and many others 453d like them, that I foresaw long ago; they're why I was afraid and hesitated to touch the law about acquiring and raising women and children."

"No, by Zeus," he said, "it doesn't look like an easy one."

"It isn't," I said. "But here's how things stand: whether you fall into a little swimming pool or into the middle of the vast sea, you have to swim all the same."

"Certainly."

"Then we too must swim and try to get safely out of the argument, hoping that a dolphin might pick us up, or for some other unlikely rescue." 453e

"So it seems," he said.

"Come on, then," I said, "let's see if we can find a way out. We agree that different natures should pursue different occupations, and that a woman's nature and a man's are different. Yet now we say that these different natures should pursue the same occupations. Is that the charge against us?"

"Exactly."

"What a splendid power the art of contradiction has, Glaucon!" I said.

"Why do you say that?"[5]

454a "Because," I said, "many people seem to me to fall into it even against their will, and to think they're having a discussion, not a quarrel. That's because they can't examine what is said by dividing it into its kinds; instead they chase after contradictions of what was said by fastening on the mere word, and they use quarreling, not discussion, with one another."

5 The legendary singer Arion was said to have been carried safely to shore on a dolphin's back after being thrown overboard.

"That does happen to many people," he said. "But surely it doesn't apply to us at the moment?" 454b

"It certainly does," I said. "At any rate, we're in danger of getting into contradiction without meaning to."

"How?"

"We're very bravely and contentiously chasing after the literal words of the claim that a nature that isn't the same shouldn't have the same occupations. But we didn't examine at all what kind of sameness or difference of nature we meant, or what it bore on, when we defined things back then, assigning different occupations to a different nature and the same ones to the same nature."

"No," he said, "we didn't examine that." 454c

"So it seems," I said, "we might as well ask ourselves whether bald men and long-haired men have the same nature and not opposite ones; and then, once we agree that they're opposite, if bald men are shoemakers, not to allow long-haired men to be, or if long-haired men are, not to allow the others."

"That would be ridiculous," he said.

"And is it ridiculous for any other reason," I said, "than that back then we weren't positing sameness and difference of nature in every sense, but were attending only to the kind of difference and likeness 454d that bears on the occupations themselves? For instance, we said that a man and a woman who both have a doctor's soul have the same nature. Or don't you think so?"

"I do."

"But that a doctor and a carpenter have different natures?"

"Of course."

"So too," I said, "with the male kind and the female kind: if either turns out to differ from the other with respect to some art or other occupation, we'll say that occupation should be assigned to the one suited to it. But if they turn out to differ only in this, that the female bears children 454e and the male begets them, we'll say it hasn't yet been shown at all that a woman differs from a man with respect to what we're talking about, and

we'll go on thinking that our guardians and their women should pursue the same occupations."

"And rightly," he said.

"Next, then, we'll ask the person who says the opposite 455a to teach us just this: in what art or occupation concerned with the organization of a city is the nature of a woman and of a man not the same but different?"

"That's fair, anyway."

"Well, perhaps someone else might say what you said a little earlier: that it's not easy to give an adequate answer on the spot, but not at all hard after some thought."

"He might."

"Then shall we ask the person who raises this objection to follow 455b us, and see whether we can somehow show him that there is no occupation concerned with running a city that is peculiar to women?"

"Certainly."

"'Come on then,' we'll say to him, 'answer this. Is this what you meant when you said that one person is naturally gifted for something and another isn't: that the one learns it easily, the other with difficulty? That the one, after a little learning, can discover much more beyond what he learned, while the other, after much learning and practice, can't even hold on to what he learned? And that in the one the body adequately serves the mind, while in 455c the other it works against it? Are there any other marks than these by which you distinguished the naturally gifted from the ungifted in each field?'"

"No one," he said, "will say there are any others."

"Then do you know of anything that human beings practice in which the male kind doesn't surpass the female in all these respects? Or should we go on at length about weaving, and looking after the cakes and the stews—where women do seem to count for something, and where it's most laughable of all 455d for them to be beaten?"

"What you say is true," he said: "the one kind is far outdone by the other in practically everything. Many women, it's true,

are better than many men at many things; but on the whole it is as you say."

"So, my friend, there's no occupation among those who run a city that belongs to a woman because she's a woman, or to a man because he's a man. The natural gifts are distributed alike in both creatures. By 455e nature a woman shares in every occupation, and so does a man, but in all of them a woman is weaker than a man."

"Certainly."

"Then shall we assign everything to men and nothing to women?"

"How could we?"

"No: there is, I think, as we'll say, one woman with a gift for medicine and another without, one who is musical by nature and another unmusical."

"Of course."

456a "And isn't there one woman who is athletic and warlike, and another who is unwarlike and no lover of physical training?"

"I think so."

"And what about this: one a lover of wisdom and another a hater of wisdom? One spirited and another spiritless?"

"That too."

"So one woman is fit to be a guardian, and another isn't. Or wasn't this the sort of nature we selected in the men, too, who were fit to be guardians?"

"It was."

"So for guarding the city, a woman and a man have the same nature, except insofar as hers is weaker and his stronger."

"Evidently." 456b

"Then women of this sort must be selected to live with men of this sort and to guard alongside them, since they're capable and akin to them in nature."

"Certainly."

"And mustn't the same natures be assigned the same pursuits?"

"The same."

"So we've come round in a circle to where we were before, and we agree that it isn't contrary to nature to give music and physical training to the women among the guardians."

"Absolutely."

"So the laws we were making weren't impossible, or like mere wishful prayers, 456c since the law we laid down was in accordance with nature. It's rather the present practice, which runs counter to it, that turns out, it seems, to be against nature."

"So it seems."

"Now, wasn't our inquiry whether what we were proposing was possible, and whether it was best?"

"It was."

"And it's been agreed that it's possible?"

"Yes."

"And next we have to reach agreement that it's best?"

"Clearly."

"Well then, when it comes to making a woman a guardian, we won't have one education to make our men and another to make our women, 456d especially since it's taking over the same nature?"

"No, not a different one."

"Then what's your opinion about this?"

"About what?"

"About supposing, in your own mind, that one man is better and another worse. Or do you think they're all alike?"

"Not at all."

"Then in the city we were founding, which do you think we've turned into better men: the guardians, who received the education we described, or the shoemakers, who were educated in shoemaking?"

"That's a ridiculous question," he said.

"I understand," I said. "Well, of all the other citizens, aren't these 456e the best?"

"By far."

"And won't these women be the best of the women?"

"That too," he said, "by far."

"Is there anything better for a city than that it should come to have the best possible women and men?"

"There isn't."

"And music and physical training, applied as [457a] we described, will bring this about?"

"Of course."

"So the practice we were laying down is not only possible but also best for the city."

"Yes."

"Then the guardians' women must strip for exercise, since they'll be clothed in excellence instead of cloaks, and they must share in war and in the rest of the guarding of the city, and do nothing else; but of these same tasks the lighter ones must be given to the women rather than to the men, because of the weakness of their sex. As [457b] for the man who laughs at naked women exercising for the sake of what's best, he 'plucks the unripe fruit' of wisdom with his laughter. He doesn't know, it seems, what he's laughing at or what he's doing. For this is the finest thing that is said, and ever will be said: that what is beneficial is fine, and what is harmful is shameful."[6]

"Absolutely."

"So may we say that, in discussing the law about women, we're escaping this one wave, as it were? We haven't been completely swamped by laying down that our guardians, [457c] male and female, must share all their pursuits in common; instead, the argument somehow agrees with itself that what it proposes is both possible and beneficial?"

"And it's no small wave you're escaping," he said.

"You'll say it isn't a big one," I said, "once you see the next."

"Tell me, then; let me see it," he said.

"Following on this one," I said, "and on the others before it, there comes, I think, this law."

6 "Plucking the unripe fruit of wisdom" adapts a line of the poet Pindar.

THE SECOND WAVE: WIVES AND CHILDREN IN COMMON

Socrates proposes that guardians share wives and children, with state-arranged breeding.

SOCRATES "What is it?"

"That these women are all 457d to be shared by all these men, and no woman is to live privately with any man; and that the children, too, are to be shared, and no parent is to know their own offspring, nor any child its parent."

"This one is much bigger than the other," he said, "when it comes to disbelief, both about whether it's possible and about whether it's beneficial."

"I don't think," I said, "there'd be any dispute about its being beneficial—that it would be a very great good for the women to be shared and the children shared, if it could be done. But I think there'd be a great deal of dispute about whether it's possible or not." 457e

"There could well be plenty of dispute about both," he said.

"You're talking about an alliance of arguments against me," I said. "I thought I'd run away from one of them at least, if you thought it beneficial, and that I'd be left with only whether it's possible or not."

"But you didn't slip away unnoticed," he said. "Give an account of both."

"I'll have to pay the penalty," I said. "But do me this 458a one favor. Let me take a holiday, the way lazy-minded people like to feast on their own thoughts when they walk alone. People like that, you know, before they find out how any of the things they desire can come about, skip that question, so as not to wear themselves out deliberating about what's possible and what isn't. They assume that what they want is already there, and go straight on to arrange the rest, enjoying themselves as they run through all they'll do once it's happened—making a soul that was lazy to begin with 458b lazier still. Well, I'm going soft myself now. I want to put those questions off and examine later how

these things are possible. For now I'll assume they are possible and consider, if you'll let me, how the rulers will arrange them when they happen, and show that carrying them out would be the most advantageous thing of all for both the city and the guardians. "I'll try to examine these points with you first, and the others afterward—if you'll let me."

"I'll let you," he said. "Go ahead and look."

"Well then," I said, "I think that if the rulers are to be worthy 458c of that name, and their auxiliaries likewise, the latter will be willing to do what they're ordered, and the former will give the orders—in some cases obeying the laws themselves, and in others, the ones we leave to their discretion, imitating the laws."

"Probably," he said.

"Then you, their lawgiver," I said, "just as you selected the men, will select the women too and hand them over, as close in nature to the men as possible. And since they'll have houses and common meals together, and no one will own anything of that sort privately, 458d they'll be together; and mixing together both in the gymnasia and in the rest of their upbringing, they'll be drawn, I think, by an innate necessity to have sex with one another. Or don't you think I'm talking about necessities?"

"Not geometrical necessities," he said, "but erotic ones, which are probably sharper than the others when it comes to persuading and pulling along the great mass of people."

"Very much so," I said. "But next, Glaucon: for them to have sex with one another in a disorderly way, or to do anything else that way, would neither 458e be holy in a city of happy people, nor will the rulers allow it."

"No, because it isn't just," he said.

"Then clearly our next step will be to make marriages as sacred as we possibly can; and the sacred ones would be the most beneficial."

"Absolutely." 459a

"Then how will they be most beneficial? Tell me this, Glaucon. I see you have hunting dogs in your house, and a great

many pedigree birds. Well then, by Zeus, have you paid any attention to their matings and breeding?"

"In what respect?" he said.

"First, among these animals themselves, though they're all well bred, aren't there some that are, and turn out to be, the best?"

"There are."

"Then do you breed from all of them alike, or are you keen to breed as far as possible from the best?"

"From the best." 459b

"And from the youngest, or from the oldest, or as far as possible from those in their prime?"

"From those in their prime."

"And if they aren't bred this way, you think your breed of birds and of dogs will be much worse?"

"I do," he said.

"And what about horses," I said, "and the other animals? Do you think it's any different with them?"

"It would be strange if it were," he said.

"Good heavens, my dear friend," I said, "how supremely skilled our rulers will need to be, if the same holds for the human race too." 459c

"Well, it does," he said. "But why do you say so?"

"Because they'll need to use a lot of drugs," I said. "For bodies that don't need drugs but are willing to follow a regimen, we think even a rather ordinary doctor will do. But when drugs are actually needed, we know that a bolder doctor is required."

"True. But what are you getting at?"

"This," I said. "Our rulers will probably have to use a good deal of falsehood and deception for the benefit 459d of those they rule. And we said, I think, that all such things are useful as a kind of drug."

"And rightly," he said.

"Well, it seems this 'rightly' will come into play not least in marriages and procreation."

"How so?"

"From what we've agreed," I said, "the best men must have sex with the best women as often as possible, and the most inferior men with the most inferior women as seldom as possible; and the offspring of the former must be reared, 459e but not those of the latter, if the flock is to be of the highest quality. And all this must happen without anyone knowing except the rulers themselves, if the herd of guardians is to be as free as possible from faction."

"Quite right," he said.

"So we must establish by law certain festivals at which we'll bring together the brides and bridegrooms, with sacrifices, and hymns 460a composed by our poets to suit the marriages that take place. The number of marriages we'll leave to the rulers, so that they can keep the number of men as constant as possible, taking into account wars, diseases and everything of that sort, and so that our city, as far as possible, becomes neither large nor small."

"Right," he said.

"And I think some clever lots must be devised, so that at each pairing the inferior man we mentioned blames chance, not the rulers."

"Certainly," he said. 460b

"And to those of the young men who are good in war or elsewhere we must give honors and prizes, and in particular a more generous license to sleep with the women, so that at the same time, under a plausible pretext, as many as possible of the children will be sired by such men."

"Right."

"And the offspring, as they're born, will be taken over by the officials appointed for this—whether men or women or both, since offices, of course, are shared by women and men alike—"

"Yes." 460c

"The children of the good, I think, they'll take to the fold, to nurses living apart in a certain part of the city; but those of the inferior, and any of the others born defective, they'll hide away, as is fitting, in a secret and unknown place."

"Yes," he said, "if the breed of guardians is to stay pure."

"And they'll also see to the children's feeding, bringing the mothers to the fold when their breasts are full, and using every contrivance 460d to make sure no mother recognizes her own child; they'll provide other women who have milk if the mothers themselves haven't enough; and they'll see to it that the mothers nurse only for a moderate length of time, while the sleepless nights and the rest of the labor they'll hand over to wet nurses and nannies?"

"You're making childbearing very easy for the guardians' women," he said.

"As it should be," I said. "But let's go through the next point we proposed. We said that offspring should come from parents in their prime."

"True." 460e

"Do you agree, then, that a reasonable length for the prime is twenty years for a woman and thirty for a man?"

"Which years?" he said.

"A woman," I said, "should bear children for the city from the age of twenty to forty; a man, once he's past his sharpest prime for running, should father children for the city from then until fifty-five."

"For both of them, at any rate," he said, "that's the prime of body and of understanding."

461a "Then if anyone older or younger than this takes part in procreation for the community, we'll say his offense is neither holy nor just, since he's fathering a child for the city who, if it goes undetected, will be born without the sacrifices and prayers that priestesses and priests and the whole city will offer at each marriage—that from good parents ever better, and from useful parents ever more 461b useful offspring may come—but will be born instead under cover of darkness, out of terrible lack of self-control."

"Right," he said.

"The same law applies," I said, "if a man still of procreating age touches a woman of that age without a ruler pairing them.

We'll say he's foisting on the city a child that is illegitimate, unbetrothed and unhallowed."

"Quite right," he said.

"But when the women and the men are past the age for procreation, I suppose we'll leave them free to have sex 461c with whomever they like—except that a man may not with his daughter, his mother, his daughter's children or his mother's mother and those above her, nor a woman with her son, her father, or their descendants and ancestors. And we'll leave them free only after instructing them all to do their utmost, preferably, not to let even a single pregnancy see the light, if one occurs; but if one forces its way through, to deal with it on the understanding that there is no rearing for such a child."

"That's reasonable enough," he said. "But fathers and 461d daughters, and the others you just mentioned—how will they tell who is whose?"

"They won't," I said. "But from the day a man becomes a bridegroom, all the children born in the tenth month after that, and in the seventh too, he'll call his sons if they're male and his daughters if they're female, and they'll call him father. In the same way he'll call their offspring his grandchildren, and they in turn will call his generation grandfathers and grandmothers. And those born during the period when their mothers and fathers were having children 461e they'll call brothers and sisters—so that, as we were just saying, they won't have sex with one another. But the law will allow brothers and sisters to live together, if the lot falls that way and the Pythia approves as well."[7]

"Quite right," he said.

"This, then, Glaucon, is the sharing of women and children among the guardians of your city, and this is its character. That it's consistent with the rest of the constitution and by far the best, we must next confirm from the argument. Or how shall we proceed?"

"That way, by Zeus," he said.

7 The Pythia was the priestess of Apollo's oracle at Delphi.

462a "Well, isn't the starting point for reaching agreement to ask ourselves what we can name as the greatest good in the organization of a city—the thing the lawgiver must aim at in laying down the laws—and what the greatest evil, and then to examine whether what we've just described fits the track of the good for us and doesn't fit that of the evil?"

"Absolutely," he said.

"Do we know of any greater evil for a city than whatever tears 462b it apart and makes it many instead of one? Or any greater good than whatever binds it together and makes it one?"

"We don't."

"And doesn't the sharing of pleasure and pain bind it together, when, as far as possible, all the citizens rejoice and grieve alike over the same gains and losses?"

"Absolutely," he said.

"Whereas the privatizing of such feelings dissolves it, when some are devastated and others overjoyed at the same 462c things happening to the city and to those in it?"

"Of course."

"And doesn't that come about when the citizens don't say words like 'mine' and 'not mine' in unison? And likewise with 'someone else's'?"

"Exactly."

"So the city in which the greatest number say 'mine' and 'not mine' of the same thing and in the same way is the best governed?"

"By far."

"And that's the city that most closely resembles a single person? For example, when one of us has a finger struck, the whole community that stretches through the body to the soul, organized into a single structure under the ruling part 462d within it, perceives it, and all of it feels the pain together, the whole along with the suffering part; and that's why we say the person has a pain in his finger. And the same account holds for any other part of a person, both for pain when a part is suffering and for pleasure when it's getting better?"

"The same," he said. "And as for what you're asking, the best-governed city is the one that lives most like this."

"Then when one of its citizens experiences anything, good 462e or bad, such a city, I think, will be the most ready to say that the experience is its own, and the whole city will share the pleasure or share the pain."

"It must," he said, "if it's well governed."

"It's time," I said, "for us to return to our own city and look there for the conclusions of our argument, to see whether it has them most of all, or some other city has them more."

"Yes, we should," he said.

"Well then: in other cities there are rulers and people, and in this one too?"

"There are."

463a "And all of these will call one another citizens?"

"Of course."

"But besides 'citizens,' what do the people in other cities call their rulers?"

"In most, masters; in democracies, just this very name, rulers."

"And what about the people in our city? Besides 'citizens,' what do they say their rulers are?" 463b

"Saviors and auxiliaries," he said.

"And what do these call the people?"

"Paymasters and providers."

"And what do the rulers in other cities call their peoples?"

"Slaves," he said.

"And what do the rulers call one another?"

"Fellow rulers," he said.

"And ours?"

"Fellow guardians."

"Can you tell me whether any of the rulers in other cities can address one of his fellow rulers as one of his own and another as an outsider?"

"Yes, many can."

"And he regards and speaks of the one who is his own as belonging to him, 463c and of the outsider as not belonging to him?"

"Yes."

"And what about your guardians? Could any of them regard or address any of his fellow guardians as an outsider?"

"Not at all," he said. "Whomever he meets, he'll think he's meeting a brother or a sister, a father or a mother, a son or a daughter, or their descendants or ancestors."

"Very well put," I said. "But tell me this too. Will you legislate for them only the family names, or 463d also that they're to act in all things in keeping with the names? Toward their fathers, for instance, doing all that the law prescribes about fathers—respect, care, and the duty to obey one's parents—or else it won't go well for him with gods or with men, since he'd be acting neither piously nor justly if he did otherwise? Will these be the sayings that all the citizens chant in the children's ears from the start—about their fathers, whoever is pointed out to them as such, and about their other relatives—or will they be others?" 463e

"These," he said. "It would be ridiculous for them just to mouth the names of kinship without the deeds."

"So of all cities, it's in this one that, when any one person is doing well or badly, they'll most of all say in unison the phrase we mentioned just now: 'mine is doing well,' or 'mine is doing badly.'"

"Very true, again," he said.

"And didn't we say that along with this belief and this way of speaking there follows a sharing of pleasures and pains?"

"And we were right to say so."

464a "So our citizens will share most fully in one and the same thing, which they'll call 'mine'; and sharing in that, they'll have the fullest sharing of pain and pleasure?"

"By far."

"And the cause of this, besides the rest of our arrangements, is the sharing of women and children among the guardians?"

"Far more than anything else," he said. 464b

"But we agreed that this was the greatest good for a city, when we likened a well-governed city to a body and the way it relates to a part of itself in pain and pleasure."

"And we were right to agree," he said.

"So the sharing of children and women among the auxiliaries has turned out to be the cause of the greatest good for the city."

"Very much so," he said.

"And it's consistent with what we said before, too. We said, I think, that they mustn't have private houses, or land, or 464c any possessions, but must receive their sustenance from the others as wages for their guarding and all spend it in common, if they were to be real guardians."

"Right," he said.

"Then, as I say, don't both what was said before and what's being said now make them still more genuine guardians? Don't they keep them from tearing the city apart by applying 'mine' not to the same thing but each to something different—one man dragging into his own house whatever he can acquire apart from the others, 464d another into his own separate house, with a separate wife and children, creating private pleasures and pains for things that are private? Won't they instead share one belief about what is their own, all straining toward the same end, and be as far as possible alike in what they feel of pain and pleasure?"

"Exactly," he said.

"And what about lawsuits and accusations against one another? Won't they all but vanish from among them, since they own nothing private except their bodies, and everything else is shared? And so won't 464e they be free of all the factional strife that people fall into over the possession of money, or children and relatives?"

"They're bound to be rid of it," he said.

"Nor would there rightly be any suits for violence or assault among them. For we'll say it's fine and just for people to defend themselves against others of their own age, and we'll make the care of their bodies compulsory."

"Right," he said.

465a "And this law has another merit," I said. "If someone gets angry with someone else, by venting his anger in this way he'd be less likely to go on to more serious conflicts."

"Certainly."

"And an older person will be charged with ruling and disciplining all the younger ones."

"Clearly."

"And it's likely that a younger person will never try to use violence on an older one or strike him, unless the rulers order it. Nor, I think, will he dishonor him in any other way; for there are two guardians enough to stop him, fear and shame: shame 465b forbidding him to lay hands on those who may be his parents, and fear that the others will come to the victim's aid, some as sons, some as brothers, some as fathers."

"That's how it works out," he said.

"So in every way the men will keep peace with one another as a result of the laws?"

"A great deal of peace."

"And if these men don't quarrel among themselves, there's no fear that the rest of the city will ever split into factions against them or against one another."

"No, there isn't."

"As for the pettiest of the evils they'd be rid of, I hesitate 465c even to mention them, they're so unseemly: the poor flattering the rich; all the perplexities and pains people have in raising children and in making money for the necessary upkeep of their households—borrowing here, refusing to pay there, scraping it together somehow and handing it over to their wives and servants to manage. All the things, my friend, that they suffer over these matters, and what sort of things they are, are obvious, mean-spirited, and not worth talking about." 465d

"Obvious even to a blind man," he said.

"They'll be rid of all these things, and they'll live a life more blessed than the most blessed life that Olympic victors live."

"How?"

"Those victors are counted happy for only a small part of what these men have. Our guardians' victory is finer, and their maintenance at public expense is more complete. The victory they win is the preservation of the whole city, and they and their children are crowned with sustenance and everything else life needs; they receive honors 465e from their own city while they live, and when they die they're given a worthy burial."

"Very fine things," he said.[8]

"Do you remember, then," I said, "that earlier someone's argument—I forget whose—reproached us for not making the guardians happy, 466a since, though they could have all the citizens' possessions, they would have nothing? And we said, I think, that we'd look into this later if the occasion arose, but that for now we were making our guardians guardians, and the city as happy as we could, and weren't fashioning it with an eye to one group in it and making that group happy?"

"I remember," he said.

"Well then, now that the life of our auxiliaries appears far finer and better than that of Olympic victors, 466b does it look at all comparable to the life of shoemakers, or of any other craftsmen, or of farmers?"

"I don't think so," he said.

"Still, what I said there it's right to say here as well. If the guardian tries to become happy in such a way that he's no longer even a guardian, and a life so moderate, so secure, and—as we claim—the best isn't enough for him, but a foolish, adolescent opinion about happiness takes hold of him and drives 466c him to use his power to make everything in the city his own, he'll find out that Hesiod was truly wise when he said that half is somehow more than the whole."

"If he takes my advice," he said, "he'll stay with this life."[9]

"Then do you agree," I said, "to the partnership of the women with the men that we've described—in education, in children,

8 Olympic victors were honored in their home cities, in Athens with free meals at public expense for life.

9 Hesiod, *Works and Days* 40.

and in guarding the other citizens? That whether they stay in the city or go to war, they must guard together and 466d hunt together like dogs, and share in everything in every way as far as possible; and that in doing this they'll be doing what's best, and nothing contrary to the nature of female in relation to male, by which the two are naturally made to share with each other?"

"I agree," he said.

THE GUARDIANS AT WAR

Socrates describes how the guardians' children learn war and how Greeks should treat other Greeks.

SOCRATES "Then what remains," I said, "is to determine whether it's really possible for this partnership to arise among human beings, as it does among other animals, and in what way it's possible?"

"You got in ahead of me," he said, "with just what I was going to take up." 466e

"As for war," I said, "I think it's clear how they'll fight."

"How?" he said.

"They'll campaign together, and they'll also take any of their children who are sturdy enough along to the war, so that, like the children of other craftsmen, they can watch the work they'll have to do themselves when they're grown;

467a and, besides watching, they'll assist and wait on them in everything to do with the war, and look after their fathers and mothers. Or haven't you noticed how it goes in the crafts—how the sons of potters, for instance, spend a long time as helpers, watching, before they put their own hands to the potting?"

"Very much so."

"Then should potters take more care to train their sons, through experience and by watching what's appropriate, than the guardians take with theirs?"

"That would be absurd," he said.

"And besides, every animal fights exceptionally hard 467b when its offspring are present."

"That's so. But the risk, Socrates, is no small one. If they suffer a defeat, as tends to happen in war, they lose their children as well as themselves, and make it impossible for the rest of the city to recover."

"What you say is true," I said. "But do you think the first thing to provide for is that they never run any risk at all?"

"Not at all."

"Well then, if they must take a risk somewhere, shouldn't it be where success will make them better?"

"Obviously." 467c

"And do you think it makes little difference, and isn't worth a risk, whether or not children who are to become men of war get to watch what war involves?"

"No, it does make a difference, for the purpose you mention."

"So we must start from this, making the children spectators of war, and devise some safety for them as well, and all will be well. Isn't that so?"

"Yes."

"Now in the first place," I said, "their fathers won't be ignorant, so far as human beings can know, but will be good judges of which 467d campaigns are dangerous and which aren't?"

"Probably," he said.

"So they'll take them on some and be careful to avoid others."

"Right."

"And I suppose," I said, "they won't put the worst men in charge of them, but those whose experience and age qualify them to be leaders and tutors."

"Yes, that's fitting."

"But of course, we'll say, many unexpected things have happened to many people."

"Very much so."

"To meet that sort of thing, then, my friend, we must give them wings while they're still small children, so that if need be they can fly off and escape." 467e

"What do you mean?" he said.

"We must put them on horseback as young as possible," I said, "and once they've learned to ride, take them on horseback to watch—not on spirited, combative horses, but on the swiftest and most obedient to the rein. That way they'll get the best view of their own work, and, if need be, they'll make the safest escape, following their older leaders."

"I think you're right," he said.

468a "And what about the conduct of war?" I said. "How should your soldiers behave toward one another and toward the enemy? Am I seeing this rightly or not?"

"Tell me," he said, "what you have in mind this time."

"Among themselves," I said, "anyone who deserts his post, or throws away his arms, or does anything of the kind out of cowardice—shouldn't he be made into some kind of craftsman or a farmer?"

"Certainly."

"And anyone taken alive by the enemy—shouldn't we make a present of him to his captors, to use their catch however they like?" 468b

"Absolutely."

"And the man who distinguishes himself and wins a name for bravery—don't you think that first of all, while still on campaign, he should be crowned by each of the youths and boys serving with him, one after another? Or not?"

"I do."

"And what about having them clasp his right hand?"

"That too."

"But this next thing, I suspect," I said, "you won't go along with."

"What's that?"

"That he should kiss and be kissed by each of them."

"Most of all," he said. "And I'd add to the law that, 468c as long as they're on that campaign, no one he wants to kiss should be allowed to refuse, so that if anyone happens to be in love with someone, male or female, he'll be all the keener to win the prize for valor."

"Good," I said. "We've already said that a good man will have more marriages open to him than the others, and will be chosen more often than the others for such things, so that as many children as possible are born from someone like him."

"Yes, we said so," he said.

"What's more, according to Homer too, it's right to honor 468d the good among the young in ways like these. Homer says that Ajax, after he'd distinguished himself in battle, was 'honored with the long cuts of the chine,' since this was the honor proper to a brave man in his prime, one that would build up his strength at the same time as it honored him."

"Quite right," he said.[10]

"Then in this, at least," I said, "we'll follow Homer. At sacrifices and on all such occasions we too will honor the good, to the extent that they show themselves good, with hymns and with the things we just mentioned, and besides these with 'seats of honor, and meat, 468e and cups brimming full,' so that as we honor good men and women we also train them."

"Excellent," he said.

"Very well. And of those who die on campaign, whoever dies having distinguished himself—won't we say first of all that he belongs to the golden race?"

"Absolutely."

"And won't we believe Hesiod, that when any of this race die, 469a 'they become holy spirits dwelling on earth, noble, warders-off of evil, guardians of mortal men'?"

"Yes, we'll believe him."

"Then we'll ask the god how we should lay to rest such spirit-like and godlike people, and with what distinction, and do it in whatever way he directs?"

"Of course we will."[11]

"And for all time afterward we'll tend their tombs as the tombs of spirits, 469b and pay them reverence? And we'll observe

10 In *Iliad* 7, after Ajax's duel with Hector, Agamemnon rewards him with the choicest cut of the sacrificed ox.

these same customs when anyone dies of old age or in any other way, among those judged exceptionally good in their lives?"

"That's only just," he said.

"Next: how will our soldiers deal with the enemy?"

"In what respect?"

"First, as to enslavement: does it seem right for Greeks to enslave Greek cities? Or should they, as far as they can, not allow any other city to do it either, and make it their custom to spare the Greek 469c people, on guard against enslavement by non-Greeks?"

"Sparing them makes all the difference in the world," he said.

"Then they won't themselves own a Greek slave, and they'll advise the other Greeks to do the same?"

"Certainly," he said. "That way they'd be more inclined to turn against the non-Greeks and keep their hands off one another."

"And what about stripping the dead of anything but their arms," I said, "once they've won—is that a good practice? Doesn't it give cowards an excuse 469d not to go after the man who's still fighting, as though they were doing their duty by poking about over a corpse? Many armies have been lost before now through that kind of plundering."

"Very much so."

"And don't you think it's greedy and unworthy of a free man to rob a corpse, and the mark of a small, womanish mind to treat the dead man's body as the enemy, when the enemy has flown off and left behind only what he fought with? Or do you think people who do this 469e behave any differently from dogs that snap at the stones thrown at them but leave the thrower alone?"

"Not a bit differently," he said.

"Then we must give up robbing corpses and preventing the enemy from taking up their dead?"

"We certainly must, by Zeus," he said.

"Nor, I take it, will we carry weapons to the temples to dedicate them, especially Greek ones, if we care at all 470a about the

goodwill of the other Greeks. Rather, we'll be afraid that bringing such things from our own kin to a temple may be a pollution —unless, that is, the god says otherwise."

"Quite right," he said.

"And what about laying waste Greek land and burning houses? What will your soldiers do to the enemy?"

"I'd be glad to hear your opinion," he said.

"Well, in my view," I said, "they should do neither, 470b but should carry off the year's harvest. Do you want me to tell you why?"

"Certainly."

"It seems to me that just as there are two names, war and civil strife, so there are two things, answering to two kinds of discord. By the two I mean what is one's own and akin, on the one hand, and what is alien and foreign, on the other. Hostility with one's own is called civil strife; hostility with the alien, war."

"There's nothing off the mark in that," he said. 470c

"Now see whether this is on the mark, too. I say that the Greek people is its own and akin to itself, but foreign and alien to the non-Greek."

"Well put," he said.

"So when Greeks fight non-Greeks, and non-Greeks Greeks, we'll say they're at war and are enemies by nature, and this hostility must be called war. But when Greeks do anything of the kind to Greeks, we'll say they're friends by nature, but that in such a case Greece is sick and divided against itself, 470d and this kind of hostility must be called civil strife."

"I agree to think of it that way," he said.

"Now consider," I said, "that in what's now agreed to be civil strife, wherever something like this happens and a city is split, if each side ravages the other's fields and burns their houses, the strife is thought to be accursed and neither side to love its city—otherwise they'd never dare to ravage their nurse and mother. What's thought reasonable is for the victors to carry off the

11 Hesiod, *Works and Days* 122–123, describing what became of the golden race, the first and best generation of humankind.

crops [470e] of the vanquished, and to keep in mind that they'll be reconciled and won't be at war forever."

"Yes," he said, "that way of thinking belongs to far more civilized people than the other."

"Well then," I said, "the city you're founding—won't it be Greek?"

"It must be," he said.

"Then won't its people be good and civilized?"

"Very much so."

"And won't they love their fellow Greeks? Won't they regard Greece as their own, and share in the same religious rites as the other Greeks?"

"Very much so."

"Then won't they regard a quarrel with Greeks, since they're their own kin, as civil strife, and not even call it war?"

"Right."

"And they'll quarrel as people who will one day be reconciled?"

"Certainly."

"Then they'll bring the others to their senses in a kindly way, not punishing them with slavery or destruction, since they're correctors, not enemies."

"Just so," he said.

[471a] "Being Greeks, then, they won't ravage Greece or burn homes, and they won't agree that everyone in each city is their enemy—men, women, and children—but that their enemies are always just the few who are to blame for the quarrel. [471b] And for all these reasons they won't be willing to ravage these people's land, since most of them are friends, or to tear down their houses; they'll carry the quarrel only so far as it takes for the guilty to be compelled by the innocent, who are suffering, to pay the penalty."

"I agree," he said, "that this is how our citizens should treat their opponents, and that they should treat the non-Greeks the way Greeks now treat one another."

"Shall we lay down this law too for the guardians, then: not to ravage land 471c or burn houses?"

"Let's lay it down," he said, "and say that this and what came before are good."

"But really, Socrates, I think that if someone lets you talk about things like this, you'll never get around to what you pushed aside earlier before saying all this: whether this constitution can come into being, and how it could ever possibly do so. I grant that if it did come about, everything would be good for the city where it did, and I'll even add what you leave out: they'd fight their enemies 471d best, because they'd be least likely to desert one another, since they'd know one another and call one another by these names—brothers, fathers, sons. And if the women joined the campaign too, whether in the same ranks or posted in the rear, to frighten the enemy or in case help were ever needed, I know that this would make them altogether invincible. And I can see all the good things at home that are being left out, all the good things they would have. 471e "But take it that I grant all this—that these things and countless others would be theirs, if this constitution came into being—and say no more about it. Let's now try to convince ourselves of just this: that it's possible, and how it's possible. The rest we can let go."

THE THIRD WAVE: PHILOSOPHER-KINGS

Socrates says cities will not be well governed until philosophers rule, and defines the philosopher.

SOCRATES 472a "That's quite a sudden raid you've made on my argument," I said, "and you've no sympathy for my dawdling. Perhaps you don't realize that I've barely escaped two waves, and now you're bringing on the biggest and most difficult one, the third. When you see and hear it, you'll surely forgive me, and see that I had good reason to hesitate and be afraid to state so paradoxical an idea and try to examine it."

"The more you talk like this," he said, "the less we'll let you off 472b from telling us how this constitution can come into being. So speak, and don't waste time."[12]

"Well then," I said, "first we must remember that we got here by looking for what justice is like, and injustice."

"We must. But what of it?" he said.

"Nothing. But if we find what justice is like, will we also insist that the just man must not differ from it in any way, but be in every respect such as justice 472c is? Or will we be content if he comes as close to it as possible and has a greater share in it than anyone else?"

"That's it," he said. "We'll be content."

"It was for the sake of a model, then," I said, "that we were looking for what justice itself is like, and for what the perfectly just man would be like, if he existed; and likewise for injustice and the most unjust man. We wanted to look at them, at how they appear to us in point of happiness and its opposite, so that we'd be compelled to agree about ourselves as well: that whoever is most 472d like them will have a lot most like theirs. It wasn't in order to prove that these things could come into being."

"That's true," he said.

"Do you think a painter would be any less good if he painted a model of what the most beautiful human being would be like, and rendered everything in the picture well, but couldn't prove that such a man could actually exist?"

"By Zeus, I don't," he said.

"Well, weren't we too, as we say, making a model 472e of a good city in words?"

"Certainly."

"Then do you think what we said is any less good because we can't prove that it's possible to run a city as we described?"

"Of course not," he said.

"That, then, is the truth of it," I said. "But if, to please you, I must also put my mind to proving how and in what respect it

would be most possible, then for the purposes of that proof, agree with me on the same points again."

"Which ones?"

"Can anything be done as it's said? Or is it the nature of doing to have less hold on truth than saying does, even if some people don't think so? Do you agree with this or not?"

"I agree," he said.

473a "Then don't force me to show that what we described in words must come about in fact exactly as described. If we can manage to discover how a city could be run as nearly as possible in the way we've described, say that we've 473b discovered that the things you demand are possible. Or won't you be content to get that much? I would be."

"So would I," he said.

"Next, it seems, we should try to seek out and show what is being done badly in cities now, which keeps them from being run this way, and what is the smallest change that would bring a city to this kind of constitution—preferably one change; if not, two; if not, as few in number and as slight in effect as possible." 473c

"Absolutely," he said.

"Well," I said, "I think we can show that with one change the city would be transformed—not a small or easy change, but a possible one."

"What change?" he said.

"I've now come," I said, "to the very thing we likened to the biggest wave. But it will be said all the same, even if it's going to drown me in ridicule and contempt, like a wave that quite literally bursts out laughing. Consider what I'm about to say."

"Say it," he said.

"Unless," I said, "either philosophers rule as kings in 473d cities, or those now called kings and potentates genuinely and adequately practice philosophy—unless political power and philosophy coincide, and the many natures that now pursue one

12 The first two "waves" were the proposals that women share the guardians' work and that the guardians hold wives and children in common.

apart from the other are forcibly barred from doing so—there is no end to evils, my dear Glaucon, for cities, nor, I think, for the human race. 473e Nor will this constitution we've now described in words ever before then grow to the extent possible and see the light of the sun. This is what has long made me hesitate to speak, seeing how very contrary to common opinion it would sound. For it's hard to see that no other city could be happy, either in private or in public life."

And he said, "Socrates, what a word and argument you've let fly! Now that you've said it, you can expect a great many people, and 474a not negligible ones, to throw off their cloaks, so to speak, this very moment, and, stripped for action, grab whatever weapon comes to hand and charge at you full tilt, ready to do who knows what. If you don't fend them off with argument and escape, you'll really pay the price of being laughed to scorn."

"Well, aren't you the one to blame for this?" I said.

"And a good thing I did," he said. "But I won't betray you. I'll defend you with what I can, and what I can offer is goodwill and encouragement, and perhaps I'd give you more fitting answers 474b than someone else would. So, with a helper like that, try to show the unbelievers that things are as you say."

"I must try," I said, "since you're offering such a mighty alliance. Now if we're going to escape the people you mention, I think we need to define for them whom we mean by the philosophers we dare to say must rule. That way, once they're clearly marked out, one can defend oneself by showing 474c that some people are suited by nature to take up philosophy and to lead in a city, while the rest are suited to leave it alone and follow the leader."

"Now would be the time to define them," he said.

"Come on, then, follow me this way, and let's see if we can somehow explain it adequately."

"Lead on," he said.

"Will I need to remind you, then," I said, "or do you remember that when we say someone loves something, he must, if the

phrase is used correctly, clearly not love one part of it and not another, but cherish all of it?" 474d

"It seems you'll need to remind me," he said. "I don't quite get it."

"Someone else might say what you're saying, Glaucon," I said, "but it doesn't suit a man given to love to forget that all boys in their bloom somehow sting and stir a man who loves boys and is given to love, since they seem worthy of his attention and his affection. Isn't that how you all behave toward the beautiful ones? One has a snub nose, and you'll praise him as 'charming'; another's hooked nose you call 'regal'; the one 474e in between, you say, is perfectly proportioned; the dark ones look manly, and the fair ones are 'children of the gods.' And 'honey-colored'—do you think that name is the creation of anyone but a lover who uses pet names and has no trouble with a sallow complexion, so long as it comes with the bloom of youth?"

"In short, you make every excuse 475a and use every expression so as not to reject any boy in the flower of youth."

"If you want to make me your example of what lovers do," he said, "I agree, for the sake of the argument."

"And what about wine lovers?" I said. "Don't you see them doing the very same thing, welcoming every wine on any pretext?"

"Very much so."

"And lovers of honor, I think, you can see: if they can't be generals, they command a company, and if they can't be honored by greater 475b and more distinguished people, they're content to be honored by lesser and meaner ones, since it's honor as a whole that they desire."

"Quite so."

"Then say yes or no to this. When we say someone desires something, will we say he desires the whole of that kind of thing, or one part and not another?"

"The whole," he said.

"Then we'll say the philosopher, too, desires wisdom—not one part and not another, but all of it?"

"True."

"Then someone who's fussy about what he studies, especially 475c when he's young and has no way yet of telling what's useful and what isn't, we won't call a lover of learning or a philosopher —just as we say that someone fussy about his food isn't hungry and doesn't desire food, and isn't a lover of food but a poor eater."

"And we'll be right to say so."

"But the one who's readily willing to taste every kind of learning, who goes to his studies gladly and can't get enough—him we'll rightly call a philosopher, won't we?" 475d

And Glaucon said, "Then you'll have many strange people of that sort. All the lovers of sights seem to me to be like that, because they enjoy learning things; and the lovers of sounds are a very strange lot to count among philosophers. They'd never willingly attend a discussion or spend time that way, but as if they'd hired out their ears to listen to every chorus, they run around at the Dionysia, never missing one, whether in the towns or in the villages. Are we going to call all these people, and others who learn such things, 475e and the practitioners of the minor arts, philosophers?"

"Not at all," I said, "though they're like philosophers."[13]

"Then who are the true ones?" he said.

"Those who love the sight of truth," I said.

"That's right, too," he said. "But what do you mean by it?"

"It wouldn't be at all easy to explain to someone else," I said, "but I think you'll agree with me on this."

"On what?"

"Since the beautiful is the opposite of the ugly, they're two."

"Of course."

"And since they're two, each is one?"

"That too."

13 The Dionysia were festivals of Dionysus, held both in Athens and in the country villages, featuring choral and dramatic performances.

KNOWLEDGE AND OPINION

Socrates distinguishes knowledge of the forms from opinion about the many changing things.

SOCRATES 476a "And the same account holds for just and unjust, good and bad, and all the forms: each is itself one, but because they show up everywhere in association with actions and bodies and one another, each appears to be many."

"You're right," he said.

"Well, this is where I draw the line," I said. "On one side I put those you were just talking about, the lovers of sights, the lovers of crafts, and the practical people; 476b and on the other, the ones our argument is about, the only ones who could rightly be called philosophers."

"What do you mean?" he said.

"The lovers of sounds and sights, I suppose," I said, "delight in beautiful sounds and colors and shapes and everything made from such things, but their mind is incapable of seeing and delighting in the nature of the beautiful itself."

"Yes, that's certainly how it is," he said.

"And those who are able to approach the beautiful itself and see it by itself—wouldn't they be rare?" 476c

"Very much so."

"So someone who believes in beautiful things but doesn't believe in beauty itself, and can't follow if someone leads him to knowledge of it—does he seem to you to be living in a dream or awake? Consider: isn't this what dreaming is, whether one is asleep or awake—taking something that is like something else to be not a likeness but the very thing it resembles?"

"I'd certainly say," he said, "that such a person is dreaming."

"And what about the opposite case: someone who believes in something beautiful itself, 476d and can discern both it and the things that participate in it, and takes neither the participants to be it nor it to be the participants—does he seem to you to be living awake or in a dream?"

"Very much awake," he said.

"Then we'd be right to call this man's thought knowledge, since he knows, and the other's opinion, since he opines?"

"Certainly."

"What if this person, who we say opines but doesn't know, gets angry with us and disputes that what we say is true? 476e Will we have some way to soothe him and gently persuade him, while hiding from him that he isn't quite sound?"

"We certainly must," he said.

"Come on, then, consider what we'll say to him. Or would you like us to question him like this, telling him that if he knows something, nobody begrudges it—on the contrary, we'd be glad to see someone who knows something? 'But tell us this: does the one who knows know something or nothing?' You answer me on his behalf."

"I'll answer," he said, "that he knows something."

"Something that is, or something that is not?"

"Something that is. How could something that is not be known?"

"So we're sure enough of this, even if we were to examine it from more angles: what completely is, is completely knowable, and what in no way is, is in every way unknowable?"

"Quite sure enough."

"Very well. And if something were such as both to be and not to be, wouldn't it lie between what purely is and what in no way is?"

"Between."

477a "Then since knowledge was set over what is, and ignorance of necessity over what is not, for what lies between we must also look for something between 477b ignorance and knowledge, if there is such a thing?"

"Certainly."

"Now do we say that opinion is something?"

"Of course."

"A different power from knowledge, or the same?"

"Different."

"So opinion is set over one thing and knowledge over another, each according to its own power."

"Yes."

"Now knowledge is naturally set over what is, to know what is as it is? But no—I think we first need to make a distinction."

"What distinction?" 477c

"We'll say that powers are a class of the things that are, by which we can do what we can do, and by which anything else can do whatever it can. For example, I call sight and hearing powers, if you understand the kind of thing I mean."

"I understand," he said.

"Then hear how they strike me. In a power I don't see any color or shape or anything of the sort, as I do in many other things, which I look at to distinguish, in my own mind, some things from others. In a power 477d I look only to what it's set over and what it accomplishes, and that's how I've come to call each of them a power: the one set over the same thing and accomplishing the same thing I call the same power, and the one set over something different and accomplishing something different I call a different one. What about you? How do you do it?"

"The same way," he said.

"Come back to this point, then, my excellent friend," I said. "Knowledge: do you say that it is itself a kind of power, or what class do you put it in?"

"In that one," he said, "and it's the strongest of all the powers." 477e

"And what about opinion? Shall we assign it to power, or to some other kind?"

"To no other kind," he said. "What enables us to form opinions is nothing other than opinion."

"But a little while ago you agreed that knowledge and opinion are not the same."

"How could anyone with any sense," he said, "treat what is infallible as the same as what is not infallible?"

"Good," I said. "So clearly we agree that opinion is something other than knowledge." 478a

"Something other."

"Then each of them, having a different power, is by nature directed at a different thing?"

"Necessarily."

"Knowledge, I take it, is directed at what is, to know what is as it is?"

"Yes."

"And opinion, we say, at forming opinions?"

"Yes."

"About the very same thing that knowledge knows? Will the same thing be both knowable and an object of opinion? Or is that impossible?"

"Impossible," he said, "given what we've agreed. If different powers are by nature directed at different things, and both of these, opinion 478b and knowledge, are powers, and each is different, as we say, then it follows that the knowable and the object of opinion can't be the same."

"Then if what is is knowable, the object of opinion would be something other than what is?"

"Something other."

"Well then, does opinion have what is not as its object? Or is it impossible even to form an opinion about what is not? Think about it. Doesn't someone who forms an opinion bring his opinion to bear on something? Or is it possible to form an opinion, and yet form an opinion about nothing?"

"Impossible."

"So someone who forms an opinion forms an opinion about some one thing?"

"Yes."

"But surely what is not would most correctly be called not some one thing but 478c nothing?"

"Certainly."

"And to what is not we necessarily assigned ignorance, and to what is, knowledge?"

"Rightly," he said.

"So one forms opinions neither about what is nor about what is not?"

"No."

"Then opinion would be neither ignorance nor knowledge?"

"It seems not."

"Then does it lie outside them, surpassing either knowledge in clarity or ignorance in obscurity?"

"Neither."

"Then does opinion strike you," I said, "as darker than knowledge but brighter than ignorance?"

"Very much so," he said. 478d

"And it lies within the two of them?"

"Yes."

"Then opinion would be between them."

"Exactly."

"Now didn't we say earlier that if something turned up that both is and is not at the same time, it would lie between what purely is and what in every way is not, and that neither knowledge nor ignorance would be directed at it, but whatever in turn turned up between ignorance and knowledge?"

"Right."

"And now what we call opinion has turned up between them?"

"It has." 478e

"So what's left for us, it seems, is to find the thing that shares in both, in being and in not being, and couldn't rightly be called purely either one; so that, if it turns up, we can justly call it the object of opinion, assigning extremes to extremes and what is between to what is between. Isn't that so?"

"It is."

"With this laid down, then, let him tell me, I'll say, let him answer me, 479a this fine fellow who thinks there is no beautiful itself, no form of beauty itself that stays always the same in the same respects, but believes in the many beautiful things—that lover of sights who can't bear it if anyone says that the beautiful is one, or the just, and so on. 'My excellent friend,' we'll say, 'of

these many beautiful things, is there one that won't also appear ugly? Of the just things, one that won't appear unjust? Of the pious things, one that won't appear impious?'" 479b

"No," he said, "they're bound to appear somehow both beautiful and ugly, and the same goes for everything else you ask about."

"What about the many doubles? Do they appear any less halves than doubles?"

"Not at all."

"And big and small things, light and heavy ones—will they be called by whatever names we give them any more than by the opposites?"

"No," he said, "each of them will always have something of both."

"Then is each of the many things any more what someone says it is than it is not?"

"They're like the double meanings people play with at dinner parties," he said, 479c "and the children's riddle about the eunuch hitting the bat—what he hit it with and what it was sitting on. These things too have a double meaning, and you can't firmly conceive any of them as being or as not being, or as both, or as neither."

"Then do you know what to do with them," I said, "or where you could put them better than between being and not being? They surely won't appear darker than what is not, so as to be more not, 479d or brighter than what is, so as to be more."[14]

"Very true," he said.

"Then we've found, it seems, that the many conventions of the many about the beautiful and the rest roll around somewhere between what is not and what purely is."

"We have."

14 The riddle ran roughly: a man who was not a man, seeing and not seeing a bird that was not a bird, sitting on wood that was not wood, hit and did not hit it with a stone that was not a stone (a half-blind eunuch, a bat, a reed, a pumice stone).

"But we agreed beforehand that if anything of that sort turned up, it should be called an object of opinion, not of knowledge: the wanderer in between, caught by the power in between."

"We did agree." 479e

"Those, then, who look at many beautiful things but don't see the beautiful itself, and can't follow someone else who leads them to it, who look at many just things but not the just itself, and so on for everything—we'll say that they have opinions about everything but know nothing of what they have opinions about."

"Necessarily," he said.

"And what about those who look at each of the things themselves, which are always the same in the same respects? Won't we say they know, and don't merely have opinions?"

"That's necessary too."

"And won't we say that these welcome and love the things 480a that knowledge is about, and the others the things opinion is about? Or don't we remember saying that the others love and look at beautiful sounds and colors and things of that kind, but can't even bear the idea that the beautiful itself is something?"

"We remember."

"Then will we be striking a false note if we call them lovers of opinion rather than lovers of wisdom? And will they be very angry with us if we speak that way?"

"Not if they take my advice," he said. "It isn't right to be angry at the truth."[15]

"Then those who welcome each thing itself that is must be called lovers of wisdom, and not lovers of opinion?"

"Absolutely."

15 "Lovers of opinion" (*philodoxoi*) plays on *philosophoi*, "lovers of wisdom"; *doxa*, "opinion," can also mean reputation.

Book VI

The philosopher's nature, and the sun.

SOCRATES 484a "So, Glaucon," I said, "after going through a long argument, we've managed, with some difficulty, to bring to light who the philosophers are and who the non-philosophers are."

"Perhaps," he said, "it wasn't easy to do in a short one."

"Apparently not," I said. "At any rate, I think it would have come out still better if we had only this to discuss, and didn't have many other things left to go through if we're to see how a just life differs 484b from an unjust one."

"So what comes next for us?" he said.

"What else," I said, "but the next step? Since philosophers are those who can grasp what is always the same in the same respects, while those who can't, but wander among many things of every sort, are not philosophers, which of them should be the leaders of a city?"

"What could we say about it," he said, "that would be reasonable?"

"Whichever of them," I said, "appear capable of guarding the laws and practices of cities, those are the ones we should appoint 484c as guardians."

"Right," he said.

"And is this clear," I said, "whether a guardian who is to keep watch over anything should be blind or sharp-sighted?"

"Of course it's clear," he said.

"Well, do you think the blind differ at all from those who are really deprived of the knowledge of each thing that is, who have no clear model in their soul, and can't, like painters, look to

what is most true, always referring back to it [484d] and studying it as closely as possible, and so establish here too conventions about what is beautiful and just and good, when they need establishing, and guard and preserve those already established?"

"No, by Zeus," he said, "they don't differ much."

"Shall we make these our guardians, then, rather than those who have come to know each thing that is, and who don't lag behind the others in experience or fall short of them in any other part of excellence?"

"It would be absurd," he said, "to choose the others, if these didn't fall short in other respects, since in this very point, which is perhaps the most important, they would have the advantage."

"Then shouldn't we say how the same people will be able to have both this and that?"

"Certainly."

[485a] "Well, as we said at the beginning of this discussion, we must first understand their nature. And I think that if we reach adequate agreement about that, we'll also agree that the same people can have both, and that no one but these should be leaders of cities."

"How so?"

"Let's take this as agreed about philosophic natures: [485b] that they always love any learning that reveals to them something of that being which always is, and doesn't wander between coming to be and passing away."

"Let it be agreed."

"And further," I said, "that they love the whole of it, and don't willingly give up any part of it, small or larger, more valued or less, as we described earlier in the case of lovers of honor and people in love."

"You're right," he said.

"Next, then, consider whether those who are to be as we described must also have this in their nature besides [485c] the rest."

"What?"

"Truthfulness: never willingly accepting what is false, but hating it, and cherishing the truth."

"That's likely," he said.

"Not just likely, my friend: it's entirely necessary that someone who is by nature in love with someone should cherish everything related and akin to his beloved."

"Right," he said.

"And could you find anything more akin to wisdom than truth?"

"How could I?" he said.

"Then can the same nature be a lover of wisdom and 485d a lover of falsehood?"

"Not at all."

"So the real lover of learning must, from earliest youth, reach out as far as he can for every kind of truth."

"Absolutely."

"But we surely know that when someone's desires lean strongly toward one thing, they are weaker toward everything else, like a stream channeled off in that direction."

"Of course."

"So when someone's desires have flowed toward learning and everything of that kind, I think they will be concerned with the pleasure of the soul itself by itself, and will leave behind the pleasures that come through the body—if he is a philosopher not in pretense but 485e in truth."

"That's quite necessary."

"Such a person will be moderate, then, and not at all a lover of money. The things for which money is so eagerly pursued, at such great expense, are for anyone but him to take seriously."

"Yes."

486a "And there's surely this to consider too, when you're going to judge whether a nature is philosophic or not."

"What?"

"That you don't miss any trace of meanness in it. Pettiness is surely the thing most opposed to a soul that is always going to reach out for the whole and for everything, divine and human."

"Very true," he said.

"Then if a mind has grandeur and contemplates all time and all being, do you think it possible for such a person to regard human life as anything great?"

"Impossible," he said. 486b

"So such a person won't think death anything terrible either?"

"Not in the least."

"Then a cowardly and mean nature, it seems, would have no share in true philosophy."

"I don't think so."

"Well then, could an orderly person, who isn't a lover of money, or mean, or a braggart, or a coward, ever turn out hard to deal with, or unjust?"

"He couldn't."

"So when you're examining whether a soul is philosophic or not, you'll look at this too, right from its youth: whether it is just and gentle, or unsociable and savage."

"Certainly." 486c

"Nor, I think, will you leave out this."

"What?"

"Whether it learns easily or with difficulty. Or do you ever expect anyone to be properly fond of something that pains him to do, and in which he barely accomplishes a little?"

"That couldn't happen."

"And what if he couldn't retain anything he learned, being full of forgetfulness? Could he avoid being empty of knowledge?"

"How could he?"

"Laboring to no profit, don't you think he'll be forced in the end to hate both himself and that activity?"

"Of course." 486d

"Then let's never admit a forgetful soul among those who are properly philosophic; let's insist on looking for one with a good memory."

"Absolutely."

"And surely we would say that an unmusical and graceless nature tends in only one direction: toward disproportion."

"Of course."

"And do you think truth is akin to disproportion or to proportion?"

"To proportion."

"Then, in addition to the rest, let's look for a mind that is by nature well proportioned and graceful, whose innate disposition will make it easy to lead toward the form of each thing that is."

"Of course." 486e

"Well then? Do you think that the qualities we've gone through are in any way not necessary, or not bound up with one another, for a soul that is to have an adequate and complete share in what is?"

"They're absolutely necessary," he said.

487a "Then is there any way you could find fault with a pursuit that no one could ever practice adequately unless he were by nature good at remembering, quick to learn, high-minded, graceful, a friend and kinsman of truth, justice, courage and moderation?"

"Not even Momus," he said, "could find fault with that."

"Well," I said, "when such people have been perfected by education and age, wouldn't you entrust the city to them alone?" 487b
1

WHY PHILOSOPHERS SEEM USELESS

Adeimantus objects that philosophers are useless, and Socrates answers with the image of the ship.

SOCRATES "Socrates," said Adeimantus, "no one could argue against you on these points. But this is what happens to the people who hear you say what you're saying now, every time. They think that because they're inexperienced at question and answer, they're led a little astray by the argument at each question, and when the little steps are added up at the end of the discussion, a big slip comes to light, contrary to what they said at

1 Momus: the personification of blame and fault-finding, who criticized even the works of the gods.

first. And just as, against people who are clever at draughts, the unskilled players end up hemmed in, with no move to [487c] make, so they too end up hemmed in and with nothing to say, by this other kind of draughts, played not with counters but with words. Yet the truth isn't any more on that side for all that. I say this with an eye to the present case. "For right now someone might say to you that in words he can't oppose you at each question you ask, but in fact he can see that of those who launch into philosophy—not those who take it up while young for the sake of their education and then [487d] leave it, but those who spend longer in it—most become very odd, not to say thoroughly wicked, while even those who seem the most decent are still affected by the pursuit you praise to this extent: they become useless to their cities."

When I heard this, I said, "Do you think the people who say this are lying?"

"I don't know," he said, "but I'd be glad to hear what you think."

"You'd hear that to me they seem to be telling the truth." [487e]

"Then how can it be right," he said, "to say that cities will have no rest from their evils until philosophers rule in them, when we agree that philosophers are useless to them?"

"You're asking a question," I said, "that needs an answer given through an image."

"And you, I suppose," he said, "aren't in the habit of talking in images!"

"Very well," I said. "Are you making fun of me, after pushing me into an argument so [488a] hard to prove? Anyway, listen to the image, so that you can see even better how hard I have to strain for my images. What the most decent people suffer in their relation to their cities is so harsh that there is no single thing that has suffered anything like it. To make an image of it and speak in their defense, one has to assemble it from many sources, the way painters paint goat-stags and such creatures by mixing things together.[2] "Imagine something like this happening,

2 Goat-stags: fantastic hybrid beasts familiar from decorated textiles and pottery.

whether on many ships or on one: "There is a shipowner who is bigger and 488b stronger than everyone else on board, but somewhat deaf, similarly short-sighted, and with a knowledge of seamanship to match. The sailors are quarreling with one another over the navigation, each thinking he ought to navigate, though he has never learned the art and can't point to a teacher or to a time when he learned it. What's more, they claim it can't even be taught, and they're ready to cut to pieces anyone who says it can. They're forever crowding around the 488c shipowner himself, begging him and doing everything they can to get him to hand them the tiller. Sometimes, if they fail to persuade him and others succeed instead, they kill the others or throw them overboard. Then they tie up their noble shipowner with mandrake or drink or something else, take command of the ship, help themselves to its stores, and, drinking and feasting, sail the way you'd expect such people to sail. On top of this they praise anyone 488d who is clever at helping them take command, by persuading or forcing the shipowner, calling him a real seaman, a navigator, a man who knows ships; anyone who isn't like that they denounce as useless. They don't even understand that the true navigator must pay attention to the year and the seasons, the sky, the stars, the winds, and everything that belongs to his art, if he is really going to be fit to command a ship. As for how he will take the helm, 488e whether anyone wants him to or not, they don't think it possible to acquire an art or practice of that and, at the same time, the art of navigation.

"When this is what goes on aboard ships, don't you think the real navigator would be called a stargazer, 489a a babbler, and useless to them by those who sail on ships run this way?"

"Very much so," said Adeimantus.

"I don't think," I said, "that you need to see the image examined in detail to see that it resembles the attitude of cities toward true philosophers. I think you understand what I mean."

"I certainly do," he said.

"First, then, teach this image to the man who is surprised that philosophers aren't honored in cities, and try to persuade him that it would be far more surprising 489b if they were."

"I will teach him," he said.

"And tell him he's right that the most decent people in philosophy are useless to the many. But tell him to blame their uselessness on those who don't make use of them, and not on the decent ones. It isn't natural for a navigator to beg the sailors to be ruled by him, or for the wise to go to the doors of the rich; whoever came up with that witticism was lying. The truth of the matter is that when someone is sick, rich or poor, he has 489c to go to the doctor's door, and anyone who needs to be ruled must go to the door of the one who can rule. It isn't for the ruler, if he is really any use, to beg those he rules to be ruled. You won't go wrong if you liken our present political rulers to the sailors we were just describing, and those they call useless stargazing babblers to the true navigators."[3]

"Quite right," he said.

"For these reasons, then, and in these conditions, it isn't easy for the best pursuit to be well thought of by those who pursue the opposite. 489d But by far the greatest and most damaging slander comes upon philosophy through those who claim to pursue it—the ones you had in mind when you said that philosophy's accuser claims most of those who go in for it are thoroughly wicked, and the most decent are useless. And I agreed that you were telling the truth, didn't I?"

"Yes."

"Well, we've gone through the reason why the decent ones are useless?"

"We certainly have."

"Next, then, shall we go through why the wickedness of the majority is inevitable, and try to show, if we can, that philosophy isn't to blame for this either?" 489e

"Certainly."

3 The witticism is attributed to the poet Simonides, who remarked that the wise are found at the doors of the rich.

"Then let's listen and speak, going back in memory to where we described the nature that someone who is to be fine and good must 490a have by birth. Leading him, if you remember, was first of all truth, which he had to pursue wholly and in every way; otherwise he would be a braggart with no share at all in true philosophy."

"Yes, that's what was said."

"Isn't this one point, at least, flatly at odds with current opinion about him?"

"Very much so," he said.

"Then won't we be making a reasonable defense if we say that the real lover of learning is naturally inclined to strive toward what is, and doesn't 490b linger among the many particular things that are believed to be, but goes on, without losing his edge or giving up his love, until he grasps the nature of each thing that is, itself, with the part of the soul fitted to grasp such a thing—and the part fitted to it is the part akin to it; and that, having drawn near to what really is and coupled with it, and begotten intelligence and truth, he knows, and truly lives and is nourished, and only then is released from his labor pains, but not before?"

"That would be as reasonable a defense as possible," he said.

"Well then? Will such a person have any part in loving falsehood, or will he do quite the opposite and hate it?" 490c

"Hate it," he said.

"And when truth leads the way, I don't think we'd ever say that a chorus of evils follows."

"How could it?"

"Rather, a healthy and just character, with moderation following too."

"Right," he said.

"And why should I marshal the rest of the chorus of the philosophic nature all over again from the start? You remember, I suppose, that courage, high-mindedness, ease of learning and memory turned out to belong to these people. You objected that anyone would be compelled to 490d agree with what we're saying,

but that if he left the arguments aside and looked at the very people the argument is about, he would say he saw that some of them were useless, and most of them bad with every kind of badness. Looking into the cause of this slander, we have now arrived at the question of why most of them are bad; and that is why we have taken up the nature of true philosophers again and have had to define it." 490e

HOW THE PHILOSOPHIC NATURE IS CORRUPTED

Socrates explains how gifted natures are corrupted by the crowd and how impostors disgrace philosophy.

SOCRATES "That's so," he said.

"Then we must look at how this nature is corrupted," I said, "how it's ruined in many people, while only a few escape—the ones people call not wicked but useless. And after 491a that, we must look in turn at the natures that imitate it and set themselves up in its pursuit: what sort of souls they are that, arriving at a pursuit they're unworthy of, one too big for them, go wrong in many ways and have attached to philosophy, everywhere and in everyone's eyes, the reputation you describe."

"What corruptions do you mean?" he said.

"I'll try to go through them for you," I said, "if I can. I think everyone will agree with us on this much: a nature like this, with everything we just prescribed for it if it is to become a complete 491b philosopher, is born rarely among human beings, and in few. Don't you think so?"

"Very much."

"Then consider how many and how great are the forces that destroy these few."

"What are they?"

"The most surprising thing of all to hear is that each of the qualities of that nature which we praised destroys the soul that has it and drags it away from philosophy. I mean courage, moderation and all the rest we went through."

"That's strange to hear," he said. 491c

"What's more," I said, "besides these, all the so-called good things corrupt it and drag it away: beauty, wealth, bodily strength, powerful family connections in the city, and everything that goes with them. You have the general outline of what I mean."

"I do," he said, "and I'd be glad to learn more precisely what you mean."

"Then grasp the whole thing correctly," I said, "and it will be perfectly clear to you, and what I said about them just now won't seem strange."

"So what are you telling me to do?" he said. 491d

"With every seed or growing thing," I said, "whether plant or animal, we know that if it doesn't get the nourishment, climate or place that suits it, the more vigorous it is, the more it falls short of what it should be. For bad is surely more opposed to good than to what is not good."

"Of course."

"So it makes sense, I think, that the best nature, when it gets nurture alien to it, turns out worse than an inferior one."

"It does." 491e

"Then, Adeimantus," I said, "shall we say the same of souls: that the most gifted, if they get a bad upbringing, become exceptionally bad? Or do you think great crimes and unmixed wickedness come from an inferior nature rather than from a vigorous one ruined by its upbringing, and that a weak nature will ever be the cause of great things, either good or bad?"

"No," he said, "it's as you say."

492a "Then the nature we assigned to the philosopher, if it gets the learning that suits it, must grow and arrive at every excellence; but if it is sown and planted and grows up in surroundings that don't suit it, it will arrive at every opposite, unless one of the gods happens to come to its rescue. Or do you too believe, like the many, that some young people are corrupted by sophists, and that there are private sophists who corrupt them to any extent worth mentioning? Don't you think rather that the people who say this are themselves the greatest 492b sophists, who edu-

cate most thoroughly and turn out young and old, men and women, to be just the sort they want?"

"When?" he said.

"When," I said, "many of them sit crowded together in assemblies, law courts, theaters, army camps or any other public gathering of the crowd, and with a great uproar censure some of the things said or done and praise others, both to excess, shouting and clapping, while 492c the rocks and the place around them echo back and double the uproar of blame and praise. In a situation like that, what do you think becomes of a young man's heart, as the saying goes? What private education will hold out for him, and not be swept away by such blame and praise and go off, carried by the current wherever it carries it? Won't he call the same things fine and shameful as they do, pursue what they pursue, and become just like them?" 492d

"He'll have no choice at all, Socrates," he said.

"And yet," I said, "we haven't yet mentioned the strongest compulsion."

"What's that?" he said.

"The one these educators and sophists add in deeds when they fail to persuade with words. Or don't you know that they punish anyone who isn't persuaded with loss of civic rights, with fines, and with death?"

"They most certainly do," he said.

"Then what other sophist, or what private teachings, do you think will prevail when pulling against them?" 492e

"None, I think," he said.

"No," I said, "and even to try is great folly.

"No character ever does, ever has, or ever will turn out differently with respect to excellence by being educated against the education these people give—no human character, that is, my friend. The divine, as the proverb says, we should leave out of the account. You can be quite sure that whatever is saved 493a and turns out as it should in cities constituted as they are now, you won't be wrong to say a divine dispensation saved it."

"That's how it seems to me too," he said.

"Then here's something else you should think, besides," I said.

"What's that?"

"That each of the private teachers who work for fees—the ones these people call sophists and regard as their rivals—teaches nothing but the convictions of the many, the opinions they hold when they're gathered together, and calls this wisdom. "It's as if someone were rearing a great, powerful beast and had learned its moods and 493b appetites: how to approach it and where to touch it, when it's most savage or most gentle and what makes it so, what sounds it tends to make on each occasion, and what sounds from someone else soothe it or make it wild. Having learned all this through long association and time spent, he calls it wisdom, organizes it into a craft, and turns to teaching it, though he knows nothing in truth about which of these convictions and appetites is fine or shameful, 493c good or bad, just or unjust. He applies all these names according to the great animal's opinions, calling what pleases it good and what annoys it bad. He has no other account of them; he calls what's necessary just and fine, but he has never seen how much the nature of the necessary really differs from that of the good, and he couldn't show it to anyone else. "Wouldn't a man like that, by Zeus, seem to you a strange educator?"

"He would to me," he said.

"Well, does he seem any different from the man who thinks it wisdom to have figured out the moods and pleasures of the many and 493d varied people gathered together, whether in painting or music or, for that matter, in politics? If someone associates with the many and shows them a poem, or some other piece of craftsmanship, or a service to the city, making the many his masters beyond what's necessary, the so-called necessity of Diomedes will compel him to produce whatever they praise. But as for these things being truly good and fine—have you ever yet

heard any of them give an argument for that which wasn't ridiculous?" 493e 4

"No, and I don't suppose I ever will," he said.

"Keep all this in mind, then, and recall the earlier point. Can the multitude possibly accept or believe that the beautiful itself exists, rather than the many beautiful things, or each thing itself 494a rather than the many particular things?"

"Not in the least," he said.

"Then it's impossible," I said, "for the multitude to be philosophical."

"Impossible."

"So those who do philosophy are bound to be criticized by them."

"Bound to be."

"And by those private individuals who associate with the crowd and want to please it."

"Clearly."

"Given all this, what salvation do you see for a philosophical nature, so that it stays in its pursuit and reaches the end? Think about it in light 494b of what we said before. We agreed that quickness at learning, memory, courage and high-mindedness belong to this nature."

"Yes."

"Then won't such a person be first in everything right from childhood, especially if his body grows to match his soul?"

"Why wouldn't he?" he said.

"And when he gets older, I imagine, his family and fellow citizens will want to use him for their own affairs."

"Of course." 494c

"So they'll lie at his feet with requests and honors, getting hold of his future power in advance and flattering it ahead of time."

"That's certainly how it usually goes," he said.

"So what do you think such a person will do in such circumstances," I said, "especially if he happens to be from a great city,

rich and well-born in it, and handsome and tall besides? Won't he be filled with boundless hope, believing he'll be capable of managing the affairs of Greeks and non-Greeks alike, 494d and won't he exalt himself on that account, filling up with posturing and empty pride, without any sense?"

"He certainly will," he said.

"Now if someone gently approaches a person in this condition and tells him the truth—that there's no sense in him, that he needs it, and that it can't be acquired unless he slaves to acquire it—do you think it will be easy for him to listen, surrounded by so many bad influences?"

"Far from it," he said.

"But suppose," I said, "that because of his good nature and his kinship 494e with the arguments he does somehow perceive something, and is turned and drawn toward philosophy. What do we think those people will do who believe they're losing his usefulness and his companionship? Won't they stop at nothing, in word or deed, both with him, so that he won't be persuaded, and with the one persuading him, so that he won't be able to—plotting against him in private and hauling him into court in public?"

"They're bound to," he said.

"So is there any way such a person will do philosophy?"

"Hardly."

495a "So you see," I said, "that we weren't wrong to say that the very components of the philosophical nature, when it gets a bad upbringing, are in a way responsible for its falling away from the pursuit—and so are the so-called goods, wealth and all such resources?"

"No, we weren't," he said. "What we said was right."

"This, then, my remarkable friend," I said, "is the ruin and corruption, 495b so great and of such a kind, of the best nature with respect to the best pursuit—a nature that's rare enough anyway, as we say. And it's from among these men that there come

4 "The necessity of Diomedes" was a proverbial phrase for irresistible compulsion; its origin was disputed even in antiquity.

both those who do the greatest harm to cities and to individuals, and those who do them good, if they happen to be swept in that direction. A small nature never does anything great to anyone, individual or city."

"Very true," he said.

"So the people she most belongs with fall away like this, 495c leaving philosophy deserted and unfulfilled. They themselves live a life that doesn't suit them and isn't true, while others, unworthy of her, move in on her as if she were an orphan with no kin, and disgrace her and fasten reproaches on her—the very ones you say her critics make: that of those who spend time with her, some are worthless and most deserve all sorts of bad things."

"Yes," he said, "that's certainly what people say."

"And it's natural that they say it," I said. "Other little men see this territory emptying out, though it's full of fine 495d names and pretensions, and like people who escape from prison into temples, they gladly leap out of their crafts into philosophy—those, that is, who happen to be cleverest at their own little craft. For even faring as she does, philosophy still keeps a grander prestige than the other crafts, and many people with imperfect natures aspire to it: people whose bodies have been deformed by their crafts and trades, and whose souls 495e have likewise been cramped and crushed by their menial work. Or isn't that inevitable?"

"It certainly is," he said.

"Do you think," I said, "that they look any different from a bald little metalworker who's come into some money, just released from prison, freshly washed at the bathhouse, wearing a brand-new cloak, all dressed up like a bridegroom, about to marry his master's daughter because she's poor and has been left without anyone?"

"No different at all," he said.

"And what sort of offspring are such people likely to father? Won't they be illegitimate and inferior?"

"That's inevitable."

496a "What about this? When those unworthy of education draw near it and consort with it unworthily, what sort of thoughts and opinions should we say they father? Won't they be what can truly be called sophisms, with nothing genuine about them, nothing that has any share in true understanding?"

"Absolutely," he said.

"Then there remains, Adeimantus," I said, "only a very small group of those 496b who consort with philosophy worthily. Perhaps a noble, well-brought-up character held back by exile, who, with no one around to corrupt him, stays with her as his nature leads; or a great soul born in a small city, who disdains the city's affairs and looks down on them. And a few, perhaps, with good natures might come to her from some other craft that they rightly disdain. Then there's the bridle of our friend Theages, which could also hold someone back: for 496c Theages had everything else in place for falling away from philosophy, but his sickly body keeps him out of politics and holds him back. My own case, the divine sign, isn't worth mentioning; it has happened to perhaps one other person before me, or to no one.[5] "Someone who has become one of these few and has tasted how sweet and blessed a possession it is, and who has also seen clearly enough the madness of the many—that practically no one does anything sound in public affairs, and that there's no 496d ally with whom one could go to the aid of justice and survive; that he'd be like a man fallen among wild beasts, unwilling to join in their wrongdoing and unable to hold out alone against all these wild creatures, and would perish before he could benefit his city or his friends, useless to himself and to everyone else—taking all this into account, he keeps quiet and minds his own business. Like someone who shelters behind a little wall in a storm, when the wind drives dust and rain along, he watches others filled with lawlessness and is content if he can somehow live his life here pure of injustice and unholy 496e deeds, and take his leave of it with good hope, calm and kindly."

5 Theages was a young companion of Socrates; a dialogue attributed to Plato bears his name.

497a "Well," he said, "that's no small accomplishment to take his leave with."

"Nor the greatest," I said, "if he doesn't find a constitution that suits him. In a suitable one he himself will grow more, and will preserve the common good along with his own.

"As for philosophy, then—why it has got its bad reputation, and that the reputation is unjust—I think that's been adequately said, unless you have something more to say."

"No, I've nothing more to say about that," he said. "But which of today's constitutions do you say suits her?" 497b

"None at all," I said. "That's exactly my complaint: no city constitution of today is worthy of the philosophical nature. That's why it gets twisted and altered. Just as a foreign seed sown in other soil tends to be overpowered and fade into the local kind, so this breed too does not now keep its own power, but degenerates into an alien character. But if it finds the best constitution, just 497c as it is itself the best, then it will make plain that it was really divine, and everything else human, both natures and pursuits. Clearly, then, you're going to ask next what this constitution is."

"You guessed wrong," he said. "That wasn't what I was going to ask, but whether it's the one we described in founding our city, or another."

"In other respects it's that one," I said. "But this very point was mentioned then too: that there would always need to be something in the city with the same rationale 497d for the constitution that you, the lawgiver, had when you laid down the laws."

"Yes, it was mentioned," he said.

"But it wasn't made sufficiently clear," I said, "because I was afraid of the objections you all have seized on to show that its demonstration would be long and difficult. And what remains isn't the easiest thing to go through, either."

"What is it?"

"How a city can take up philosophy without being destroyed. For all great things are precarious, and, as the saying goes, fine things really are hard." 497e

"All the same," he said, "let the demonstration be completed by making this clear."

"It won't be lack of will that stops me," I said, "but, if anything, lack of ability. You'll be here to see my eagerness for yourself. And notice even now how eagerly and recklessly I'm about to say that a city should take up this pursuit in the opposite way from how it does now."

"How so?"

"Now," I said, "those who take it up at all are youngsters just out [498a] of childhood, who approach it in the interval before running a household and making money, and then, just when they've come to its hardest part, they drop it—and these are counted the most philosophical. By the hardest part I mean the part about arguments. Later, if they're invited to listen when others are doing it, and they agree to, they think that's a great thing, since they believe it should be done as a sideline. And toward old age, with a few exceptions, they're extinguished much more thoroughly than [498b] Heraclitus' sun, in that they're never rekindled."

"So how should it be?" he said.[6]

"Quite the opposite. While they're youngsters and children, they should engage in an education and philosophy suited to youth, and take very good care of their bodies while these are growing and becoming a man's, securing them as servants for philosophy. As they advance in age, when the soul begins to reach maturity, they should intensify its exercises. And when their strength fails and they're past political [498c] and military service, then at last they should be let loose to graze, and do nothing else except as a sideline—those, that is, who are going to live happily and, after death, crown the life they've lived with a fitting lot in the other world."

"You really do seem to be speaking eagerly, Socrates," he said. "But I think most of your listeners will resist you even more

6 Heraclitus held that the sun is new each day, so it goes out every evening and is kindled again.

eagerly and won't be persuaded in the slightest—starting with Thrasymachus."

"Don't stir up trouble," I said, "between Thrasymachus and me, when we've just [498d] become friends—not that we were enemies before. We won't give up trying until we either persuade him and the others, or do something to help them in that other life, when they're born again and come across arguments like these."

"That's a short time you're talking about," he said.

"No time at all," I said, "compared with the whole. Still, it's no wonder that most people aren't persuaded by what we say. They've never seen the thing we're now stating actually come into being, [498e] but rather phrases like these, deliberately made to match one another, not falling together by chance as they did just now.

"But a man matched and made like to excellence as perfectly as possible in deed and word, ruling [499a] in a city of the same kind—that they have never seen, not one or more than one. Or do you think they have?"

"Not at all."[7]

"Nor, my good friend, have they listened enough to fine and free discussions, the kind that search strenuously and in every way for the truth for the sake of knowing it, and that keep their distance from the clever, contentious stuff that aims at nothing but reputation and strife, whether in lawsuits or in private gatherings."

"No, they haven't," he said.

"That's why," I said, "even though we foresaw this then [499b] and were afraid, we still said, compelled by the truth, that no city or constitution, nor any man either, will ever become perfect until some necessity by chance compels these few philosophers—the ones who aren't wicked but are now called useless—to take charge of a city, whether they want to or not, and compels the city to obey them; or until the sons of those now holding power

7 Socrates is poking fun at rhetorical jingles (in Greek, *genomenon/legomenon*, *parisōmenon/hōmoiōmenon*), the contrived sound-matching associated with Gorgias.

or kingship, or the rulers 499c themselves, are struck by some divine inspiration with a true passion for true philosophy. I say there's no reason to think that either or both of these is impossible. If it were, we'd rightly be laughed at for saying things that are no better than wishful prayers. Or isn't that so?"

"It is."

"So if, in the infinite time that has passed, some necessity has compelled those who are supreme in philosophy to take charge of a city, or does so now in some non-Greek land far 499d beyond our view, or will do so hereafter, we're ready to fight it out in argument that the constitution we've described has existed, exists, and will exist whenever this Muse gains control of a city. It isn't impossible for it to come about, and we're not talking about impossibilities. That it's difficult, we ourselves admit."

"I think so too," he said.

"But you'll tell me," I said, "that most people don't think so?"

"Perhaps," he said.

"My good friend," I said, "don't be so very hard on the many. 499e They'll have a different opinion if, instead of picking a fight, you soothe them and try to clear away the slander against the love of learning, pointing out whom you mean by philosophers and defining, 500a as we did just now, their nature and their pursuit, so that they don't think you mean the people they have in mind.

"Or even if they do look at it that way, won't you say they'll take a different view and give different answers? Do you think anyone is harsh toward someone who isn't harsh, or envious of someone who isn't envious, when he himself is free of envy and gentle? I'll get in ahead of you and say that I think such a harsh nature is found in a few people, not in the majority."

"And I certainly agree," he said. 500b

PHILOSOPHERS AS RULERS

Socrates argues philosopher-rulers are possible and must take the longer way of study.

SOCRATES "Then do you also agree about this: that the cause of the many's hostility toward philosophy is those outsiders who have crashed in where they don't belong, like drunken revelers, abusing one another, spoiling for a fight, and always making people the subject of their talk—doing what least befits philosophy?"

"Very much so," he said.

"For surely, Adeimantus, someone whose thought is truly directed toward the things that are has no leisure to look down at human 500c affairs, and to fight with people and be filled with envy and ill will. Instead, looking at and contemplating things that are ordered and always the same, that neither do wrong nor are wronged by one another, but are all in order and in accordance with reason, he imitates them and makes himself as like them as he can. Or do you think there's any way someone can avoid imitating what he admires and associates with?"

"Impossible," he said.

"So the philosopher, associating with what is divine and orderly, becomes orderly 500d and divine himself, as far as a human being can. But there's plenty of slander everywhere."

"Absolutely."

"Now if some necessity arises for him," I said, "to practice putting what he sees there into people's characters, both privately and publicly, instead of shaping only himself, do you think he'll prove a poor craftsman of moderation, justice and civic excellence as a whole?"

"Not at all," he said.

"But if the many realize that what we're saying about him 500e is true, will they really be harsh with philosophers and distrust us when we say that a city could never be happy unless its outlines were drawn by painters using the divine model?"

"They won't be harsh," he said, "if they do realize it.

"But [501a] what way of drawing it do you mean?"

"They would take a city and people's characters," I said, "as if they were a painter's panel, and first wipe it clean—which isn't at all easy. But you know that right away they'd differ from everyone else in this: they'd be unwilling to touch either an individual or a city, or to write laws, until they had either received it clean or made it clean themselves."

"And rightly," he said.

"Then after that, don't you think they'd sketch in the outline of the constitution?"

"Of course." [501b]

"Next, I imagine, as they work, they'd look often in both directions: toward what is by nature just, beautiful, moderate and all such things, and in turn toward what they're putting into human beings, mixing and blending the pursuits into a man-like tint, taking their cue from what Homer, too, called 'godlike' and 'the image of the gods' when it appears in human beings."

"Right," he said.

"And I suppose they'd rub out one thing and paint another in again, [501c] until they had made human characters as dear to the gods as they can possibly be."

"That would certainly make a very beautiful painting," he said.[8]

"So are we somehow persuading those you said were charging at us with all their might," I said, "that this is the sort of painter of constitutions we were praising to them before—the one they were angry about because we were handing cities over to him? Are they any calmer hearing it now?"

"Much calmer," he said, "if they're sensible." [501d]

"Yes, for on what ground will they be able to dispute it? That philosophers aren't lovers of what is and of truth?"

"That would be absurd," he said.

8 "Man-like" (*andreikelon*) was a painters' term for flesh color; Socrates plays it off Homer's epithet *theoeikelos*, "godlike."

"Or that their nature, as we described it, isn't akin to the best?"

"Not that either."

"Well then, won't such a nature, when it gets the pursuits suited to it, be completely good and philosophical, if any is? Or will anyone say that the ones we excluded are more so?" 501e

"Surely not."

"So will they still be enraged when we say that until the philosophical class gains control of a city, there will be no rest from evils for city or citizens, and the constitution we're telling as a story in words will not be completed in fact?"

"Less so, perhaps," he said.

"Would you like us to say not that they're less enraged but 502a that they've become completely gentle and been persuaded, so that, if nothing else, they'll agree out of shame?"

"Certainly," he said.

"Then let's take it that they've been persuaded of this," I said. "Now will anyone dispute this: that the offspring of kings or rulers might happen to be born philosophers by nature?"

"Not a single person," he said.

"And can anyone claim that once born such, they're absolutely bound to be corrupted? That it's hard for them to be saved, we too 502b admit. But that in all of time not a single one of them all could ever be saved—is there anyone who would argue that?"

"How could there be?"

"But surely," I said, "one is enough, if he has a city that obeys him, to accomplish everything that's now disbelieved."

"Yes, one is enough," he said.

"For if a ruler lays down the laws and pursuits we've described," I said, "it's surely not impossible that the citizens will be willing to carry them out."

"Not at all."

"And would it be astonishing or impossible that what we think should seem right to others too?" 502c

"I don't think so," he said.

"And that these things are best, if they're possible, we've gone through adequately earlier, I believe."

"Yes, adequately."

"So now, it seems, our conclusion about the legislation is that what we're describing is best, if it could come about, and that it's difficult to bring about, but not impossible."

"That is the conclusion," he said.

"Then since this has finally, with difficulty, been brought to an end, we must discuss what remains: in what way, and through what studies [502d] and pursuits, the saviors of the constitution will come to be present in it for us, and at what ages each will take up each."

"Yes, we must discuss that," he said.

"My cleverness got me nowhere," I said, "when I left aside earlier the troublesome business of the possession of women, and of producing children, and the appointment of rulers, knowing that the completely true arrangement would provoke envy and be hard to bring about. For now the need to go through them has come around no less. [502e] The matters concerning women and children have been finished, but the question of the rulers has to be taken up again as if from the beginning.

"We said, [503a] if you remember, that they must show themselves lovers of their city, tested in pleasures and pains, and must be seen not to throw away this conviction in labors or fears or any other reversal. Whoever can't do this must be rejected, but whoever comes through pure in every way, like gold tested in fire, must be appointed ruler and given privileges and prizes both while alive and after death. Something like this is what was said, while the argument slipped past with its face veiled, [503b] afraid to stir up the question now before us."

"What you say is very true," he said. "I remember."

"Yes, my friend," I said, "I shrank from saying what I've now dared to say. But now let this be ventured: that we must establish philosophers as the guardians in the strictest sense."

"Let it be said," he said.

"Consider, then, how few you're likely to have. For the parts of the nature we described, which they must have, seldom tend to grow together into one; mostly it grows up torn apart." 503c

"How do you mean?" he said.

"You know that people who are quick to learn, have good memories, and are shrewd and sharp, with all that goes along with these, don't usually grow up to be at the same time youthfully vigorous and grand in their thinking and the kind who are willing to live in an orderly way, with quiet and stability. Instead, such people are carried wherever their sharpness takes them, and all stability goes out of them."

"That's true," he said.

"And again, those steady characters that don't change easily, whom 503d one would rather rely on as trustworthy, and who in war are hard to move to fear—they do the same thing when it comes to learning. They're hard to move and slow to learn, as if they'd been numbed, and they're filled with sleep and yawning whenever they have to work hard at anything of that sort."

"That's so," he said.

"But we say that one must have a good and fine share of both, or else he must not be given the most rigorous education, or honor, or rule."

"Right," he said.

"Don't you think this will be rare?"

"Of course." 503e

"So he must be tested in the labors, fears and pleasures we mentioned then, and we now add what we passed over then: he must also be exercised in many studies, as we watch whether his nature will be able to bear the greatest studies or will 504a lose heart, like those who lose heart in the other trials."

"It's certainly right to examine it that way," he said. "But which do you mean by the greatest studies?"

"You remember, I suppose," I said, "that we distinguished three forms in the soul and pieced together what justice, moderation, courage and wisdom each are."

"If I didn't remember," he said, "I'd deserve not to hear the rest."

"And what was said before that, too?"

"What was that?" 504b

"We said, I think, that to see them in the finest way possible there was another, longer road, and that they would become clear to someone who had traveled it, but that it was possible to add demonstrations in keeping with what had been said before. You all said that was enough, and so what was said then was, as it seemed to me, lacking in precision; whether it satisfied you, you'd be the ones to say."

"Well, to me it seemed a fair measure," he said, "and to the others too." 504c

"But, my friend," I said, "a measure of such things that falls short of what is in any way at all is no fair measure. Nothing incomplete is the measure of anything. Yet people sometimes think they already have enough and there's no need to look any further."

"Yes," he said, "plenty of people feel that way, out of laziness."

"But that's a feeling," I said, "that a guardian of a city and its laws can least afford."

"That makes sense," he said.

"Then someone like that, my friend," I said, "has to go the longer way round, 504d and has to work as hard at learning as at physical training. Otherwise, as we were just saying, he'll never reach the end of the greatest and most fitting subject of study."

"What?" he said. "Aren't these the greatest? Is there something still greater than justice and the other things we went through?"

THE FORM OF THE GOOD

Socrates says the form of the good is the greatest object of study, but will not define it.

SOCRATES "There is something greater," I said. "And even with these themselves, we mustn't look at a sketch, as we did just now; we mustn't settle for anything short of the most finished

work. Isn't it absurd to strain every nerve over other things of little worth 504e so as to get them as precise and pure as possible, and not to think that the greatest things deserve the greatest precision?"

"A thought very much worth having," he said. "But as for what you call the greatest subject of study, and what it's about—do you think anyone's going to let you go without asking what it is?"

"Not at all," I said. "Go ahead and ask it yourself.

"You've certainly heard it many times. But right now either you're not paying attention, or else you mean 505a to make trouble for me by seizing on what I say. I think it's more the latter. You've often heard that the form of the good is the greatest subject of study: it is by making use of it that just things and everything else become useful and beneficial. And you pretty well know by now that this is what I'm going to say, and in addition that we don't know it adequately. And if we don't know it, then even if we knew everything else as well as could be, without it—you know this—it would do us no good, just as it would do us no good 505b to possess anything without the good. Or do you think there's any advantage in possessing every possession, if it isn't good? Or in understanding everything else without the good, while understanding nothing fine and good?"

"No, by Zeus, I don't," he said.

"But you surely also know this: most people think the good is pleasure, while the more refined think it's understanding."

"Of course."

"And, my friend, that those who hold the latter view can't show what understanding it is, but end up being forced to say it's understanding of the good."

"Yes," he said, "which is quite ridiculous." 505c

"How could it not be," I said, "when they reproach us for not knowing the good and then talk to us as though we did know it? They say it's understanding of the good, as if we understood what they mean as soon as they utter the word 'good.'"

"Very true," he said.

"And what about those who define the good as pleasure? Are they any less full of confusion than the others? Aren't they forced to agree, too, that there are bad pleasures?"

"They certainly are."

"So the result, I think, is that they have to agree that the same things are both good and bad. Isn't that so?" 505d

"Of course."

"Then it's clear that there are many great disputes about it?"

"Of course."

"And what about this? Isn't it clear that with just and fine things, many people would choose what seems so—and even if it isn't, they'd still do and have them and have the reputation for them—but with good things nobody is satisfied any more to get what only seems so? They look for what really is, and here everyone has contempt for mere seeming."

"Very much so," he said.

"This is what every soul pursues, and for its sake it does everything. 505e It divines that it is something, but it's at a loss and can't adequately grasp what it is, or have a stable conviction about it as it can about other things, and for that reason it misses whatever benefit there was in the other things as well. About something of this kind and this importance, 506a are we to say that even the best people in the city, into whose hands we'll put everything, should be left in the dark like this?"

"Least of all," he said.

"At any rate, I think," I said, "that if it isn't known in what way just and fine things are good, they won't have acquired a guardian worth much in someone who doesn't know this. And I divine that no one will know them adequately before that."

"Yes, and you divine well," he said.

"So our constitution will be perfectly ordered if a 506b guardian of this kind watches over it, one who has knowledge of these things?"

"Necessarily," he said. "But you yourself, Socrates—do you say that the good is knowledge, or pleasure, or something else besides these?"

"What a man!" I said. "You made it very plain long ago that other people's views on these things wouldn't satisfy you."

"Well, Socrates," he said, "it doesn't seem just to me for someone to be able to state other people's beliefs but not his own, after spending so much 506c time on these matters."

"What?" I said. "Do you think it's just to talk about things one doesn't know as though one knew them?"

"Not at all as though one knew them," he said, "but one should be willing to say what one thinks, as what one thinks."

"What?" I said. "Haven't you noticed that opinions without knowledge are all ugly? The best of them are blind—or do you think people who hold some true opinion without intelligence are any different from blind people traveling the right road?"

"No different," he said.

"So do you want to look at ugly things, blind and crooked, when you could 506d hear bright and beautiful ones from others?"

"For Zeus's sake, Socrates," said Glaucon, "don't back off now, as if you were at the finish line. We'll be satisfied if you go through the good the way you went through justice and moderation and the rest."

THE SUN

Socrates compares the good to the sun, which gives both light for seeing and life to things.

SOCRATES "So will I, my friend," I said, "very much satisfied. But I'm afraid I won't be up to it, and that in my eagerness I'll make a fool of myself and be laughed at. No, my dear friends, let's leave aside for now what the good 506e itself is. Even to reach my own present view of it seems too much for our present effort. But I'm willing to talk about what appears to be the offspring of the good and most like it, if you'd like; if not, we'll let it go."

"No, tell us," he said. "You can pay us the account of the father another time."

507a "I wish," I said, "that I could pay it and you could collect it, and not just the interest, as now. Still, take this interest, this offspring of the good itself. But be careful I don't somehow cheat you without meaning to, by paying you a counterfeit account of the interest."

"We'll be as careful as we can," he said. "Just tell us."

"Once we've come to an agreement," I said, "and I've reminded you of what was said earlier, and has often been said at other times too." 507b

"What's that?" he said.[9]

"We say that there are many beautiful things," I said, "and many good things, and so on for each kind, and we distinguish them in our account."

"We do."

"And we also speak of the beautiful itself and the good itself. And so with all the things we then posited as many: we posit them in turn according to a single form of each, on the view that there is one, and call each 'what it is.'"

"That's so."

"And we say that the many things are seen but not grasped by intelligence, while the forms are grasped by intelligence but not seen."

"Absolutely." 507c

"Now with what part of ourselves do we see the things that are seen?"

"With sight," he said.

"And with hearing the things that are heard," I said, "and with the other senses all the things that are perceived?"

"Of course."

"Well," I said, "have you noticed how lavishly the craftsman of the senses crafted the power of seeing and being seen?"

"Not really," he said.

"Then look at it this way. Do hearing and sound need some further kind of thing, for the one to hear and the other to be

9 The Greek word *tokos* means both "offspring" and "interest" on a loan, which drives the joke here.

heard—a third thing such that, 507d if it isn't present, the one won't hear and the other won't be heard?"

"They need nothing," he said.

"And I think," I said, "that many of the others—not to say all of them—need nothing of the kind either. Or can you name one that does?"

"I can't," he said.

"But don't you realize that sight and the visible do need something?"

"How so?"

"Sight may be present in the eyes, and its owner may try to use it, and color may be present in things; but unless 507e a third kind of thing is present, one naturally suited to this very purpose, you know that sight will see nothing and the colors will be invisible."

"What is this thing you mean?" he said.

"What you call light," I said.

"True," he said.

"Then the sense of seeing and the power of being 508a seen are yoked together by a yoke more precious than the other pairings, and by no small measure—unless light is something without value."

"Far from it," he said.

"So which of the gods in heaven can you name as master of this, whose light makes our sight see as well as possible and the things seen be seen?"

"The same one you and everyone else would," he said. "Obviously you're asking about the sun."

"Now is sight related to this god in the following way?"

"What way?"

"Neither sight itself nor the thing it comes to be in, which 508b we call the eye, is the sun."

"No, it isn't."

"But I think it's the most sunlike of the sense organs."

"By far."

"And doesn't it get the power it has from the sun, dispensed to it like an inflowing stream?"

"Certainly."

"Then isn't the sun, too, not sight, but, as the cause of sight, seen by sight itself?"

"That's so," he said.

"The sun, then," I said, "is what you should say I mean by the offspring of the good, which the good begot in proportion to itself: as the good itself is 508c in the intelligible realm in relation to intelligence and the things grasped by intelligence, so the sun is in the visible realm in relation to sight and the things seen."

"How?" he said. "Explain it to me further."

"You know," I said, "that when someone no longer turns his eyes toward things whose colors are lit by daylight, but toward things lit by the glimmers of night, they grow dim and seem nearly blind, as though there were no clear sight in them?"

"Very much so," he said. 508d

"But when, I think, they're turned toward things the sun shines on, they see clearly, and sight appears to be present in those very same eyes."

"Of course."

"Then think of the soul in the same way. When it fixes itself on what truth and what is shine upon, it grasps and knows it and appears to have intelligence. But when it fixes on what is mixed with darkness, on what comes to be and passes away, it opines and grows dim, changing its opinions up and down, and seems in turn to have no intelligence."

"Yes, it does seem so." 508e

"So say that what gives truth to the things known, and gives the knower the power to know, is the form of the good. And since it is the cause of knowledge and truth, think of it as known too; but beautiful as both of these are, knowledge and truth, you'll be right to think of it as something other than them and still more beautiful.

"As for knowledge 509a and truth: just as in the other case it's right to think of light and sight as sunlike, but wrong to believe

they're the sun, so here it's right to think of both of these as goodlike, but wrong to believe that either of them is the good. The good's condition must be honored still more highly."

"You're talking about an extraordinary beauty," he said, "if it provides knowledge and truth but is itself above them in beauty. Surely you don't mean it's pleasure."

"Hush!" I said. "Look at its image further, this way, instead." 509b

"How?"

"The sun, I think you'll say, not only gives the things that are seen the power of being seen, but also their coming to be and growth and nourishment, though it isn't itself coming to be."

"Of course not."

"Then say likewise that the things known not only get their being known from the good, but also have their existence and their being from it, though the good is not being, but is still beyond being, surpassing it in dignity and power." 509c

And Glaucon, very comically, said, "Apollo! What superhuman hyperbole!"

"Well, it's your fault," I said, "for forcing me to say what I think about it."

"And don't stop on any account," he said, "or if nothing else, at least go through the likeness with the sun again, in case you're leaving anything out."

"Well, I'm certainly leaving out a lot," I said.

"Then don't skip even a little," he said.

"I expect I'll skip a great deal," I said. "Still, as far as is possible at present, I won't leave anything out on purpose."

"Don't," he said. 509d

THE DIVIDED LINE

Socrates divides reality with the image of a line and describes prisoners in a cave.

SOCRATES "Then think of it," I said, "as we say: there are these two, and one rules over the intelligible kind and realm, the

other over the visible—I won't say 'the heavens,' in case you think I'm playing the sophist with the word. Anyway, do you have these two kinds, visible and intelligible?"

"I do."

"Then take a line cut into two unequal sections, and cut each section again in the same ratio, the section of the visible kind and that of the intelligible. Then, in terms of relative clarity and unclarity, in the visible section 509e one subsection will be images —[10]

"by images I mean first 510a shadows, then reflections in water and in everything that is dense, smooth and bright, and everything of that sort, if you follow me."

"I do."

"Then take as the other subsection the things these images resemble: the animals around us, and everything that grows, and the whole class of manufactured things."

"I'll take it so," he said.

"Would you also be willing to say," I said, "that it has been divided in terms of truth and its lack, so that as the object of opinion is to the object of knowledge, so the likeness is to what it is a likeness of?" 510b

"I certainly would," he said.

"Now consider in turn how the intelligible section should be cut."

"How?"

"Like this. In one part of it the soul, using as images the things that were imitated before, is forced to inquire from hypotheses, proceeding not to a first principle but to a conclusion. In the other it proceeds from a hypothesis to a first principle that is not hypothetical, without the images used in the first part, making its way by means of forms themselves, through them."

"I didn't quite understand what you're saying," he said. 510c

"Let's try again," I said. "You'll understand more easily with this said first. I think you know that people who work on geo-

10 The Greek for "heaven" (*ouranos*) sounds a little like the word for "visible" (*horatos*), so Socrates avoids what might look like a pun.

metry and arithmetic and that sort of thing hypothesize the odd and the even, the figures, three kinds of angle, and other things akin to these in each line of inquiry. They treat these as known, making them hypotheses, and don't think fit to give any further account of them either to themselves or to others, 510d as though they were clear to everyone. Starting from these, they go through the rest and arrive, consistently, at the conclusion they set out to investigate."

"Yes," he said, "I certainly know that."

"Then you also know that they make use of visible figures and argue about them, though they aren't thinking about these, but about the things these resemble. They argue for the sake of the square itself and the diagonal itself, not 510e the one they draw, and so on. These very things they model and draw, which themselves have shadows and reflections in water, they use in turn as images, seeking 511a to see those other things themselves, which one can't see except by thought."

"That's true," he said.

"This, then, is what I was calling intelligible. The soul is forced to use hypotheses in investigating it, not going to a first principle, since it can't climb above the hypotheses; and it uses as images the very things of which the things below are likenesses, things regarded and valued as clear in comparison with those likenesses." 511b

"I understand," he said, "that you mean what falls under geometry and its sister arts."

"Then understand that by the other section of the intelligible I mean what reason itself grasps by the power of dialectic. It treats its hypotheses not as first principles but as genuinely hypotheses—stepping-stones and springboards, as it were—so that it can go all the way up to what is unhypothetical, to the first principle of everything. Having grasped this, it turns back, holding on to what follows from it, and so comes down to a conclusion, 511c making no use of anything perceptible at all, but only of forms themselves, through forms, to forms; and it ends in forms."

"I understand," he said, "though not adequately—it seems an enormous task you're describing. But I understand that you want to mark off what is contemplated of what is and is intelligible by the knowledge of dialectic as clearer than what is contemplated by the so-called arts, for which hypotheses are first principles. Those who contemplate their objects are forced to do so by thought and not by the senses; but because they don't go back up to a first principle 511d in their investigation, but proceed from hypotheses, you think they don't have intelligence about them, even though these things are intelligible when taken with a first principle. And I think you call the state of geometers and people like them thought, not intelligence, as though thought were something between opinion and intelligence."

"You've taken it in very adequately," I said. "Now take these four conditions that arise in the soul, corresponding to the four sections: understanding for the highest, thought 511e for the second; assign belief to the third and imagination to the last. And arrange them in proportion, considering that each shares in clarity to the degree that its objects share in truth."

"I understand," he said, "and I agree, and I'll arrange them as you say."

Book VII

The cave, and the philosopher's education.

SOCRATES 514a "Next," I said, "compare our nature, in its education and lack of education, to a condition like this. Picture people living in a sort of underground cave-like dwelling, with a long entrance open to the light across the whole width of the cave. They've been there since childhood, fettered by the legs and neck, so that they stay where they are and see only what's in 514b front of them, unable to turn their heads around because of the fetters. Light comes to them from a fire burning above and far behind them. Between the fire and the prisoners there's a road higher up, and along it, picture a low wall built, like the screens that puppeteers set up in front of the audience, above which they show their puppets."

"I see," he said.

"Then see people carrying along this low wall 514c all kinds of artifacts that stick up above it, and statues of people 515a and other animals made of stone and wood and every sort of material. As you'd expect, some of the carriers are talking and some are silent."

"It's a strange image you're describing," he said, "and strange prisoners."

"Like us," I said. "First of all, do you think such people would have seen anything of themselves or of one another except the shadows cast by the fire onto the wall of the cave in front of them?"

"How could they," he said, "if they'd been forced to keep their heads motionless 515b all their lives?"

"And what about the things being carried past? Isn't it the same?"

"Of course."

"Then if they could talk to one another, don't you think they'd believe that the things they saw were the things that are?"

"Necessarily."

"And what if the prison also had an echo from the wall facing them? Whenever one of the passers-by spoke, do you think they'd believe that the speaker was anything other than the passing shadow?"

"No, by Zeus, I don't," he said. 515c

"Then in every way," I said, "such people would believe the truth to be nothing other than the shadows of the artifacts."

"Quite necessarily," he said.

"Now consider," I said, "what their release from their fetters and their cure from folly would be like, if something like this happened to them in the course of nature. Whenever one of them was freed and suddenly forced to stand up, turn his neck around, walk and look up toward the light, he'd be in pain doing all this, and because of the dazzle he'd be unable to make out the things whose 515d shadows he'd seen before. What do you think he'd say if someone told him that before he'd been seeing nonsense, but now, being somewhat nearer to what is and turned toward things that more fully are, he was seeing more correctly —and, what's more, pointed to each of the things passing by and forced him to answer the question of what it is? Don't you think he'd be at a loss, and would believe that the things he saw before were truer than the ones now being pointed out to him?"

"Much truer," he said. 515e

"And if someone forced him to look at the light itself, wouldn't his eyes hurt, and wouldn't he turn away and flee toward the things he's able to make out, and believe that these are really clearer than the things being pointed out?"

"Yes," he said.

"And if someone dragged him by force from there up the rough, steep ascent," I said, "and didn't let go until he'd dragged

him out into the light of the sun, wouldn't he be in pain 516a and angry at being dragged? And when he came into the light, with his eyes full of its glare, wouldn't he be unable to see even one of the things we now call true?"

"No, he wouldn't," he said, "not right away."

"He'd need to get used to it, I think, if he were going to see the things up there. At first he'd most easily make out shadows, and after that the reflections of people and other things in water, and later the things themselves. From these he'd go on to look at the things in the heavens, and the heavens themselves, more easily at night, gazing at the light of the 516b stars and the moon, than at the sun and the sun's light by day."

"Of course."

"And finally, I think, he'd be able to make out the sun—not its reflections in water or in some place not its own, but the sun itself, by itself, in its own place—and to look at it as it is."

"Necessarily," he said.

"And after this he'd reason about it that it's the sun that provides the seasons and the years and governs everything 516c in the visible realm, and is in a way the cause of all those things he and his companions used to see."

"Clearly," he said, "he'd come to that after the others."

"Well then? When he remembers his first dwelling, and the wisdom there, and his fellow prisoners of that time, don't you think he'd count himself happy for the change, and pity them?"

"Very much so."

"And suppose they'd had honors and praise from one another back then, and prizes for whoever was sharpest at making out the things passing by and best at remembering which of them usually came earlier, which later, 516d and which together, and who was therefore best able to divine what was going to come next. Do you think he'd hanker after these things and envy those who are honored and hold power among them? Or would he feel what Homer describes, and very much prefer 'to work the land as a hired hand for another man, a man with no land of his own,'

and put up with anything at all rather than hold those opinions and live that way?" 516e [1]

"Yes," he said, "I think he'd accept anything rather than live that way."

"Now think about this too," I said. "If such a man went back down and sat in the same seat, wouldn't his eyes be full of darkness, coming suddenly out of the sun?"

"Very much so," he said.

"And if he had to compete again with those perpetual prisoners in judging those shadows while his sight was still dim, 517a before his eyes had settled—and the time it took to get used to it wouldn't be very short—wouldn't he make them laugh? Wouldn't they say of him that he'd gone up and come back with his eyes ruined, and that it isn't worth even trying to go up? And as for anyone who tried to free them and lead them up, if they could somehow get their hands on him and kill him, wouldn't they kill him?"

"They certainly would," he said.

"Now, my dear Glaucon," I said, "this whole image 517b must be connected with what was said before. Liken the region that appears through sight to the prison dwelling, and the light of the fire in it to the power of the sun. And if you take the ascent and the viewing of the things above as the soul's journey up into the intelligible realm, you won't mistake my hope, since that's what you want to hear. A god knows, perhaps, whether it's actually true. "But this is how things appear to me: in the knowable realm, the last thing to be seen, and seen only with difficulty, is the form of the 517c good. But once seen, it must be concluded that it is the cause of all that is right and beautiful in everything. In the visible realm it gave birth to light and to light's lord; in the intelligible realm it is itself lord, providing truth and understanding. And whoever is going to act sensibly, in private or in public life, must see it."

"I agree too," he said, "as far as I'm able."

1 The quotation is from Homer's *Odyssey* (11.489–90), where the shade of Achilles says he would rather be a poor man's hired laborer than king over all the dead.

"Come on, then," I said, "agree with me about this as well, and don't be surprised that those who have got this far aren't willing to take part in human affairs, but their souls are always eager to spend their time up above. 517d That's surely what we'd expect, if this too follows the image we described."

"It is what we'd expect," he said.

"And what about this? Do you think it's at all surprising," I said, "if someone who comes from divine contemplations to human evils behaves awkwardly and looks very ridiculous when, with his sight still dim and before he's become adequately used to the darkness around him, he's forced to contend in law courts or elsewhere about the shadows of justice, or the statues that cast those shadows, and to argue 517e about how these things are understood by people who have never seen justice itself?"

"Not in the least surprising," he said.

518a "But anyone with sense," I said, "would remember that the eyes can be confused in two ways, from two causes: when they move from light into darkness, and when they move from darkness into light. Believing that the same thing happens to the soul too, whenever he saw one that was troubled and unable to make anything out, he wouldn't laugh at it thoughtlessly. He would consider whether it had come from a brighter life and was in darkness because it was unused to the dark, or whether it was coming from greater ignorance into something brighter and was 518b filled with the dazzle of a more brilliant light. Then he would count the one happy in its experience and its life, and pity the other; and if he did want to laugh at that one, his laughter would be less ridiculous than laughter at the soul that had come down from the light above."

EDUCATION AS A TURNING AROUND

Socrates argues that education turns the soul toward the light rather than putting knowledge into it.

SOCRATES "That's very fairly put," he said.

"Then if this is true," I said, "we must think this about these matters: education isn't what some of those who profess it claim it is. They claim, I think, that they can put knowledge into a 518c soul that lacks it, as if they were putting sight into blind eyes."

"They do claim that," he said.

"But our present argument," I said, "shows that this power is already present in each person's soul, and so is the instrument each of us learns with. It's as if an eye couldn't turn from darkness toward the light except together with the whole body: in the same way this instrument must be turned around, together with the whole soul, away from what comes to be, until it is able to bear looking at what is, and at the brightest of what is. And this, we say, is 518d the good. Isn't it?"

"Yes."

"Then there would be an art of this very thing," I said, "of the turning around: of how this instrument can be turned most easily and effectively. It wouldn't be an art of putting sight into it. It would take for granted that it has sight but isn't turned the right way or looking where it should, and contrive to bring that about."

"So it seems," he said.

"Now the other so-called excellences of the soul are probably close to those of the body. They really 518e aren't present beforehand, but are produced later by habit and practice. But the excellence of understanding, it seems, belongs above all to something more divine, which never loses its power, but becomes useful and beneficial, 519a or else useless and harmful, depending on the way it is turned.

"Or haven't you ever noticed, with people who are said to be wicked but clever, how sharply their petty little soul sees, and how keenly it discerns the things it's turned toward? Its sight isn't poor, but it's forced to serve badness, so that the more sharply it sees, the more harm it does."

"Certainly," he said.

"And yet," I said, "suppose this part of such a nature had been hammered at from earliest childhood and struck free of the

leaden weights, as it were, that are akin to becoming, 519b which fasten onto it through eating and the pleasures and greed of that sort and turn the soul's vision downward. If it were freed of these and turned around toward what is true, this same part of the same people would see those things too most sharply, just as it sees the things it's turned toward now."

"It's likely," he said.

WHY THE PHILOSOPHERS MUST GO BACK DOWN

Socrates insists the philosophers must return to the cave and take their turn at ruling.

SOCRATES "Well then, isn't this likely too," I said, "and in fact necessary, given what we've said: that neither the uneducated, who have no experience of truth, 519c could ever govern a city adequately, nor those who are allowed to spend their whole lives in education? The first because they have no single aim in life at which everything they do, in private and in public, must be directed; the second because they won't act if they can help it, believing they've already emigrated, while still alive, to the Isles of the Blessed."

"True," he said.[2]

"Then it's our job as founders," I said, "to compel the best natures to reach the study we earlier called the greatest: to see the good 519d and make that ascent. And when they've made it and seen enough, we mustn't allow them what is allowed now."

"What's that?"

"To stay there," I said, "and refuse to go back down to those prisoners, or to share their labors and honors, whether these are of less worth or more serious."

"Then," he said, "are we going to do them wrong, and make them live a worse life when a better one is open to them?" 519e

"You've forgotten again, my friend," I said, "that the law isn't concerned with making any one class in the city do exception-

2 In Greek myth, the Isles of the Blessed were where favored heroes lived in bliss after death.

ally well. It contrives to bring this about in the city as a whole, fitting the citizens together by persuasion and compulsion, and making them share 520a with one another the benefit each group is able to bring to the community. And it produces such men in the city not so as to let each of them turn wherever he likes, but so as to use them itself to bind the city together."

"True," he said. "I had forgotten."

"Consider, then, Glaucon," I said, "that we won't be doing wrong to those who become philosophers among us either. We'll be saying just things to them when we compel them to care for and guard the others. We'll tell them that those who turn out this way in other 520b cities are reasonable not to share in the labors there. They grow up spontaneously, against the will of the constitution in each city, and it's just that what grows by itself, owing its upbringing to no one, shouldn't be eager to repay the cost of that upbringing to anyone. 'But you we have bred, both for yourselves and for the rest of the city, to be like leaders and kings in a beehive. You have been educated better and more completely than they have, and you are more capable 520c of taking part in both. "'So each of you in turn must go down to live with the others and get used to seeing things in the dark. Once you're used to it, you'll see ten thousand times better than the people there, and you'll know what each of the images is and what it's an image of, because you have seen the truth about beautiful and just and good things. And so the city will be governed by us and by you as a waking reality, not in a dream, the way most cities are governed now, by people who fight one another over shadows and form factions over ruling, 520d as if it were some great good. But the truth, surely, is this: the city where those who are to rule are least eager to rule must be governed best and with least faction, and the city that gets the opposite kind of rulers must be governed in the opposite way.'"

"Certainly," he said.

"Then do you think our pupils will disobey us when they hear this, and refuse to take their turn sharing the labors of the city,

while spending most of their time living with one another in the pure region?" 520e

"Impossible," he said. "We'll be giving just orders to just people. But each of them will certainly go to rule as to something necessary—the opposite of those who rule in every city now."

"That's how it is, my friend," I said. "If you can find a life better 521a than ruling for those who are going to rule, a well-governed city becomes possible for you. For only in that city will the truly rich rule—rich not in gold but in what a happy person must be rich in: a good and sensible life. But if beggars, starved of goods of their own, go into public affairs thinking that's where they must grab the good from, it isn't possible. Ruling becomes something to fight over, and a war like that, a war within the household, destroys them and the rest of the city too."

"Very true," he said. 521b

"Then do you know of any life that looks down on political office," I said, "other than the life of true philosophy?"

"No, by Zeus," he said.

"But those who go into ruling mustn't be in love with it. Otherwise their rival lovers will fight them."

"Of course."

"Then whom else will you compel to take on guarding the city, if not those who have the best understanding of what makes a city well governed, and who have other honors and a better life than the political one?"

"No one else," he said. 521c

THE STUDIES THAT DRAW THE SOUL UPWARD

Socrates sets out arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and harmonics as studies that turn the mind toward being.

SOCRATES "Then would you like us to consider now how such people will come to be, and how someone will lead them up into

the light, as some are said to have gone up from Hades to the gods?"

"Of course I would," he said.

"This, it seems, wouldn't be the flip of a shell. It is the turning around of a soul from a day that is a kind of night to the true day: an ascent to what is, which we'll say is true philosophy."

"Certainly."

"So we must consider which of the studies has that kind of 521d power?"

"Of course."[3]

"So what study would draw the soul away from what comes to be toward what is, Glaucon? And as I say this, something else occurs to me. Didn't we say that these people must be athletes of war when they're young?"

"We did."

"Then the study we're looking for must have this feature in addition to that one."

"What feature?"

"It mustn't be useless to men of war."

"It must," he said, "if that's possible."

"Now earlier we educated them in physical training and in music and poetry." 521e

"We did," he said.

"And physical training, I take it, is concerned with what comes to be and passes away, since it presides over the growth and decay of the body."

"So it appears."

"Then it wouldn't be the study we're looking for."

"No."

"What about music and poetry, as far as we described them before?"

522a "But that was the counterpart of physical training," he said, "if you remember. It educated the guardians through habits. Through harmony it passed on a certain harmonious-

3 "The flip of a shell" refers to a children's game: a shell, dark on one side and light on the other, was tossed to decide which team ran and which chased.

ness, not knowledge, and through rhythm a certain rhythmicalness; and in its stories, both the more mythical ones and the more truthful, it had other habits akin to these. But there was nothing in it that led toward anything 522b like what you're looking for now."

"You remind me very precisely," I said. "It really had nothing of the kind. But then, my wonderful Glaucon, what study would be like that? The crafts all seemed to be menial—"

"Of course they did. And yet what other study is left, apart from music and poetry, physical training and the crafts?"

"Come on," I said. "If we can't find anything beyond these, let's take something that extends to all of them."

"Like what?" 522c

"Like this common thing that all crafts and kinds of thought and knowledge make use of—which everyone has to learn among the first things."

"What is it?" he said.

"This humble business," I said, "of telling one and two and three apart. In short, I mean number and calculation. Isn't it true that every craft and every kind of knowledge is compelled to take part in them?"

"Very much so," he said.

"Then the art of war too?" I said.

"It absolutely must," he said. 522d

"At any rate," I said, "in the tragedies Palamedes keeps showing Agamemnon up as a thoroughly ridiculous general. Haven't you noticed? He says that he invented number and then drew up the ranks of the army at Troy and counted the ships and everything else, as if they had never been counted before, and Agamemnon, apparently, didn't even know how many feet he had, if he really didn't know how to count. And yet what sort of general do you think he'd be?"

"A strange one," he said, "if that were true." 522e

"Then shall we set it down," I said, "as a study necessary for a man of war to be able to calculate and count?"[4]

"More than anything," he said, "if he's going to understand anything at all about drawing up troops—or rather, if he's going to be a human being at all."

"Then do you notice the same thing about this study that I do?" I said.

"What's that?"

"It's probably one of the studies we're looking for, those that lead naturally to understanding. But no one uses it correctly, though it is entirely able to draw us toward being."

"What do you mean?" he said.

"I'll try to show you what I think," I said. "As I distinguish in my own mind the things that lead where we said and those that don't, look along with me and agree or disagree, so that we can see more clearly whether it is as I suspect."

523a "Show me," he said.

"I'll show you, then," I said, "if you can make it out. Some objects of perception 523b don't summon understanding to examine them, since perception judges them adequately; others urge it in every way to examine them, since perception produces nothing sound."

"You obviously mean things seen at a distance," he said, "and illusionistic paintings."

"You haven't quite hit on what I mean," I said.

"Then what do you mean?" he said.

"The ones that don't summon it," I said, "are those that don't give rise 523c to the opposite perception at the same time. The ones that do, I count as summoning, since in their case perception makes this no more evident than its opposite, whether it meets the thing close up or from far away. You'll understand what I mean more clearly this way. Here, we'd say, are three fingers: the smallest, the second, and the middle one."

4 Palamedes, a Greek hero at Troy, was credited in legend with inventing numbers, letters and other devices; Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides each wrote a play about him.

"Of course," he said.

"Take it that I'm speaking of them as seen close up. Now here's what I want you to consider about them."

"What?"

"Each of them appears equally to be a finger, and 523d in that respect it makes no difference whether it's seen in the middle or at the end, whether it's white or black, thick or thin, or anything of that kind. In all these cases the soul of most people isn't compelled to ask understanding what a finger is, since sight never indicated to it at the same time that the finger was the opposite of a finger."

"No, it didn't," he said.

"So naturally," I said, "a thing like that wouldn't 523e summon or awaken understanding."

"Naturally."

"But what about this? Does sight see their largeness and smallness adequately, and does it make no difference to it whether one of them lies in the middle or at the end? And the same with touch, for thickness and thinness, or softness and hardness? And don't the other senses reveal such things deficiently?

"Doesn't 524a each of them work like this? First, the sense assigned to the hard is necessarily assigned to the soft as well, and it reports to the soul that it perceives the same thing as both hard and soft?"

"That's so," he said.

"Then in such cases," I said, "the soul must be puzzled about what this perception means by hard, if it says the same thing is soft too; and about what the perception of light and heavy means by light and heavy, if it indicates that the heavy is light and the light heavy?" 524b

"Yes," he said, "these reports are strange to the soul and need examining."

"So naturally," I said, "in cases like these the soul first calls on calculation and understanding and tries to examine whether each of the things reported to it is one or two."

"Of course."

"And if they appear to be two, doesn't each appear to be different, and one?"

"Yes."

"So if each is one, and both together are two, it will understand the two as separate, 524c since it wouldn't understand things that weren't separate as two, but as one."

"Right."

"Sight, too, saw large and small, we say, but not as separate—as something mixed together. Isn't that so?"

"Yes."

"And to get clear about this, understanding in turn was compelled to see large and small, not mixed together but distinguished, the opposite of the way sight saw them."

"True."

"And isn't it from here that it first occurs to us to ask what, then, the large is, and the small?"

"Absolutely."

"And that's how we came to call the one intelligible and the other visible." 524d

"Quite right," he said.

"That's what I was trying to say just now: that some things summon thought and others don't. Those that strike perception together with their own opposites I defined as summoning; those that don't, as not awakening understanding."

"Now I understand," he said, "and I think so too."

"Well then, which of the two do number and the one seem to belong to?"

"I can't work it out," he said.

"Then reason it out from what we've said," I said. "If the one is adequately seen itself by itself, or grasped by some other 524e sense, it wouldn't draw us toward being, as we said about the finger.

"But if something opposed to it is always seen along with it, so that it appears no more one than the opposite, then there would at once be need of something to judge between them. The soul

would be compelled to be puzzled about it and to search, stirring up its thinking within itself, and to ask what the one itself is. In that way the study of the one would be among those 525a that lead us and turn us around toward the contemplation of what is."

"Well," he said, "sight of it has exactly this feature, more than anything. We see the same thing at once as one and as unlimited in number."

"And if that's true of the one," I said, "isn't the same true of all number?"

"Of course."

"But calculation and arithmetic are entirely about number."

"Very much so." 525b

"And they clearly lead toward truth."

"Extraordinarily so."

"Then it seems they would be among the studies we're looking for. A man of war has to learn them to draw up his troops, and a philosopher because he must rise up out of becoming and grasp being, or else never become skilled at calculation."

"That's so," he said.

"And our guardian happens to be both a man of war and a philosopher."

"Of course."

"Then it would be fitting, Glaucon, to prescribe this study by law, and to persuade those who are going to share in the greatest 525c matters in the city to go in for calculation and take it up, not as amateurs, but until they arrive at the contemplation of the nature of numbers by understanding itself. They shouldn't practice it for buying and selling, like merchants or shopkeepers, but for the sake of war, and to make it easier for the soul itself to turn from becoming to truth and being."

"Very well said," he said.

"And now that the study of calculation has been mentioned," I said, "I notice 525d how subtle it is, and how useful in many ways for what we want, if one pursues it for the sake of knowing rather than trading."

"How so?" he said.

"In the way we just described. It leads the soul forcefully upward, and compels it to discuss numbers themselves, never accepting it if someone offers it numbers that have visible or tangible bodies. You know, surely, how experts in the subject behave: if someone tries to divide the one itself 525e in argument, they laugh at him and won't accept it. If you cut it up into small change, they multiply it, taking care that the one should never appear to be not one but many parts."

"Very true," he said.

526a "Then what do you think, Glaucon, if someone asked them, 'My remarkable friends, what sort of numbers are you discussing, in which the one is as you claim—each one equal to every other one, without the slightest difference, and having no parts within itself?' What do you think they'd answer?"

"This, I think: that they're talking about numbers that can only be thought, and can't be handled in any other way."

"So you see, my friend," I said, "that this study really does seem necessary 526b for us, since it clearly compels the soul to use understanding itself to reach the truth itself?"

"It certainly does that," he said.

"Well, and have you ever noticed that those who are naturally good at calculation are, so to speak, naturally quick at all studies, and that slow people, if they're educated and exercised in it, even if they get no other benefit, all improve at least in becoming quicker than they were?"

"That's so," he said. 526c

"And I don't think you'd easily find many studies that take more effort to learn and practice than this one."

"No, you wouldn't."

"For all these reasons, then, we mustn't give up this study. Those with the best natures must be educated in it."

"I agree," he said.

"Then let that be one thing settled," I said. "Second, let's consider whether the study that comes next is of any use to us."

"What study? Do you mean geometry?" he said.

"Exactly that," I said. 526d

"As much of it as bears on warfare," he said, "is obviously of use. For pitching camp, seizing positions, concentrating and deploying an army, and all the other formations armies take in battle itself and on the march, the same man would do far better as a geometer than otherwise."

"But for things like that," I said, "even a small portion of geometry and calculation would be enough. What we need to consider is whether the larger and more advanced part of it tends toward that goal: 526e making it easier to see the form of the good. And everything tends that way, we say, that compels the soul to turn toward the region where the most blessed part of what is is found, which the soul must by all means see."

"You're right," he said.

"Then if it compels us to contemplate being, it's of use; if becoming, it isn't."

"That's what we say."

527a "Well, no one with even a little experience of geometry," I said, "will dispute this with us: that this science is the complete opposite of the way its practitioners talk about it."

"How so?" he said.

"They talk, I think, in a very ridiculous way, though they can't help it. They speak as if they were doing something, and make all their statements for the sake of action: 'squaring,' 'applying,' 'adding,' and so on. But in fact the whole 527b subject is pursued for the sake of knowledge."

"Absolutely," he said.

"Mustn't we agree to something further?"

"What?"

"That it's knowledge of what always is, not of something that at some time comes to be and passes away."

"That's easily agreed," he said. "Geometry is knowledge of what always is."

"Then, my noble friend, it would draw the soul toward truth, and produce philosophical thought, so that we turn upward what we now wrongly turn downward."

"As much as anything can," he said. 527c

"Then as much as anything can," I said, "we must order that the people in your beautiful city by no means neglect geometry. Its by-products aren't trivial either."

"What are they?" he said.

"The ones you mentioned," I said, "concerning war. And as for taking in all other studies better, we know, surely, that someone who has grasped geometry will be completely different from someone who hasn't."

"Completely, by Zeus," he said.

"Shall we set this down as the second study for the young, then?"

"Let's," he said. 527d

"Well then, shall we set down astronomy third? Or don't you think so?"

"I do," he said. "Being more perceptive about the seasons, months and years is fitting not only for farming and navigation, but just as much for generalship."

"You amuse me," I said. "You seem to be afraid the majority will think you're prescribing useless studies. But it's no trivial matter—in fact it's hard—to believe that in these studies an instrument in each person's soul is purified and 527e rekindled, after being destroyed and blinded by other pursuits; and this instrument is more worth saving than ten thousand eyes, since truth is seen by it alone. Those who share this view will think you're speaking remarkably well. But those who've never had any inkling of it will naturally think you're talking nonsense, since they see no other benefit from these studies worth mentioning.

"So decide right now 528a which group you're talking to. Or perhaps it's neither, and you're making your arguments mainly for your own sake, though you wouldn't begrudge anyone else whatever benefit he might get from them."

"That's my choice," he said: "to speak, ask and answer mainly for my own sake."

"Then back up a step," I said. "Just now we didn't take the subject that comes after geometry correctly."

"How did we take it?" he said.

"After plane surfaces," I said, "we went straight to solids in rotation, taking up the solid 528b before we'd studied it by itself. But the right thing is to take the third dimension straight after the second. And that, I think, is the dimension of cubes and whatever has depth."

"Yes, it is," he said. "But these things, Socrates, don't seem to have been discovered yet."

"There are two reasons for that," I said. "First, since no city holds these things in honor, they're researched feebly, being difficult. Second, the researchers need a director, without whom they won't make discoveries. It's hard for such a director to appear in the first place; and even if one did, as things stand 528c the researchers in this field are too proud to obey him. But if a whole city joined in directing them and held these things in honor, the researchers would obey, and with continuous and vigorous research the truth about them would come to light. Even now, slighted and stunted as they are by the many, and by researchers who can't say what they're useful for, they grow in spite of all this, by the force of their charm; so it wouldn't be surprising if they came to light." 528d

"Yes," he said, "they certainly have exceptional charm. But explain more clearly what you were saying just now. You were counting the study of plane surfaces as geometry."

"Yes," I said.

"And then," he said, "at first you put astronomy after it, but later you went back."

"Yes," I said, "in my hurry to go through everything quickly, I'm getting there more slowly. The investigation of the dimension of depth came next, but because research into it is in a ridiculous state, I skipped it and after geometry 528e spoke of astronomy, which is the motion of what has depth."

"That's right," he said.

"Then let's set astronomy down as the fourth study," I said, "on the assumption that the one we're now leaving out will be available if a city pursues it."

"That's reasonable," he said. "And Socrates, since you scolded me just now for praising astronomy in a vulgar way, I'll now praise it on the lines you're pursuing. 529a I think it's clear to everyone that this study compels the soul to look upward, and leads it from things here to things there."

"Perhaps it's clear to everyone but me," I said. "I don't think so."

"What do you think, then?" he said.

"The way it's handled now by those who lead people up into philosophy, it makes the soul look very much downward."

"What do you mean?" he said.

"It seems to me," I said, "that you have a rather lordly idea of what the study of things 'above' is. You look likely to think that 529b if someone tipped his head back and learned something by gazing at decorations on a ceiling, he was contemplating them with his understanding and not with his eyes. Maybe you're right to think so, and I'm being simple-minded. But I, for my part, can't believe that any study makes the soul look upward except the one concerned with what is and is invisible. If someone tries to learn about any perceptible thing, whether gaping upward or squinting down, I say he will never learn it—for there is no knowledge 529c of such things—and that his soul is looking not up but down, even if he does his studying floating on his back, on land or at sea."

"I've got what I deserve," he said. "You were right to rebuke me. But what did you mean when you said astronomy should be studied differently from the way it's studied now, if it's to be learned in a way that's useful for our purposes?"

"This," I said. "These decorations in the sky, since they are embroidered on something visible, should be regarded as the most beautiful and 529d most precise of such things, but as falling far short of the true ones—the motions with which real speed and real slowness, in true number and in all the true figures,

move relative to each other and carry along what is in them. These can be grasped by reason and thought, but not by sight. Or do you think otherwise?"

"Not at all," he said.

"Then we should use the decoration in the sky as models for the sake of learning about those other things," I said, "just as 529e we would if we came across diagrams drawn and worked out with exceptional skill by Daedalus or some other craftsman or painter.

"Anyone experienced in geometry who saw such things would presumably think them superbly made, but would think it ridiculous to study them seriously in the expectation of finding in them the truth about 530a equals or doubles or any other ratio."

"How could it not be ridiculous?" he said.[5]

"Well, don't you think someone who is really an astronomer will feel the same way when he looks at the motions of the stars?" I said. "He'll believe that the craftsman of the heavens put together the heavens themselves and what is in them as beautifully as such works can be put together. But as for the ratio of night to day, and of these to the month, and of the month to the year, and of the other stars 530b to these and to one another —don't you think he'll consider it strange to believe that these things always happen in the same way and never deviate in any respect, even though they have bodies and are visible, and to seek by every means to grasp the truth about them?"

"I certainly think so," he said, "now that I hear it from you."

"Then we'll pursue astronomy as we do geometry," I said, "by means of problems, and leave the things in the sky alone, if we're really going to take part in astronomy and make 530c the naturally wise part of the soul useful instead of useless."

"You're prescribing a task many times greater than the way astronomy is done now," he said.

5 Daedalus was the legendary master craftsman of Greek myth, said to have made statues so lifelike they moved.

"Yes," I said, "and I think we'll prescribe everything else in the same way too, if we're to be of any use as lawgivers. But can you suggest any other suitable subject?"

"Not right now, just like that," he said.

"Well, motion presents not one kind but several," I said, 530d "as I think. Some wise person will perhaps be able to name them all; but there are two that are obvious even to us."

"What are they?"

"Besides the one we've discussed," I said, "its counterpart."

"What's that?"

"It looks as if, just as the eyes are fixed on astronomy," I said, "so the ears are fixed on harmonic motion, and these two sciences are sisters of a sort, as the Pythagoreans say and as we agree, Glaucon. Or what do we do?"

"We agree," he said. 530e 6

"Then since the task is a big one," I said, "we'll find out from them what they say about these things and whatever else there is besides. But through all of it we'll hold on to our own principle."

"What's that?"

"That those we are going to raise should never attempt to learn any part of these subjects that is incomplete and doesn't always arrive at the point where everything ought to end up, as we were just saying about astronomy.

"Or don't you know that 531a they do the same kind of thing with harmony too? They measure audible concords and sounds against one another, and so, like the astronomers, they labor to no end."

"Yes, by the gods," he said, "and ridiculously too. They talk about certain 'densities' and put their ears to the strings as if trying to catch a voice from next door. Some say they can still hear a sound in between, and that this is the smallest interval, the one that should be the unit of measure; others argue that the

6 The Pythagoreans, followers of Pythagoras (sixth century BC), studied numerical ratios in music and in the heavens.

strings are now sounding the same note. Both 531b put their ears ahead of their understanding."[7]

"You mean those excellent people who harass the strings and torture them, racking them on the pegs," I said. "But so that the image doesn't get too long—with blows from the plectrum, and accusations against the strings, and denials and brazenness on their part—I'll drop the image. I don't mean these people but the ones we said just now we'd ask about harmony. They do the same thing as the 531c astronomers: they look for the numbers in these audible concords, but they don't go up to problems, to investigate which numbers are concordant and which are not, and why in each case."

"That's a superhuman task you're describing," he said.

"A useful one, rather," I said, "for the search for the beautiful and the good, but useless if pursued in any other way."

"Likely enough," he said.

"And I think," I said, "that if the study of all these things we've gone through 531d reaches their community and kinship with one another, and works out how they are related, then pursuing them contributes something to what we want, and the labor isn't wasted; but otherwise it is."

"I suspect so too," he said. "But it's an enormous task you're talking about, Socrates."

DIALECTIC

Socrates presents dialectic as the crowning study, which reaches the first principle of all.

SOCRATES "The prelude, you mean," I said, "or what? Don't we know that all these are only preludes to the song itself that has to be learned? Surely you don't think people who are clever at these things are dialecticians." 531e

"No, by Zeus," he said, "except for a very few of those I've met."

7 "Densities" (πυκνώματα) was a technical term of Greek music theory for clusters of very small intervals.

"But will people who can't give and receive an account," I said, "ever know any of the things we say they must know?"

"No," he said, "not that either."[8]

532a "Then isn't this, Glaucon," I said, "finally the song itself that dialectic performs? Though it is intelligible, the power of sight would imitate it—the power that, we said, tries to look at the animals themselves, then at the stars themselves, and finally at the sun itself. In the same way, when someone tries through dialectic, without any of the senses, to press on by means of reason to what each thing itself is, and doesn't give up until 532b he grasps what the good itself is by understanding itself, he arrives at the very end of the intelligible, just as that other one then arrived at the end of the visible."

"Absolutely," he said.

"Well then, don't you call this journey dialectic?"

"Of course."

"And the release from the bonds," I said, "and the turning from the shadows to the images and the light, and the ascent from the underground cave to the sun; and there, the continued inability to look at the animals and plants and the light of the sun, 532c but the ability to look at divine reflections in water and shadows of the things that are—not shadows of images cast by another light of the same kind, which is itself a shadow compared with the sun—all this practice of the arts we've gone through has this power: it leads the best part of the soul up to the sight of the best among the things that are, just as then the clearest part of the body was led to the sight of the brightest thing in the bodily and 532d visible realm."

"I accept that," he said. "And yet it seems to me altogether hard to accept, and in another way hard not to accept. All the same—since we don't have to hear this only on the present occasion but must come back to it many times—let's suppose that things are as has now been said, and go on to the song itself, and go through it the way we went through the prelude. So tell me

8 The Greek word for "song" here, nomos, also means "law," and Plato plays on both senses.

what the character of the power of dialectic is, and 532e into what kinds it is divided, and what its paths are. These, it seems, would be the ones that lead to the place where, once one arrives, there would be a rest from the road and an end of the journey."

533a "You won't be able to follow me any further, my dear Glaucon," I said—"though there would be no lack of eagerness on my side—and you would no longer be seeing an image of what we're talking about, but the truth itself, at least as it appears to me. Whether it is really so or not, it isn't worth insisting on that any longer. But that there is something like this to be seen—that we must insist on. Isn't that so?"

"Of course."

"And also that only the power of dialectic could reveal it, to someone experienced in the subjects we've just gone through, and that it's not possible in any other way?"

"That too," he said, "is worth insisting on." 533b

"This much, anyway, no one will dispute when we say it," I said: "that no other inquiry attempts to grasp systematically, in every case, what each thing itself is. All the other arts are directed either to human opinions and desires, or to generation and composition, or to the care of things that grow or are put together. As for the rest, which we said grasp something of what is—geometry and the ones that follow it—we see that they dream 533c about what is, but are unable to see it in waking life so long as they use hypotheses and leave them undisturbed, unable to give an account of them. When your starting point is something you don't know, and your conclusion and the steps in between are woven together out of what you don't know, how could such an agreement ever become knowledge?"

"There's no way," he said.

"Then only the dialectical method proceeds in this way," I said, "doing away with the hypotheses and going to the first principle itself, 533d so as to make them secure. And when the eye of the soul is really buried in some outlandish mire, dialectic gently draws it out and leads it upward, using as helpers and fellow guides in the turning around the arts we went through. We

have often called these knowledge, out of habit, but they need another name, clearer than opinion but dimmer than knowledge—somewhere earlier we defined it as thought. But I don't think there should be any dispute about 533e a name, for people who have to investigate things as important as those before us."

"No, there shouldn't," he said.

"So it will be enough to use whatever name merely makes clear, in some way, the state in the soul we mean?"

"Yes."

"Then it will be enough," I said, "as before, to call the first section knowledge, the second thought, the third 534a belief, and the fourth imagination; and the last two together opinion, and the first two together understanding. Opinion is concerned with becoming, and understanding with being. As being is to becoming, so understanding is to opinion; and as understanding is to opinion, so knowledge is to belief and thought to imagination. But the proportion between the things these are set over, and the division of each of the two—the opinable and the intelligible—into two parts, let's leave aside, Glaucon, so that it doesn't fill us up with arguments many times longer than the ones we've already been through." 534b

"As for the rest," he said, "I agree with you, so far as I can follow."

"And do you also call someone a dialectician who grasps the account of the being of each thing? And as for someone who can't, won't you say that insofar as he is unable to give an account to himself and to another, to that extent he lacks understanding of it?"

"How could I say otherwise?" he said.

"And the same goes for the good. Suppose someone can't distinguish in an account the 534c form of the good, separating it from everything else, and can't come through all the tests as if in battle, eager to test things by what they are rather than by what people think of them, and make his way through all of this with his account never falling. Won't you say that someone in that condition doesn't know the good itself, or any other good either,

and that if he somehow grasps an image of it, he grasps it by opinion, not by knowledge? And that he is dreaming and dozing through his present life, and before he wakes up here, he'll arrive in Hades 534d and fall asleep there for good?"

"Yes, by Zeus," he said, "I'll certainly say all that."

"Well then, as for your own children, whom you are raising and educating in words—if you ever raised them in fact, I don't imagine you would let them be rulers in the city, with authority over the most important matters, while they were as irrational as lines in geometry."

"No, I wouldn't," he said.

"Then you'll make it a law that they give particular attention to this education, which will enable them to ask and answer questions with the most knowledge?" 534e

"I will," he said, "together with you."[9]

"So do you think," I said, "that dialectic lies on top of our subjects like a coping stone, and that no other subject can rightly be placed above it, but that the subjects of study 535a have now reached their end?"

"I do," he said.

"Then what remains for you," I said, "is the distribution: to whom we are to give these subjects, and in what way."

"Clearly," he said.

"Do you remember our earlier selection of rulers, and what sort of people we chose?"

"Of course I do," he said.

CHOOSING AND TRAINING THE RULERS

Socrates describes selecting the rulers by nature and training them in stages until age fifty.

SOCRATES "Well, in other respects," I said, "you should assume those are the natures that must be chosen. We must prefer the steadiest and the most courageous, and, as far as possible, the

9 Irrational (alogos, "without an account") was the term for lines whose lengths cannot be expressed as ratios of whole numbers.

best-looking. 535b But besides this, we must look for people who are not only noble and stern in character, but who also have the natural qualities that suit them for this education."

"What qualities are you specifying?"

"They need keenness for their studies, my good friend," I said, "and must not find learning hard. Souls are much more likely to lose heart in hard studies than in physical training, since the toil is closer to home: it belongs to the soul alone and isn't shared with the body."

"True," he said. 535c

"And we must look for someone with a good memory, who is tireless and loves hard work in every way. Otherwise how do you think anyone will be willing both to put his body through its labors and to complete so much study and practice?"

"No one will," he said, "unless he is altogether well endowed by nature."

"At any rate the present mistake," I said, "and the discredit that has fallen on philosophy because of it, come from this, as we said before: people take it up without being worthy of it. Illegitimate students shouldn't take it up, but legitimate ones."

"How do you mean?" he said. 535d

"First," I said, "whoever takes it up must not limp in his love of hard work, loving work in one half of things and shirking it in the other. That's what happens when someone loves physical training and hunting and loves every labor done through the body, but doesn't love learning or listening or inquiring, and hates work in all of these. And someone whose love of work has swung to the opposite side limps too."

"That's very true," he said.

"And with regard to truth," I said, "won't we count as maimed in the same way 535e a soul that hates the voluntary lie, finding it hard to bear itself and growing furious when others lie, but readily accepts the involuntary lie, and isn't upset when it's caught being ignorant, but wallows in its ignorance as contentedly as a pig?"

"Absolutely," he said.

536a "And with regard to moderation," I said, "and courage and greatness of spirit and all the parts of excellence, we must watch especially closely for the illegitimate and the legitimate. When a private person or a city doesn't know how to look at such things from every angle, they unwittingly employ the limping and the illegitimate for whichever of these purposes they happen to need—the one as friends, the other as rulers."

"That's exactly how it is," he said.

"So we must be very careful about all these things," I said. 536b "If we bring people sound of limb and sound of mind to so much learning and so much training, and educate them, then Justice herself won't find fault with us, and we'll preserve the city and its constitution. But if we bring people of another sort to these things, we'll do the very opposite, and pour an even greater flood of ridicule over philosophy."

"That would certainly be shameful," he said.

"Very much so," I said. "But I think I've just done something rather ridiculous myself."

"What's that?" he said. 536c

"I forgot we were only playing," I said, "and spoke too intensely. As I was talking I glanced at philosophy, and when I saw her undeservedly trampled in the mud, I think I got indignant and, as if angry with those responsible, said what I said too seriously."

"No, by Zeus," he said, "not too seriously for me as a listener."

"But too seriously for me as a speaker," I said. "Now let's not forget this: in our earlier selection we chose older people, 536d but in this one that won't do. We mustn't believe Solon when he says that someone growing old can learn many things; he can learn even less than he can run. All great and numerous labors belong to the young."

"Necessarily," he said.

"So arithmetic and geometry and all the preliminary education that must come before dialectic should be put before them while they are children—but not by giving the teaching the form of compulsion."

"Why not?" 536e **10**

"Because," I said, "a free person shouldn't learn any subject like a slave. Physical labors, when forced, do the body no harm, but nothing learned by force stays in the soul."

"True," he said.

"Then don't use force, my excellent friend," I said, "in bringing up the children in their 537a studies, but let them learn through play. That way you'll also be better able to see what each of them is naturally suited for."

"What you say makes sense," he said.

"And do you remember," I said, "that we said the children should also be taken to war on horseback as spectators, and, wherever it's safe, be brought up close and given a taste of blood, like puppies?"

"I remember," he said.

"Then in all these things," I said, "the labors, the studies and the dangers, whoever always proves most adept must be enrolled in a select group." 537b

"At what age?" he said.

"When they are released from their compulsory physical training," I said. "That period, whether it lasts two years or three, leaves them unable to do anything else, since fatigue and sleep are enemies of study. And at the same time, how each of them shows up in that training is itself one of the tests, and not the least of them."

"Of course," he said.

"After that period," I said, "those picked out from among the twenty-year-olds will receive greater honors than the others, 537c and the subjects they studied haphazardly as children in their education must be brought together for them into an overview of the kinship of the subjects with one another and with the nature of what is."

"That's the only kind of learning," he said, "that stays firm in those who acquire it."

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10 Solon, the Athenian lawmaker and poet of the early sixth century BC, wrote that he grew old "always learning many things."

"And it's the greatest test," I said, "of whether someone's nature is dialectical or not. Whoever can see things together is dialectical, and whoever can't is not."

"I agree," he said.

"So you will have to keep an eye on this," I said, "and see who 537d are most like this among them, steadfast in their studies and steadfast in war and in the other things required of them. When they pass the age of thirty, you must select them again from among those already selected and place them in still greater honors, and examine them, testing them by the power of dialectic to see which of them can let go of his eyes and the rest of his senses and go on, in company with truth, to what is itself. And this is where a great deal of caution is needed, my friend."

"Why, especially?" he said. 537e

THE DANGERS OF ARGUMENT

Socrates warns that early exposure to argument makes young people lawless, then turns to the worse constitutions.

SOCRATES "Don't you realize," I said, "how great an evil is arising around dialectic at present?"

"What evil?" he said.

"Its practitioners are filled with lawlessness, I suppose," I said.

"They certainly are," he said.

"Do you think there's anything surprising in what's happening to them?" I said. "Don't you sympathize?"

"Why in particular?" he said.

"It's like this," I said. "Suppose a child passed off as someone else's were brought up amid great 538a wealth, in a large and important family, with many flatterers around him, and when he became a man realized that he was not the son of those who claimed to be his parents, but couldn't find the people who were really his parents. Can you guess how he would be disposed toward the flatterers and toward those who had taken him in as their own, both during the time when he didn't know the truth

about the substitution and during the time when he did? Or would you like to hear my guess?"

"I would," he said.

"Well, my guess," I said, "is that he would honor his supposed 538b father and mother and other relatives more than the flatterers. He would be less likely to let them go in need of anything, less likely to do or say anything lawless against them, and less likely to disobey them in important matters than the flatterers—during the time when he didn't know the truth."

"Likely enough," he said.

"But once he found out the facts, my guess is that his honor and devotion toward them would slacken and toward the flatterers would intensify. He would obey the flatterers far more than before 538c and start living by their standards, keeping company with them openly; and he would care nothing for that father and the other so-called relatives, unless he were of a very decent nature."

"Everything you say is just what would happen," he said. "But how does this image apply to those who take up arguments?"

"Like this. We have, I think, convictions from childhood about what is just and fine, and we have been brought up under them as if under parents, obeying and honoring them."

"We do." 538d

"And there are other practices opposed to these, which bring pleasures with them, flatter our soul and drag it toward themselves, but they don't persuade anyone who is at all moderate. Such people honor those ancestral convictions and obey them."

"That's so."

"Well then," I said, "when someone in this condition is met by a question—'What is the fine?'—and he answers what he heard from the lawgiver, and the argument refutes him, and by refuting him many times and in many ways reduces him to the opinion that this is no more 538e fine than shameful, and the same with the just and the good and the things he held in highest honor—after that, what do you think he'll do about honoring and obeying them?"

"He's bound to stop honoring and obeying them as he did," he said.

"And when he no longer thinks these things are worthy of honor and his own, as he did before," I said, "and he doesn't find the true ones, what kind of 539a life will he naturally turn to, other than the one that flatters him?"

"None," he said.

"So he'll be seen, I think, to have turned lawless from law-abiding."

"Necessarily."

"Then isn't this natural," I said, "for those who take up arguments this way, and, as I said just now, deserving of much sympathy?"

"And pity too," he said.

"So that this pity doesn't arise concerning your thirty-year-olds, mustn't they take up arguments with every possible precaution?"

"Very much so," he said. 539b

"And isn't one important precaution not letting them taste arguments while they are young? I don't think it has escaped you that when youngsters first get a taste of arguments, they misuse them as a game, always using them to contradict. They imitate those who refute them and refute others themselves, delighting like puppies in dragging and tearing apart with argument whoever happens to be near."

"Enormously so," he said.

"So when they have refuted many people themselves, and been refuted by many, 539c they fall quickly and hard into believing nothing of what they believed before. And as a result, both they themselves and the whole of philosophy get a bad name with everyone else."

"Very true," he said.

"But an older man," I said, "wouldn't want to share in madness of this kind. He'll imitate the one who is willing to engage in dialectic and look for the truth rather than the one who plays and contradicts for the sake of the game. He himself will be

more measured, [539d] and he'll bring the practice honor instead of discredit."

"Right," he said.

"And wasn't everything we said before this also said as a precaution—that those with whom one shares arguments must have orderly and steady natures, and not, as now, anyone who happens along, with no fitness for it at all?"

"Certainly," he said.

"Then will it be enough for them to stay with the study of arguments, continuously and intensely, doing nothing else, exercising in them as they earlier exercised in bodily training, but for twice as many years?" [539e]

"Do you mean six years or four?" he said.

"Never mind," I said, "make it five. After that you must make them go back down into that cave again, and compel them to hold office in matters of war and in all the offices suited to the young, so that they won't fall short of the others in experience either. And there too [540a] they must be tested, to see whether they'll stand firm when pulled in every direction, or whether they'll give way at all."

"How long a time do you allow for this?" he said.

"Fifteen years," I said. "And when they are fifty, those who have come through safely and have excelled in every way, both in action and in knowledge, must at last be led to the end. They must be compelled to lift up the radiance of their souls and look at the very thing that gives light to all, and when they have seen the good itself, they must use it as a model and put the city, private individuals [540b] and themselves in order for the rest of their lives, each in turn. They will spend most of their time on philosophy, but when their turn comes, they will toil at political affairs and rule, each of them, for the city's sake, doing it not as something fine but as something necessary. And so, having always educated others like themselves and left them behind in their place as guardians of the city, they will depart to live in the Isles of the Blessed. The city will establish memorials and sacri-

fices to them 540c at public expense—as to divinities, if the Pythia concurs, and if not, as to blessed and godlike men."

"You've turned out rulers of perfect beauty, Socrates," he said, "like a sculptor."

"Women rulers too, Glaucon," I said. "Don't suppose that what I've said applies any more to men than to women—to those of them, that is, who are born with adequate natures."

"That's right," he said, "if they're to share everything equally with the men, as we described." 540d

"Well then," I said, "do you agree that what we've said about the city and its constitution isn't altogether wishful thinking? It's difficult, but possible somehow—and in no other way than the one we've described: when true philosophers, whether several or one, come to power in a city. They will scorn the honors of the present day, believing them unfit for a free man and worth nothing; they will value what is right, and the honors that come from it, above 540e everything, and hold justice the greatest and most necessary thing; and serving justice and making it grow, they will set their own city in order."

"How?" he said.

"They'll send everyone in the city over ten years old 541a out into the country," I said. "They'll take charge of their children, away from the present habits that their parents share, and raise them in their own ways and laws, which are the ones we described earlier. Isn't this the quickest and easiest way for the city and constitution we were describing to be established, to be happy itself, and to bring the greatest benefit to the people among whom it arises?"

"Much the quickest," he said. "And how it would come about, if it ever did, 541b I think you've explained well, Socrates."

"Then haven't we now said enough," I said, "about this city and about the man who resembles it? It's clear, I suppose, what sort of person we'll say he has to be."

"It's clear," he said. "And as to your question, I think the subject is finished."

Book VIII

How constitutions decline.

SOCRATES 543a "Very well. We've agreed, Glaucon, that in the city that is to be governed at its best, women are to be in common, children are to be in common, and all education too; likewise their pursuits in war and peace are to be in common; and their kings are to be those who have proved best in philosophy and in war."

"It's agreed," he said. 543b

"And we also granted this: that once the rulers are established, they'll lead the soldiers and settle them in the sort of housing we described, where no one has anything private and everything is common to all. And besides housing like that, we also agreed, if you remember, what sort of possessions they would have."

"Yes, I remember," he said. "We thought none of them should own any of the things other people own now; instead, like athletes of war 543c and guardians, they should receive from the others their year's keep as wages for their guarding, and devote themselves to caring for themselves and the rest of the city."

"You're right," I said. "But come on, now that we've finished this, let's recall where we turned off to get here, so that we can go back along the same road."

"That's not hard," he said. "You were talking pretty much as you are now, as if you'd finished describing the city. You said that you would set down as good the sort of city you had then described, 543d and the man who resembles it—and that, apparently, though you had a still finer 544a city and man to tell of.

"Anyway, you said that if this one is right, the others are defective. Of the remaining constitutions, as I recall, you said there were four kinds worth discussing, whose faults we should look at, along with the men who resemble each of them. That way, once we had seen them all and agreed on who is the best man and who the worst, we could investigate whether the best is happiest and the worst most wretched, or not. And when I asked which 544b four constitutions you meant, Polemarchus and Adeimantus interrupted at that point; and that's how you took up the discussion and arrived here."

"You've remembered it exactly," I said.

"Then give me the same hold again, like a wrestler: I'll ask the same question, and you try to say what you were going to say then."

"If I can," I said.

"Well, I really do want to hear for myself," he said, "which four constitutions you meant." 544c

"You won't find that hard to hear," I said. "The ones I mean are the ones that also have names. There's the one most people praise, the Cretan and Spartan constitution. Second, and second in praise, is the one called oligarchy, a constitution full of evils. Then its opposite, which comes next, democracy. And then that noble thing, tyranny, which outdoes all of them, the fourth and last disease of a city. Or do you know some other form of constitution that falls into a clearly distinct 544d class? Hereditary dynasties, purchased kingships and other constitutions of that sort lie somewhere in between these, and you'd find them no less among non-Greeks than among Greeks."

"Certainly there are many strange ones spoken of," he said.

"Then do you realize," I said, "that there must be as many kinds of human character as there are of constitutions? Or do you think constitutions come from some oak or rock, and not 544e from the characters of the people in the cities, which tip the scale, so to speak, and drag everything else along with them?"

"No," he said, "I think they come from nowhere but there."

"Then if the arrangements of cities are five, the arrangements of individual souls would be five too."

"Of course."[1]

"Now we've already described the man who resembles aristocracy, whom we rightly call good and just."

"We have."

"Next, then, shouldn't we go through the worse ones? First the man who loves victory and honor, corresponding to the Spartan constitution; then the oligarchic, the democratic and the tyrannical man. That way we can look at the most unjust man and set him beside the most just, and our inquiry will be complete: how pure justice compares with pure injustice in the happiness or wretchedness of the person who has it. Then we can either be persuaded by Thrasymachus 545b and pursue injustice, or by the argument now coming to light and pursue justice."

"Absolutely," he said, "that's what we must do."

"Well, earlier we began by examining characters in constitutions before examining them in individuals, since that's clearer. Shouldn't we do the same now? First we examine the constitution that loves honor—I have no other name in use for it; we'll have to call it timocracy or timarchy—and alongside it we'll consider the man of that sort; 545c then oligarchy and the oligarchic man; next we'll look at democracy and observe the democratic man; and fourth, we'll go to the city ruled by a tyrant and look at it, and then look into the tyrannical soul. And so we'll try to become competent judges of the questions we set ourselves."

"That would certainly be a reasonable way," he said, "to do both the viewing and the judging."

"Come on, then," I said, "let's try to say how a timocracy would arise from an aristocracy. Or is it simply this: 545d every constitution changes because of the very group that holds office, when civil strife breaks out within that group; but as long as it is of one mind, however small it is, it can't be shaken?"

"Yes, that's so."

1 "From oak or rock" echoes a proverbial phrase in Homer (*Odyssey* 19.163) for someone of unknown origin.

HOW THE BEST CITY DECLINES

Socrates explains how strife among the rulers turns the best city into a timocracy.

SOCRATES "Then how, Glaucon," I said, "will our city be shaken? How will the auxiliaries and the rulers fall into strife with each other and among themselves? Or would you like us, like Homer, to pray to the Muses to tell us how [545e] 'strife first fell upon them'? We could say that they speak to us in a lofty, tragic style, playing and teasing us as if we were children, while talking as though they were in earnest."

"How?"[2]

[546a] Something like this. It is hard for a city constituted like this to be shaken. But since everything that comes into being must decay, not even a structure like this will last for all time; it will be dissolved. And this is how. Not only for plants in the earth but also for animals upon it, there come times of fertility and barrenness of soul and body, whenever the revolutions complete the circuits of each kind's cycles—short circuits for the short-lived, and the opposite for the opposite. As for the fertility and barrenness of your race, those [546b] you have educated as leaders of the city, wise though they are, will be no more successful at hitting on them through reasoning combined with perception. The times will slip past them, and they will beget children when they should not. For a divine creature that is born, there is a period comprehended by a perfect number. For a human one, it is the first number in which increases, both dominating and dominated, taking three intervals and four terms of things that make like and unlike, that wax and wane, render everything [546c] commensurable and rational with everything else. Of these, the four-thirds base, yoked with five and increased three times, yields two harmonies. One is equal an equal number of times, so many times a hundred. The other

2 Homer invokes the Muses to tell how fire first fell on the Greek ships (*Iliad* 16.112); Socrates adapts the phrase.

is equal in length one way but oblong: on one side, a hundred numbers from the rational diameters of five, each less one (or less two, from the irrational diameters); on the other, a hundred cubes of three.[3] This whole geometrical number controls this matter: better and worse births. 546d And when your guardians, not knowing about them, pair brides with bridegrooms at the wrong time, the children will be neither well endowed by nature nor fortunate. The older generation will appoint the best of them, but they will still be unworthy, and when they come into their fathers' powers they will begin, though guardians, to neglect us: first by valuing music and poetry less than they should, and second physical training, so that your young people will be less cultivated. From these will come rulers not very well suited 546e to guarding, to testing the races—Hesiod's, and those among 547a you—of gold, silver, bronze and iron.[4]

When iron is mixed with silver and bronze with gold, unlikeness will arise, and a discordant irregularity; and wherever these arise, they always breed war and hatred. "Of this lineage," we must say, is civil strife, wherever it arises.

"And we'll say that their answer is right," he said.

"It has to be," I said, "since they're Muses." 547b

"Then what do the Muses say next?" he said.

"Once strife has arisen," I said, "the two races pull in different directions. The iron and bronze pull toward moneymaking and the acquisition of land and houses, gold and silver. The other two, the gold and silver, since they are not poor but rich by nature, draw their souls toward excellence and the old order. They struggle and strain against each other, and then they agree on a middle course: they distribute land and houses 547c as private property; they enslave those they previously guarded as free friends and providers, and hold them as dependents and

3 This "nuptial number" is famously obscure; one common reckoning makes it 12,960,000, the square of 3,600 and also the product 4,800 × 2,700.

4 In Hesiod's *Works and Days*, humankind passes through successive races of gold, silver, bronze and iron.

servants; and they themselves see to war and to keeping guard over them."

"I think that's where this change comes from," he said.

"Then wouldn't this constitution be somewhere between aristocracy and oligarchy?" I said.

"Certainly."

"That's how the change will happen. But once changed, how will it be run? Isn't it 547d clear that since it's in between, it will imitate the previous constitution in some ways and oligarchy in others, and also have something peculiar to itself?"

"Just so," he said.

"So in honoring its rulers; in having its warrior class keep away from farming, crafts and other moneymaking; in establishing common meals and attending to physical training and the contests of war—in all such things it will imitate the previous one?"

"Yes." 547e

"But in being afraid to bring the wise into office, since it no longer has men of that kind who are simple and intense, only mixed ones; in leaning instead toward spirited and simpler men, more naturally suited to war than to 548a peace; in holding the tricks and stratagems of war in honor; and in spending all its time at war—in most such things it will have features peculiar to itself?"

"Yes."

"Men like these will also be greedy for money," I said, "like those in oligarchies. They'll have a fierce, secret reverence for gold and silver, since they'll own storehouses and private treasuries where they can put it away and hide it, and walled houses —private nests, quite literally—in which 548b they can spend lavishly on women and on anyone else they like."

"Very true," he said.

"And won't they be stingy with their own money, since they value it and can't acquire it openly, but happy to spend other people's to satisfy their appetites? They'll enjoy their pleasures in secret, running away from the law like boys from their father.

That's because they've been educated not by persuasion but by force, since they've neglected the true Muse, the one who goes with discussion [548c] and philosophy, and honored physical training above music and poetry."

"The constitution you're describing," he said, "is a complete mixture of bad and good."

"Yes, it is mixed," I said. "But one thing alone stands out most clearly in it, because the spirited part is in control: love of victory and love of honor."

"Very much so," he said.

THE TIMOCRATIC MAN

Socrates describes the honor-loving man and how he grows from the son of a good father.

SOCRATES "So this constitution would come into being in this way and be of this sort," I said, "to sketch the outline of a constitution in words [548d] without working it out precisely. The sketch is enough to let us see the most just and the most unjust man, and it would be an impossibly long task to go through every constitution and every character without leaving anything out."

"That's right," he said.

"Then who is the man who corresponds to this constitution? How does he come into being, and what is he like?"

"I think," said Adeimantus, "that he comes pretty close to Glaucon here, at least in his love of victory." [548e]

"Perhaps in that respect," I said, "but I don't think he's like him in these ways."

"Which ones?"

"He has to be more self-willed," I said, "and somewhat less cultivated, though he loves the arts; fond of listening, but [549a] no speaker at all. A man like this would be harsh to slaves, instead of simply looking down on them as an adequately educated man does; gentle to free men, and very obedient to those in office. He loves ruling and loves honor, but he thinks he deserves to rule not because of his speaking or anything of that sort, but because

of his deeds in war and in matters related to war. He's a lover of physical training and of hunting."

"Yes," he said, "that's the character that goes with that constitution."

"And a man like this," I said, "would despise money while he's young, [549b] but the older he got, the more he'd welcome it. That's because he shares in the money-loving nature, and his commitment to excellence isn't pure, since he's been deprived of the best guardian."

"What guardian?" said Adeimantus.

"Reason blended with music and poetry," I said. "It's the only thing that, once it's present in a person, lives in him all his life as the preserver of his excellence."

"Well put," he said.

"That, then, is the timocratic young man," I said, "resembling the city of that sort." [549c]

"Certainly."

"And he comes into being something like this," I said. "Sometimes he's the young son of a good father who lives in a badly governed city, who shuns honors and offices and lawsuits and all that kind of busybodying, and is willing to take less so as to avoid trouble—"

"How does he come into being, then?" he said.

"First," I said, "when he hears his mother complaining that her husband isn't one of the rulers, and that because of this she's slighted [549d] among the other women. Then she sees that he isn't very serious about money, and doesn't fight or trade insults in private lawsuits or in public, but takes all that sort of thing easily; and she notices that his mind is always on himself, and that he neither particularly honors her nor slights her. The boy hears her resenting all this and telling him that his father is unmanly and far too easygoing, and all the other things [549e] women love to harp on in such cases."

"Yes," said Adeimantus, "plenty of them, and just what you'd expect from them."

"And you know," I said, "that the servants of such men—the ones who seem loyal—sometimes say the same sort of thing to the sons in secret. If they see someone who owes the father money and isn't being prosecuted by him, or who wrongs him in some other way, they urge the son to punish all such people when he grows up, [550a] and to be more of a man than his father. And when he goes out, he hears and sees more of the same: people who mind their own business in the city are called fools and held of little account, while those who don't are honored and praised." "Then the young man hears and sees all this; and on the other hand, he hears his father's words and sees his pursuits up close, next to those of others. He is pulled by both [550b] of them: his father waters and nourishes the reasoning part in his soul, the others the appetitive and the spirited parts. Since he isn't a bad man by nature but has kept bad company with the others, being pulled by both he settles in the middle. He hands over the rule within himself to the middle part, the victory-loving and spirited one, and becomes a haughty, honor-loving man."

"I think you've described his origin exactly," he said. [550c]

"Then we have the second constitution and the second man," I said.

"We do," he said.

"Next, then, shall we tell, as Aeschylus has it, of 'another, posted at another gate'—or rather, following our plan, of the city first?"

"Certainly," he said.

"And the constitution that comes after this sort, I think, would be oligarchy."

"And what sort of system," he said, "do you mean by oligarchy?"

OLIGARCHY AND THE OLIGARCHIC MAN

Socrates describes how timocracy becomes oligarchy, rule by the rich, and the miserly man who matches it.

SOCRATES "The constitution based on property assessment," I said, "in which the 550d rich rule and the poor man has no share in office."

"I understand," he said.

"Then shouldn't we first describe how the change from timarchy to oligarchy happens?"

"Yes."

"Well," I said, "even a blind man can see how it happens."

"How?"

"That storehouse full of gold that each man has," I said, "destroys a constitution like this. First they find new ways to spend money on themselves, and bend the laws to suit, disobeying them—both they and their wives."

"That's likely," he said. 550e

"Then, I think, each one watches the next and tries to match him, and so they make the majority of them like this."

"Likely."

"From there," I said, "they go further and further into moneymaking; and the more they value it, the less they value excellence. Or isn't wealth at odds with excellence in just this way—as if each lay in one pan of a scale, always tipping opposite ways?"

"Very much so," he said.

"So when wealth and the wealthy are honored in a city, excellence and good men are less honored."

"Clearly."

"And whatever is honored at any time is practiced, and whatever is dishonored is neglected."

"Just so."

551a "So in place of men who love victory and honor, they end up lovers of moneymaking and of money. They praise and

admire the rich man and bring him into office, and they treat the poor man with contempt."

"Certainly."

"Then at that point they pass a law defining the oligarchic constitution 551b by fixing an amount of wealth—larger where it's more of an oligarchy, smaller where it's less—and announcing that no one whose property doesn't reach the fixed assessment may hold office. They carry this through by force of arms, or else they've already set up this sort of constitution beforehand by intimidation. Isn't that so?"

"It is."

"Well, that, roughly speaking, is how it's established."

"Yes," he said. "But what is this constitution like? And what 551c are the faults we said it has?"

"First," I said, "its very defining standard, and what that is like. Just consider: if someone appointed ships' pilots this way, on the basis of property, and wouldn't entrust a ship to a poor man, even a better pilot—"

"They'd make a wretched voyage of it," he said.

"And isn't it the same with the leadership of anything else whatever?"

"I think so."

"Except a city?" I said. "Or with a city too?"

"Far more so," he said, "since it's the most difficult and the greatest kind of rule." 551d

"So that's one fault, and a big one, that oligarchy would have."

"Evidently."

"What about this one? Is it any smaller than that?"

"What?"

"That a city like this is necessarily not one but two—one of the poor and one of the rich—living in the same place and always plotting against each other."

"No, by Zeus," he said, "that's no smaller."

"Nor is this a fine thing: that they're probably unable to fight a war. They're forced either to use 551e the masses armed, and fear them more than the enemy, or not to use them, and then turn

out to be oligarchs in the truest sense—the few—on the battlefield itself. And at the same time they're unwilling to pay taxes for it, being lovers of money."

"Not fine."

"And what about the thing we condemned long ago—the same people farming, [552a] making money and fighting at once in such a constitution, meddling in many things? Does that seem right?"

"Not in the least."

"Now see whether this constitution is the first to admit the greatest of all these evils."

"What's that?"

"Allowing someone to sell everything he has, and another to acquire it; and allowing the one who has sold it to go on living in the city while being no part of it—neither moneymaker nor craftsman nor cavalryman nor hoplite, but called poor and destitute." [552b]

"Yes, it's the first," he said.

"Certainly nothing prevents this in oligarchies. Otherwise some wouldn't be enormously rich and others utterly poor."

"Right."

"Now look at this. When a man like this was rich and spending his money, was he any more use to the city for the purposes we were just talking about? Or did he seem to be one of the rulers, while in truth he was neither ruler nor servant of the city, but just a consumer of what was at hand?" [552c]

"Just so," he said. "He seemed to be one, but he was nothing but a consumer."

"Then shall we say," I said, "that just as a drone grows up in the honeycomb, a disease of the hive, so a man like this grows up in his house as a drone, a disease of the city?"

"Certainly, Socrates," he said.

"And, Adeimantus, hasn't god made all the winged drones stingless, while of these walking ones he has made some stingless and some with terrible stings? From the stingless ones come those who end up as beggars in old age, while from [552d] those with stings come all who are called criminals?"

"Very true," he said.

"So it's clear," I said, "that wherever you see beggars in a city, there are hidden somewhere in that place thieves, pickpockets, temple-robbers and craftsmen of every such evil."

"It's clear," he said.

"Well then, don't you see beggars in oligarchic cities?"

"Nearly everyone outside the ruling class," he said. 552e

"Then aren't we to think," I said, "that there are also many criminals in them with stings, whom the authorities carefully hold down by force?"

"We certainly are," he said.

"And won't we say that such people arise there because of lack of education, bad upbringing and the way the constitution is set up?"

"We will."

"Well, anyway, the oligarchic city would be something like this, and would have all these evils, and perhaps even more."

"Pretty much," he said.

553a "Then let's take this constitution too as completed," I said, "the one they call oligarchy, which takes its rulers on the basis of property assessment. Next let's examine the man who resembles it: how he comes into being, and what he's like once he has."

"Certainly," he said.

"Isn't it mostly in this way that the timocratic man we described changes into an oligarchic one?"

"How?"

"When a son of his at first emulates his father and follows in his footsteps, and then suddenly sees him 553b crash into the city like a ship on a reef, losing his property and himself. He has been a general, perhaps, or held some other high office, and then he's dragged into court, harmed by malicious prosecutors, and put to death or exiled or stripped of his civic rights, losing all his property."

"That's likely," he said.

"And having seen this, my friend, and suffered it, and lost what he had, he's frightened, I think, and at once throws love of honor and that spirited part headlong from the throne 553c in his soul. Humbled by poverty, he turns to moneymaking, and by stingy, penny-pinching saving and hard work he scrapes money together. Don't you think that such a man will then set the appetitive, money-loving part on that throne and make it a great king within himself, girding it with tiaras, collars and short swords?"

"I do," he said. 553d [5]

"And the reasoning and spirited parts, I think, he makes sit on the ground on either side, beneath it, as its slaves. The first he allows to reason about and investigate nothing except how to make more money out of less; the second, to admire and honor nothing but wealth and the wealthy, and to take pride in nothing but acquiring money and whatever leads to that."

"There's no other change," he said, "so quick and so powerful as that of an honor-loving young man into a money-loving one." 553e

"Then is this man oligarchic?" I said.

"Well, he has changed from a man who resembled the constitution from which oligarchy arose."

"Then let's see whether he resembles it."

"Let's."

"First, wouldn't he resemble it in valuing money above everything?"

"Of course."

"And also in being thrifty and hardworking: he satisfies only his necessary appetites and allows himself no other expenses, but enslaves his other appetites as pointless."

"Certainly."

554a "He's a squalid sort of man," I said, "who makes a profit out of everything, a hoarder—just the kind the majority admire. 554b Isn't he the one who resembles this sort of constitution?"

5 Tiaras, gold collars and short swords were regalia of the Persian court; the Persian king was known to the Greeks as "the Great King."

"I think so, anyway," he said. "Money, at least, is what's valued most, both by the city and by a man like this."

"Yes, because I don't think a man like this has paid any attention to education," I said.

"I don't think so," he said, "or he wouldn't have made a blind man leader of his chorus and honored him most."[6]

"Good," I said. "Now consider this. Shouldn't we say that because of his lack of education drone-like desires spring up in him, some of them 554c beggarly, others criminal, but held down by force through his general carefulness?"

"Certainly," he said.

"Then do you know where to look," I said, "if you want to catch sight of their criminality?"

"Where?" he said.

"At their management of orphans' estates, and at any situation like that which happens to give them plenty of license to do wrong."

"True."

"So isn't it clear from this that in his other dealings, where he has a good reputation because he seems to be just, a man like this uses some decent part 554d of himself to hold down by force the other bad desires within him—not by persuading them that it's better not to, nor by taming them with reason, but by compulsion and fear, because he trembles for the rest of his property?"

"Very much so," he said.

"And by Zeus, my friend," I said, "in most of them you'll find, when it comes to spending other people's money, desires akin to the drone's living inside them."

"Very much so," he said, "absolutely."

"So a man like this wouldn't be free of internal strife. He wouldn't be one man but a sort of double one—though for the most part 554e his better desires would have the upper hand over his worse."

"That's how it is."

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6 The blind leader is Plutus, god of wealth, traditionally pictured as blind.

"That's why, I think, he'd be more respectable than many. But the true excellence of a soul in harmony and at one with itself would escape him and stay far away."

"I think so."

"And certainly as a private citizen competing in the city for a victory or any other fine distinction, the stingy man 555a is a poor contender. He's unwilling to spend money for the sake of a good name or on contests of that kind, because he's afraid to awaken his spending desires and call them in as allies for the struggle. So he fights in true oligarchic fashion, with only a few of his forces; he loses most of the time—and stays rich."

"Very much so," he said.

"Then do we still doubt," I said, "that the stingy moneymaker is placed 555b beside the oligarchic city because he resembles it?"

"Not at all," he said.

DEMOCRACY AND THE DEMOCRATIC MAN

Socrates describes how oligarchy becomes democracy and portrays the free, many-sided democratic man.

SOCRATES "Next, it seems, we have to examine democracy: how it comes into being, and what it's like once it has, so that we can come to know the character of the corresponding man in turn and bring him forward for judgment."

"That way," he said, "we'd at least be proceeding consistently."

"Well then," I said, "doesn't the change from oligarchy to democracy happen something like this—through an insatiable appetite for the good it has set before itself, the need to become as rich as possible?"

"How so?" 555c

"Since the rulers in it rule because they own a great deal, I think they're unwilling to use the law to restrain those of the young who turn out undisciplined—to forbid them to spend and squander what's theirs—so that by buying up these people's property and lending money against it they can become still richer and more honored."

"More than anything."

"Then isn't it clear by now that in a city it's impossible to honor wealth and at the same time for the citizens to acquire enough 555d moderation—that one or the other is bound to be neglected?"

"That's reasonably clear," he said.

"So in oligarchies, by their neglect and by letting people live undisciplined lives, they have sometimes forced men of no mean birth to become poor."

"Very much so."

"And these men, I think, sit idle in the city, stings at the ready and fully armed—some in debt, some stripped of their civic rights, some both—hating and plotting against those who acquired their property and everyone else, and longing 555e for revolution."

"That's so."

"But the moneymakers keep their heads down and pretend not even to see them. They wound any of the rest who gives way to them by injecting their money, and, collecting as interest the parent sum's offspring many times over, 556a they breed a large crop of drones and beggars in the city."

"How could it not be large?" he said.

"And they're unwilling to put out this evil as it flares up," I said, "either in the one way—by preventing a man from doing whatever he likes with his property—or in the other, by which, under a different law, such problems are resolved."

"And what law is that?"

"The one that comes second to it, which compels the citizens to care about excellence. If someone ordered that most voluntary contracts be made at the lender's own 556b risk, people would make money less shamelessly in the city, and fewer evils of the kind we just described would grow up in it."

"Far fewer," he said.

"But as things are," I said, "for all these reasons the rulers put the ruled in the city into this condition. As for themselves and their own—don't they make their young men pampered and

lazy, in body and 556c in soul alike, too soft to hold out against pleasures and pains, and idle?"

"Of course."

"And themselves careless of everything but making money, paying no more attention to excellence than the poor do?"

"No more, certainly."

"So when rulers and ruled, prepared like this, come alongside each other—on a journey, or in some other joint undertaking, on a festival delegation or a campaign, as shipmates or as fellow soldiers—or when they watch each other in the very 556d face of danger, the poor are in no way despised by the rich there. On the contrary, a lean, sunburned poor man is often posted in battle beside a rich man raised in the shade and carrying a lot of extra flesh, and sees him full of gasping and helplessness. Don't you think he concludes that such people are rich because of the poor men's own badness, and that when the poor get together in private they pass the word to one another: 'Those men are ours. 556e They're nothing'?"

"Oh, I know perfectly well," he said, "that that's what they do."

"Then just as a sickly body needs only a slight push from outside to fall ill, and sometimes is at war with itself even without anything external, so too a city in the same condition falls sick and fights with itself on a slight pretext—when one side brings in allies from an oligarchic city, or the other side from a democratic one—and sometimes falls into civil strife even without outsiders?"

"Very much so."

557a "Democracy comes into being, I think, when the poor win, kill some of the other side and banish others, and give the rest an equal share in the constitution and in the offices—and in it offices are mostly assigned by lot."

"Yes," he said, "that's how democracy is established, whether it happens by force of arms or because the other side withdraws out of fear."

"Then how do these people live?" I said. "And what sort [557b] of constitution is this one, in its turn? For clearly the man who resembles it will turn out to be a democratic sort of man."

"Clearly," he said.[7]

"Well, first of all, aren't they free? Doesn't the city become full of freedom and free speech, with license in it to do whatever one wants?"

"So it's said, anyway," he said.

"And where there's license, clearly each person will arrange his own private way of life in it, whatever pleases him."

"Clearly." [557c]

"Then in this constitution above all, I think, you'd find human beings of every kind."

"Of course."

"It may well be," I said, "the most beautiful of constitutions. Like a many-colored cloak embroidered with every kind of flower, this one too, embroidered with every kind of character, might look most beautiful. And perhaps," I said, "many people would judge it the most beautiful, like children and women gazing at colorful things."

"Very much so," he said. [557d]

"And it's also a convenient place, my dear fellow," I said, "to look for a constitution."

"Why's that?"

"Because thanks to its license it contains every kind of constitution. Anyone who wants to set up a city, as we were doing just now, may well need to go to a democratic city and pick out whatever model pleases him, as if he'd come to a bazaar of constitutions, and then found his city on the one he's chosen." [557e]

"At any rate," he said, "he probably wouldn't be short of models."

"And there's no compulsion to rule in this city," I said, "even if you're capable of ruling, nor again to be ruled if you don't want to be, nor to go to war when the others are at war, nor to keep the peace when the others are keeping it, if you don't want

7 In Athens most public offices were filled by drawing lots among eligible citizens.

peace. And again, if some law forbids you to hold office or sit on a jury, you can hold office and 558a sit on juries all the same, if the fancy takes you. Isn't that a heavenly, delightful way to live—for the moment?"

"Perhaps," he said, "for the moment, anyway."

"And what about it? Isn't the calm of some of those who've been convicted charming? Or haven't you yet seen how in a constitution like this, when people have been sentenced to death or exile, they stay on all the same and go about in public, and one of them roams around like a hero's ghost, as if no one noticed or saw?"

"Lots of them," he said. 558b

"And its tolerance—not the least bit petty—and its contempt for the things we spoke of so solemnly when we were founding our city: that unless someone had an exceptional nature, he could never become a good man unless from childhood he played among fine things and pursued everything of that sort. How magnificently it tramples all that underfoot, not caring at all what practices a man comes from when he goes into politics, but honoring him 558c if he merely says he's a friend of the people!"

"Oh yes," he said, "very noble of it."

"These, then," I said, "and other things akin to them, are what democracy would have. It would be, it seems, a pleasant constitution, anarchic and many-colored, handing out a sort of equality to equals and unequals alike."

"What you're describing is very familiar," he said.

"Now look," I said, "at what the corresponding man is like in private. Or should we first examine, as we did with the constitution, how he comes into being?"

"Yes," he said.

"Then isn't it like this? That stingy, oligarchic man 558d would have a son, I suppose, raised by his father in his father's ways?"

"Why not?"

"And he too rules by force over the pleasures in himself that are spenders rather than moneymakers—the ones that have been called unnecessary—"

"Clearly," he said.

"Then, so that we don't argue in the dark," I said, "would you like us first to define the necessary desires and the unnecessary ones?"

"I would," he said.

"Well, the ones we couldn't turn aside would rightly 558e be called necessary, and so would those whose satisfaction benefits us? For our nature compels us to crave both of these. Or not?"

"Very much so."

"Then we'll be right to apply the word 'necessary' to them."

"Right."

559a "And what about the ones someone could get rid of if he trained himself from youth, and which do no good by being present—and some even do the opposite? If we said all of these were unnecessary, wouldn't we be speaking correctly?"

"Correctly, yes."

"Shall we pick out an example of each kind, so that we can grasp them in outline?"

"We should."

"Well, wouldn't the desire to eat, up to the point of health and fitness, 559b the desire for bread itself and relish, be necessary?"

"I think so."

"The desire for bread, at least, is necessary on both counts: it's beneficial, and we can't make it stop as long as we're alive."

"Yes."

"And the desire for relish is necessary insofar as it provides some benefit toward fitness."

"Certainly."

"And what about the desire that goes beyond these, for other kinds of food and the like—one most people can get rid of if it's checked and trained from youth, and which harms the body, and harms the soul with respect to understanding and moderation? Wouldn't it 559c rightly be called unnecessary?"

"Most rightly."

"Then shall we also call these spending desires, and the others moneymaking desires, because they're useful for our work?"

"Of course."

"And we'll say the same about sex and the rest?"

"Yes."

"And the man we were calling a drone just now—weren't we saying he was the one full of such pleasures and desires and 559d ruled by the unnecessary ones, while the one ruled by the necessary ones was stingy and oligarchic?"

"Well, of course."

"Then let's go back," I said, "and describe how the democratic man comes from the oligarchic one. It seems to me that it mostly happens like this."

"How?"

"When a young man, raised as we were just describing, without education and stingily, gets a taste of the drones' honey and falls in with fiery, dangerous beasts who can supply pleasures of every kind and variety and description—that, I suppose, 559e is where you should expect the change in him from an oligarchic to a democratic constitution within to begin."

"Inevitably," he said.

"Then just as the city changed when an alliance from outside came to the aid of one party, like helping like, doesn't the young man change too when a kind of desire from outside, akin and alike, comes to the aid of one of the parties within him?"

"Absolutely."

"And if, I think, some alliance comes to the aid of the oligarchic part in him from the other side, whether from his father or 560a from his other relatives admonishing and reproaching him, then there's faction and counter-faction and a battle within him against himself."

"Of course."

"And sometimes, I think, the democratic part gives way to the oligarchic. Some of his desires are destroyed, others are driven

out, as a sense of shame arises in the young man's soul, and order is restored."

"That does happen sometimes," he said.

"But then, I think, other desires akin to the exiled ones are secretly nursed along, 560b and because the father doesn't know how to bring him up, they become many and strong."

"That's usually how it goes," he said.

"So they drag him back to the same company, and through secret intercourse they breed a multitude."

"Of course."

"And in the end, I think, they seize the acropolis of the young man's soul, finding it empty of learning, of fine pursuits and of true words—which are the best sentinels and guardians in the minds of men the gods love." 560c

"By far," he said.

"And false, boastful words and opinions, I think, rush up in their place and occupy that same position in a man like this."

"Very much so," he said.

"So doesn't he go back to those Lotus-eaters and live among them openly? And if some help comes from his relatives to the stingy part of his soul, those boastful words shut the gates of the royal wall within him. They won't let the allied force itself through, and they won't receive the embassy of words from older 560d private individuals either. They win the battle themselves. They call shame 'simple-mindedness' and push it out, a dishonored exile; they call moderation 'unmanliness,' abuse it and throw it out; and they persuade him that measure and orderly spending are boorish and mean, and drive them over the border with the help of many useless desires."

"Very much so."[8]

"And once they've emptied and purified of all these the soul of the man 560e they've taken possession of and are initiating into their great mysteries, they next bring insolence, anarchy, extravagance and shamelessness back from exile, resplendent and

8 In Homer's *Odyssey* the Lotus-eaters' food made Odysseus's men forget their homecoming.

crowned, with a great chorus, singing their praises and giving them pet names: insolence they call good breeding, anarchy freedom, extravagance 561a magnificence, and shamelessness courage."

"Isn't it something like this," I said, "that while still young he changes from a man raised among necessary desires to one who sets free and lets loose the unnecessary and useless pleasures?"

"Yes," he said, "very vividly."

"After this, I think, such a man lives spending money, effort and time no more on necessary pleasures than on unnecessary ones. But if he's lucky and his frenzy doesn't go too far—if, as he gets older and the great 561b tumult has passed, he readmits some of the exiles and doesn't give himself over entirely to the invaders—then he sets his pleasures on an equal footing and lives that way, handing over the rule of himself to whichever pleasure comes along, as if it had won the office by lot, until it's satisfied, and then to another, dishonoring none but feeding them all equally."

"Certainly."

"And he doesn't accept true reasoning," I said, "or let it into the fortress, if someone tells him that some pleasures belong to 561c fine and good desires and others to bad ones, and that the first should be cultivated and honored and the second disciplined and enslaved. To all this he shakes his head and says they're all alike and must be honored equally."

"Yes," he said, "that's exactly what a man in that condition does."

"So he lives from day to day," I said, "indulging whatever desire comes along. Now he's drinking heavily to the music of pipes, then drinking only water and slimming down; 561d now he's exercising, sometimes lazing about and neglecting everything, and now spending his time on what he takes to be philosophy. Often he takes part in politics, jumping up to say and do whatever occurs to him. If he ever envies military men, off he goes in that direction; if moneymakers, off in that one.

There's no order or necessity in his life. He calls this life pleasant, free and blessed, and he follows it to the end." 561e

"You've perfectly described," he said, "the life of a man devoted to equal rights."

"Yes, and I think," I said, "that this man is varied and full of the greatest number of characters, the beautiful, many-colored man, just like that city. Many men and women would envy his life, since he holds within himself the most models of constitutions and ways of life."

"That's him," he said.

"Well then? Shall we set this man beside democracy, as one who'd rightly be called democratic?"

"Let's," he said.

HOW TYRANNY ARISES

Socrates explains how excessive freedom turns democracy into tyranny under a popular champion.

SOCRATES 562a "Then what's left for us to describe," I said, "would be the finest constitution and the finest man: tyranny and the tyrant."

"Exactly," he said.

"Come then, my dear friend, how does tyranny arise? That it comes from democracy is pretty clear."

"Clear."

"Then does democracy come from oligarchy 562b and tyranny from democracy in much the same way?"

"How?"

"The good they set before themselves," I said, "the one oligarchy was established for—that was great wealth, wasn't it?—"

"Yes."

"So it was the insatiable appetite for wealth, and the neglect of everything else for the sake of moneymaking, that destroyed it."

"True," he said.

"Then does democracy's insatiable appetite for what it defines as good destroy it too?"

"And what do you say it defines as good?"

"Freedom," I said. "Surely in a democratic 562c city you'd hear that this is the finest thing it has, and that for this reason it's the only city worth living in for anyone free by nature."

"Yes," he said, "that's said, and said often."

"Then, as I was just about to say," I said, "doesn't the insatiable appetite for this, and the neglect of everything else, change this constitution too, and prepare it to need a tyranny?"

"How?" he said.

"When a democratic city, thirsting for freedom, 562d happens to have bad wine-pourers presiding over it, and gets drunk on freedom unmixed, far past what's proper, then it punishes its rulers, unless they're very lenient and provide plenty of freedom, accusing them of being villains and oligarchs."

"Yes," he said, "that's what they do."

"And those who obey the rulers," I said, "it abuses as willing slaves and nobodies, while in private and in public it praises and honors rulers who are like the ruled and ruled who are like the rulers. In such a city, isn't it inevitable 562e that freedom goes to every extreme?"

"Of course."

"And that the anarchy seeps down, my friend," I said, "into private households, and in the end takes root even among the animals?"

"What do we mean by that?" he said.

"For instance," I said, "the father gets used to being like his child and fearing his sons, and the son to being like his father, feeling neither shame nor fear before his parents, so that he can be free. Resident alien 563a and citizen are put on an equal footing, and the foreigner likewise."

"Yes," he said, "that's what happens."[9]

"That, and other little things like it," I said. "In such a city the teacher fears and flatters his pupils, and the pupils think little of

their teachers, and of their attendants too. In general the young imitate their elders and compete with them in word and deed, while the old men lower themselves to the young's level and are full of wit and 563b pleasantry, imitating the young so as not to seem disagreeable or authoritarian."

"Certainly," he said.[10]

"But the height of the people's freedom, my friend," I said, "in a city like this, is reached when purchased slaves, male and female, are no less free than those who bought them. And we almost forgot to mention how much equality and freedom there is in the relations of women with men and men with women." 563c

"So shall we, in Aeschylus's words," he said, "'say what just now came to our lips'?"[11]

"Certainly," I said. "That's just what I'm doing. How much freer the animals owned by people are here than anywhere else, no one who hasn't seen it would believe. Just as the proverb says, the dogs become exactly like their mistresses. And the horses and donkeys too get used to walking the roads with great freedom and dignity, bumping into anyone they meet who doesn't step aside. Everything else becomes just as 563d full of freedom."

"You're telling me my own dream," he said. "It happens to me all the time on my way out to the country."

"And the sum of it all," I said, "taken together—do you see how touchy it makes the citizens' souls, so that if anyone imposes the slightest bit of slavery, they get angry and can't bear it? And in the end, you know, they pay no attention even to the laws, written or unwritten, so that no one 563e will be their master in any way at all."

"I know it very well," he said.

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9 A resident alien (metic) was a free foreigner living permanently in a Greek city without citizen rights.

10 The attendant (*paidagōgos*) was a slave who escorted a boy to school and looked after his conduct.

11 The line comes from a lost play of Aeschylus.

"This, then, my friend," I said, "is the beginning, so fine and so headstrong, from which tyranny grows, it seems to me."

"Headstrong it certainly is," he said. "But what comes next?"

"The same disease," I said, "that arose in oligarchy and destroyed it arises in this one too, more widespread and stronger because of the license, and enslaves democracy. In fact, doing anything to excess tends to bring about a great change in the opposite direction—in seasons, in 564a plants, in bodies, and not least in constitutions."

"That's likely," he said.

"Yes, for too much freedom seems to change into nothing other than too much slavery, for a private individual and a city alike."

"That's likely."

"Then it's likely," I said, "that tyranny is established from no other constitution than democracy: out of the most extreme freedom, I think, comes the greatest and most savage slavery."

"That makes sense," he said.

"But that wasn't what you were asking, I think," I said. "You were asking what disease 564b arises in oligarchy and in democracy alike and enslaves democracy."

"That's true," he said.

"Well, what I meant," I said, "was that breed of idle, spendthrift men, the bravest of them leading and the more cowardly following. We compared them to drones—the leaders to drones with stings, the followers to stingless ones."

"And rightly," he said.

"Well, these two," I said, "cause trouble in every constitution they arise in, like phlegm and bile in the body. And the good doctor and lawgiver of a city 564c must guard against them well in advance, no less than a wise beekeeper does—above all so that they don't arise, but if they do, so that they're cut out as quickly as possible, honeycombs and all."

"Yes, by Zeus," he said, "absolutely."

"Then let's take it like this," I said, "so that we can see what we want more distinctly."

"How?"

"Let's divide a democratic city into three in our account, 564d which is in fact how it's divided. One part, I suppose, is this breed, which grows up in it because of the license no less than in the oligarchic city."

"That's so."

"But it's much fiercer in this one than in that."

"How so?"

"There, because it isn't held in honor but is kept out of office, it goes unexercised and doesn't grow strong. But in a democracy this breed is pretty much the ruling element, with a few exceptions. Its fiercest part does the speaking and acting, while the rest settles around the speakers' platforms, buzzing and refusing to put up with anyone 564e who says otherwise. So in a constitution like this, everything is run by this breed, apart from a few things."

"Very much so," he said.

"Now, there's another group that's always being separated off from the majority."

"What's that?"

"When everyone is out to make money, those who are most orderly by nature generally become the richest."

"Likely."

"And that's where, I think, the drones find the most honey and the easiest to squeeze."

"Well, how could anyone squeeze honey," he said, "out of those who have little?"

"And so rich people like these, I think, are called drone-fodder."

"Pretty much," he said.

"The people would be the third group: those who work with their own hands and stay out of public affairs, and don't own very much. Whenever it assembles, this is the largest and most powerful group in a democracy."

"So it is," he said. "But it isn't often willing to do that unless it gets some share of the honey."

565a "And it always does get a share," I said, "insofar as its leaders can manage it, when they take property away from those who have it and distribute it to the people, while keeping the most for themselves." 565b

"Yes," he said, "that's how it gets its share."

"So, I think, the people whose property is being taken are forced to defend themselves, speaking before the people and taking action however they can."

"Of course."

"And then the others accuse them, even if they have no desire for revolution, of plotting against the people and of being oligarchs."

"Of course."

"And so in the end, when they see the people trying to wrong them—not willingly, but out of ignorance, deceived by the 565c slanderers—then at last, whether they want to or not, they really do become oligarchs. They don't do it willingly: this evil too is bred in them by that drone, which stings them."

"Exactly."

"Then come impeachments, trials and lawsuits, each side against the other."

"Certainly."

"And isn't it the people's habit always to set up one man in particular as their champion, and to nurture him and make him great?"

"Yes, it is." 565d

"So this much is clear," I said: "whenever a tyrant springs up, he sprouts from this root of championship and from nowhere else."

"Very clear."

"Then what is the starting point of the change from champion to tyrant? Isn't it obviously when the champion begins to do the same thing as the man in the story told about the sanctuary of Lycaean Zeus in Arcadia?"

"What story?" he said.

"That whoever tastes human innards, when a single piece is chopped up in among the innards of the other victims, is bound 565e to become a wolf. Or haven't you heard the tale?"

"I have."[12]

"Well, isn't it the same with a champion of the people? He gets hold of a mob that's thoroughly obedient to him, and he doesn't hold back from the blood of his own people. He brings unjust charges, the way these men like to, hauls people into court and stains himself with murder; he wipes out a man's life, and with unholy tongue and lips he tastes the blood of his kin; he banishes and 566a kills, and hints at the cancellation of debts and the redistribution of land. Isn't such a man bound after that, isn't it his fate, either to be destroyed by his enemies or to become a tyrant and turn from a man into a wolf?"

"It's absolutely inevitable," he said.

"He's the one, then," I said, "who starts the faction against those who own property."

"He is."

"And if he's driven out and then comes back in spite of his enemies, doesn't he come back a finished tyrant?"

"Obviously." 566b

"And if they can't drive him out, or have him put to death by slandering him to the city, they plot to kill him violently, in secret."

"That's certainly how it usually goes," he said.

"And at this point everyone who has got this far comes up with the famous tyrant's request: they ask the people for a bodyguard, so that the people's champion may be kept safe for them."

"They certainly do," he said.

"And the people grant it, I suppose, afraid for him and confident for themselves." 566c

"Certainly."

"And when a man who has money—and, along with his money, the charge of hating the people—sees this, then, my

12 Legend held that at the sanctuary of Zeus Lycaeus on Mount Lycaeon, anyone who ate human flesh mixed into the sacrificial meat was turned into a wolf.

friend, as the oracle given to Croesus says, 'by pebbly Hermus he flees, nor stays, nor is ashamed to be a coward.'"

"No," he said, "he wouldn't get a second chance to be ashamed."

"And the one who's caught," I said, "is handed over to death, I imagine."

"Inevitably."

"And as for that champion himself, it's clear he doesn't lie there, 'great [566d] in his greatness'; he has thrown down many others and stands in the city's chariot, transformed from champion into finished tyrant."

"How could he not?" he said.[13]

THE TYRANT IN POWER

Socrates describes how the tyrant stirs up wars, purges the best citizens and relies on mercenaries.

SOCRATES "Shall we go through the happiness of the man," I said, "and of the city in which such a mortal arises?"

"Yes, by all means," he said, "let's go through it."

"Well," I said, "in the early days, for the first while, doesn't he smile and greet everyone he meets, and [566e] deny that he's a tyrant, and make lots of promises in private and in public? Doesn't he free people from debts, distribute land to the people and to those around him, and put on a show of being gracious and gentle to everyone?"

"He has to," he said.

"But once he has settled matters with his enemies abroad, coming to terms with some and destroying others, and things are quiet on that front, I imagine the first thing he does is keep stirring up wars, so that the people will need a leader."

"That's likely."

13 Croesus, king of Lydia, was told by the Delphic oracle to flee by the river Hermus when a mule became king of the Medes (Herodotus 1.55). "Great in his greatness" echoes Homer's description of a fallen warrior.

"And also so that, made poor by paying war taxes, they'll be forced to concentrate on their daily needs and be less likely to plot against him?"

"Clearly."

"And if he suspects that some have free spirits and won't let him rule, so that he can have a pretext for destroying them by handing them over to the enemy? For all these reasons, isn't a tyrant always bound to stir up war?"

"He has to."

567a "And by doing this he becomes all the more readily hated by the 567b citizens?"

"Of course."

"And some of those who helped set him up and are in positions of power will speak their minds freely, both to him and to one another, criticizing what's going on—the ones who happen to be the bravest?"

"That's likely."

"Then the tyrant has to get rid of all of them if he's going to keep ruling, until he has left no one of any worth, friend or enemy."

"Clearly."

"So he has to keep a sharp eye out for who is courageous, who is high-minded, 567c who has understanding, who is rich. And so happy is he that he is compelled, whether he likes it or not, to be the enemy of all of these and to plot against them until he has purged the city of them."

"A fine purge," he said.

"Yes," I said, "the opposite of the one doctors give bodies. They remove the worst and leave the best; he does the reverse."

"It seems he has to," he said, "if he's going to rule." 567d

"Then he's bound by a blessed necessity," I said, "which orders him either to live with a crowd of worthless people, and be hated by them too, or not to live at all."

"That's the kind of necessity it is," he said.

"And the more he makes himself hated by the citizens by doing these things, won't he need more bodyguards, and more loyal ones?"

"Of course."

"Who are these loyal ones, then? And where will he send for them?"

"Plenty will come flying of their own accord," he said, "if he gives them their pay."

"Drones, by the dog!" I said. "You seem to me to be talking 567e about drones again, foreign ones of every sort."

"You're right," he said, "that's what I mean."

"But what about from right there at home? Wouldn't he be willing—"

"To do what?"

"—to take the citizens' slaves away from them, free them, and make them part of his bodyguard?"

"Very much so," he said, "since these are in fact the most loyal to him."

"What a blessed thing a tyrant is, on your account," I said, "if these are the 568a friends and loyal men he makes use of, after destroying those earlier ones."

"Well, these are the ones he does make use of," he said.

"And these companions admire him," I said, "and the new citizens keep him company, while decent people hate and avoid him?"

"How could they not?"

"It's not for nothing," I said, "that tragedy in general is thought to be wise, and Euripides outstanding at it."

"Why's that?"

"Because among other things he uttered this saying, the product of shrewd thought: that 568b 'tyrants are wise through the company of the wise.' And he clearly meant that the wise are the people the tyrant keeps company with."

"Yes," he said, "and he praises tyranny as godlike, and much else besides—he and the other poets too."[14]

14 The line is elsewhere attributed to Sophocles.

"Well then," I said, "being wise, the tragic poets will forgive us, and all those whose constitutions are close to ours, for not admitting them into our constitution, seeing that they sing the praises of tyranny."

"I think they'll forgive us," he said, "at least those of them who are 568c sophisticated."

"But they go around to the other cities, I imagine, gathering crowds and hiring fine, loud, persuasive voices, and draw the constitutions toward tyrannies and democracies."

"They certainly do."

"And on top of this they get paid and honored for it—most of all, as you'd expect, by tyrants, and second by democracy. But the higher they climb up 568d the slope of constitutions, the more their honor gives out, as if it were too short of breath to go on."

"Certainly."

"But we've digressed here," I said. "Let's go back and talk about the tyrant's army—that fine, large, many-colored army that's never the same—and how it will be fed."

"Clearly," he said, "if there are sacred treasures in the city, he'll spend them, for as long as the proceeds of their sale hold out, and so require smaller war taxes from the people." 568e

"And what happens when these run out?"

"Clearly," he said, "he'll be fed from his father's estate, he and his drinking companions and his comrades and his mistresses."

"I see," I said. "You mean that the people who fathered the tyrant will feed him and his comrades."

"They'll have no choice," he said.

"What do you mean?" I said. "What if the people get angry and say that it isn't just for a grown-up son to be fed by his father—on the contrary, the father should be fed by the son—and that they didn't father 569a and establish him so that, when he grew great, they themselves would be slaves to their own slaves and feed him and those slaves along with a rabble of others, but so that, with him as their champion, they would be freed from the rich and the so-called gentlemen in the city? And what if they now order him and his comrades to leave the city, like a father

driving his son out of the house along with his rowdy drinking companions?"

"Then, by Zeus," he said, "the people will learn what kind of 569b creature they fathered, welcomed and raised, and that they're the weaker ones trying to drive out the stronger."

"What are you saying?" I said. "The tyrant will dare to use force on his father, and beat him if he doesn't obey?"

"Yes," he said, "once he's taken away his weapons."

"You're calling the tyrant a father-beater," I said, "and a harsh nurse of old age. And this, it seems, would at last be tyranny openly acknowledged. As the saying goes, the people, trying to escape the smoke of 569c slavery to free men, would have fallen into the fire of being ruled by slaves; in exchange for that excessive and untimely freedom, they would have put on the harshest and bitterest slavery, slavery to slaves."

"That is exactly what happens," he said.

"Well then," I said, "wouldn't we be right to say that we've given an adequate account of how tyranny develops out of democracy, and of what it's like once it has come about?"

"Quite adequate," he said.

Book IX

The tyrant, and which life is happiest.

SOCRATES 571a "What remains," I said, "is to examine the tyrannical man himself: how he develops out of the democratic man, what he's like once he's come about, and how he lives—wretchedly or blessedly."

"Yes, he's the one who's still left," he said.

"Do you know," I said, "what I still feel is missing?"

"What?"

"I don't think we've adequately distinguished the desires—what kinds there are and how many. And as long as that's lacking, the inquiry 571b we're pursuing will be less clear."

"Well, isn't there still time to do it?" he said.

"Certainly. And look at what I want to see in them. It's this. Among the unnecessary pleasures and desires, some seem to me to be lawless. They are probably born in everyone, but when they are held in check by the laws and by the better desires, with the help of reason, in some people they are got rid of entirely or only a few weak ones are left, 571c while in others they remain stronger and more numerous."

"Which ones do you mean?" he said.

"The ones that wake up in sleep," I said, "when the rest of the soul—the reasoning, gentle part that rules over it—is asleep, and the bestial and savage part, stuffed with food or drink, leaps up, pushes sleep away and tries to go and satisfy its own instincts. You know that in such a state it dares to do anything, as though released and freed from all shame and understanding. It doesn't shrink from trying to have sex 571d with its mother, as it ima-

gines, or with anyone else at all, human, god or beast; it will commit any murder and abstain from no food. In a word, it falls short of no folly or shamelessness."

"What you say is very true," he said.

"But when someone is in a healthy and moderate condition, I think, and goes to sleep after he has roused his reasoning part and feasted it on fine arguments and inquiries, having come to reflect 571e within himself; and when he has given his appetitive part neither too little nor too much, so that it will go to sleep and not disturb 572a the best part with its pleasure or pain, but will leave it alone, itself by itself and pure, to investigate and reach out to perceive something it doesn't know—something past, present or future;

and when in the same way he has calmed his spirited part and doesn't fall asleep with his spirit stirred up by anger at anyone; when he has quieted these two kinds and stirred up the third, the one in which understanding arises, and so takes his rest—you know that in such a state he grasps the truth best, and the visions that 572b appear in his dreams are least lawless."

"I think that's entirely right," he said.

HOW THE TYRANNICAL MAN COMES TO BE

Socrates explains how lawless desires, seen in dreams, take over a young man and make him tyrannical.

SOCRATES "Well, we've been carried away into saying more about this than we needed to. What we want to recognize is this: that there's a terrible, savage and lawless kind of desire in every one of us, even in some of us who seem entirely measured. And this becomes plain in our sleep. So see whether you think I'm saying something and whether you agree."

"I do agree."

"Then recall what we said the democratic man was like. 572c He had been brought up from youth, I think, by a thrifty father who valued only the money-making desires and despised the

unnecessary ones that exist for the sake of amusement and show. Isn't that right?"

"Yes."

"And after he fell in with more sophisticated men, full of the desires we've just described, he rushed into every kind of excess and into their way of life, out of hatred for his father's thrift. But since he had a better nature than those who were corrupting him, he was pulled in both directions 572d and settled in the middle between the two ways of life. Enjoying each in due measure, as he thought, he lives a life that is neither slavish nor lawless, having become a democratic man instead of an oligarchic one."

"Yes," he said, "that was and still is the opinion about such a man."

"Now suppose again," I said, "that such a man, now grown older, has a young son brought up in his turn in his father's ways."

"All right."

"Suppose too that the same things happen to him as happened to his father: that he is led into total 572e lawlessness, which those leading him call total freedom; that his father and the rest of his family come to the aid of these middle desires, while the others come to the aid of the opposite side.

"And when these terrible magicians and tyrant-makers despair of holding on to the young man any other way, they contrive to plant in him some passionate love, as champion of the idle desires that divide up whatever's 573a at hand—a great winged drone. Or do you think the love of such people is anything else?"

"I think it's nothing but that," he said.

"And when the other desires buzz around it, loaded with incense and perfumes, garlands and wine and all the pleasures let loose in such gatherings, and they make it grow as large as it can and nourish it and implant in the drone the sting of longing, then this champion of the soul takes madness as its bodyguard and 573b goes into a frenzy. If it finds any opinions or desires in

him that are considered good and that still feel shame, it kills them and pushes them out of him, until it has purged him of moderation and filled him with madness brought in from outside."

"You're describing the birth of a tyrannical man perfectly," he said.

"And isn't this why," I said, "Love has long been called a tyrant?"

"It may well be," he said.

"And my friend," I said, "doesn't a drunken man also have a sort of tyrannical 573c spirit?"

"He does."

"And a man who's mad and deranged tries to rule not only human beings but gods as well, and expects to be able to."

"Very much so," he said.

"Then, my remarkable friend," I said, "a man becomes tyrannical in the strict sense when, by nature or by his habits or both, he has become drunken, lustful and crazed with black bile."

"Absolutely."

"That, it seems, is how such a man comes about. But how does he live?" 573d

"As they say in the game," he said, "you'll tell me that too."

"I'll tell you," I said. "Next, I think, there are festivals among them, and revels and feasts and mistresses and everything of that sort, for people in whom Love lives as a tyrant and steers everything in the soul."

"Inevitably," he said.

"And don't many terrible desires sprout up alongside, day and night, needing a great deal?"

"Yes, many."

"So whatever income there is gets spent quickly."

"Of course." 573e

"And after that come borrowing and cutting into the estate."

"Naturally."

"And when everything runs out, won't the desires that have nested in him, thick and fierce, inevitably clamor? And won't he,

driven as if by goads by the other desires and above all by Love himself, who leads all the rest as if they were his bodyguard, go into a frenzy and look for anyone who has anything he can take away by deceit or 574a force?"

"Very much so," he said.

"Then he has to get money from every source, or be gripped by great pangs and pains."

"He has to."

"And just as the pleasures that came into him later got the better of the old ones and took away what was theirs, won't he likewise, being younger, think he deserves to get the better of his father and mother and take their things—to take a share of the family property once he's spent his own portion?"

"Of course," he said. 574b

"And if they won't let him, wouldn't he first try to steal from his parents and deceive them?"

"Certainly."

"And when he couldn't do that, he'd use robbery and force next?"

"I think so," he said.

"And if the old man and old woman held on and fought back, my good friend, would he be careful and hold back from doing something tyrannical?"

"I'm not at all confident," he said, "about the parents of such a man."

"But, Adeimantus, by Zeus, do you think that for the sake of a mistress he's just fallen for, who's dear to him but unnecessary, such a man would strike the mother who has long been dear to him and necessary; 574c or that for the sake of a young man in his bloom, newly dear and unnecessary, he would strike his aged and necessary father, the oldest of his friends; and that he'd make his parents slaves to them, if he brought them into the same house?"

"Yes, by Zeus, I do," he said.

"What a very blessed thing it seems to be," I said, "to give birth to a tyrannical son!"

"It certainly does," he said. 574d [1]

"And what happens when his father's and mother's resources give out on him, and the swarm of pleasures gathered in him is already large? Won't he first lay hands on the wall of some house, or on the cloak of someone out late at night, and after that give some temple a thorough clearing-out? And in all this the opinions he has held since childhood about what is fine and what is shameful, the ones considered just, will be overpowered by the opinions newly released from slavery, which serve as Love's bodyguard and will prevail along with him. Before, these were set loose only in dreams, 574e during sleep, when he himself was still under the laws and his father and there was democracy within him.

But once he is ruled by Love as a tyrant, he is always, awake, what he used to be only occasionally in dreams. He'll hold back from no terrible murder, no food, no deed. 575a Love lives in him like a tyrant, in total anarchy and lawlessness, since he is sole ruler himself; and he will lead the man who harbors him, as if he were a city, into every kind of daring, to find ways of feeding himself and the mob around him—some of it brought in from outside by bad company, some let loose and freed from within by the same ways of life and by himself. Isn't this the life of such a man?"

"Yes, it is," he said.

"And if there are only a few such people in a city," I said, 575b "and the rest of the population is moderate, they go off and serve as bodyguards for some other tyrant, or as mercenaries if there's a war somewhere. But if they turn up in peace and quiet, they stay right there in the city and do a lot of small evils."

"What sort of evils do you mean?"

"Things like stealing, breaking into houses, cutting purses, stripping people of their clothes, robbing temples, kidnapping people into slavery. Sometimes, if they're good speakers, they

1 The Greek word for "necessary" (anankaios) also means "closely related by blood," so Socrates is playing on both senses.

become malicious prosecutors, bear false witness and take bribes." 575c

"Those are small evils, as you say," he said, "if such people are few."

"Yes," I said, "because small things are small compared to large ones. And all these things together, in terms of the wickedness and misery of a city, don't come anywhere near a tyrant, as the saying goes. For when such people and their followers become numerous in a city and become aware of their numbers, then it is they who, with the help of the people's folly, give birth to the tyrant: the one among them who has the greatest and strongest tyrant within himself, 575d in his own soul."

"Naturally," he said, "since he would be the most tyrannical."

"That's all very well if they yield willingly. But if the city doesn't allow it, then just as he once punished his mother and father, so now, if he can, he'll punish his fatherland, bringing in new comrades; and he'll keep his once-dear motherland, as the Cretans call it, and his fatherland enslaved to them and feed them from it. And this would be the goal of such a man's desire." 575e

"That's absolutely it," he said.[2]

"Now," I said, "aren't such men like this in private life too, even before they rule? First, in the company they keep: either they associate with flatterers who are ready to serve them in anything, or, if they need something from someone, 576a they grovel themselves, daring to strike any posture of intimacy, and then, once they've got what they want, they act like strangers?"

"Very much so."

"So all their lives they live without ever being a friend to anyone, always a master to someone or a slave to another. The tyrannical nature never tastes freedom or true friendship."

"Certainly."

"Then wouldn't we be right to call such people untrustworthy?"

"Of course."

2 The Cretans used "motherland" where other Greeks said "fatherland."

"And as unjust as it's possible to be, if we were right 576b in what we agreed earlier about what justice is."

"And we certainly were right," he said.

"Then let's sum up the worst man," I said. "He is, I suppose, the man who is, awake, what we described in a dream."

"Certainly."

"And he comes about when someone who is most tyrannical by nature rules alone, and the longer he spends his life as a tyrant, the more like this he becomes."

"Inevitably," said Glaucon, taking over the argument.

THE TYRANT IS THE MOST WRETCHED

Socrates argues the tyrant is the most enslaved and wretched of men, and the just the happiest.

SOCRATES "Then," I said, "won't the man who turns out to be most wicked 576c also turn out to be most wretched? And won't the one who has been tyrant longest and most absolutely have in truth been most wretched, most and longest? Though the many have many opinions about it."

"That much at least must be so," he said.

"And," I said, "doesn't the tyrannical man correspond in likeness to the city ruled by a tyrant, and the democratic man to the democratically governed city, and so on for the others?"

"Of course."

"And as city stands to city in excellence and happiness, so too does man to man?" 576d

"Of course."

"Then how does a city ruled by a tyrant stand in excellence to one ruled by a king, like the one we first described?"

"They're complete opposites," he said. "One is the best, the other the worst."

"I won't ask which is which," I said. "It's obvious. But as for happiness and wretchedness, do you judge them the same way or differently? And let's not be dazzled by looking at the tyrant, who is only one man, or at the few around him. We should go in

and view the whole 576e city as we ought, getting down into every part and looking at it, and only then declare our opinion."

"That's a fair challenge," he said. "And it's clear to everyone that there's no city more wretched than one ruled by a tyrant, and none happier than one ruled by a king."

"And wouldn't I also be right," I said, "to make the same challenge 577a about the men, and ask that the judge of them be someone who can enter into a man's character in thought and see through it—someone who isn't dazzled, like a child looking from outside, by the pomp that tyrants put on for outsiders, but sees through it adequately? What if I thought that all of us should listen to the man who is able to judge, who has lived under the same roof as the tyrant and been present at his doings at home, seeing how he treats each of his household—where 577b he would most be seen stripped of his tragic costume—and again in times of public danger; and what if we asked him, since he has seen all this, to report how the tyrant compares with the others in happiness and wretchedness?"

"That would be a very fair challenge too," he said.

"Then would you like us to pretend," I said, "that we ourselves are among those able to judge and who have already met such people, so that we'll have someone to answer our questions?"

"Certainly." 577c

"Come on, then," I said, "look at it this way. Remember the likeness between the city and the man, and then, looking at each point in turn, tell me what happens to each of them."

"Such as what?" he said.

"First," I said, "speaking of the city, will you say that a city ruled by a tyrant is free or enslaved?"

"As enslaved as can be," he said.

"And yet you do see masters and free men in it."

"I see a small portion of such people," he said. "But the whole, so to speak, and the most decent part of it, is enslaved, in dishonor and misery." 577d

"Then if the man is like the city," I said, "isn't the same arrangement bound to be present in him too? Won't his soul be

full of slavery and servility, with the parts that were most decent enslaved, while a small part, the most wicked and maddest, is master?"

"It has to be," he said.

"Well then, will you say that such a soul is enslaved or free?"

"Enslaved, surely."

"And the enslaved, tyrant-ruled city does least what it wants?"

"By far." 577e

"Then the tyrant-ruled soul too will least do what it wants—speaking of the soul as a whole. Always dragged by force by a goading frenzy, it will be full of turmoil and regret."

"Of course."

"And is the tyrant-ruled city bound to be rich or poor?"

"Poor."

"Then the tyrannical soul too must always be poor and insatiable."

"Just so," he said.

578a "And what about fear? Isn't a city like this, and a man like this, bound to be full of it?"

"Very full."

"And do you think you'll find more wailing and groaning, more lamenting and anguish, in any other city?"

"Not at all."

"And in a man, do you suppose such things are found more in anyone than in this tyrannical man, maddened by appetites and passions?"

"How could they be?" he said. 578b

"It was by looking at all these things, I think, and others like them, that you judged this city the most wretched of cities—"

"And wasn't I right?" he said.

"Quite right," I said. "But what do you say about the tyrannical man, looking at these same things?"

"That he's by far the most wretched of all," he said.

"There," I said, "you're no longer right."

"How so?" he said.

"I don't think," I said, "that he is yet the most wretched."

"Then who is?"

"Here's one you may think still more wretched than him."

"Who?" 578c

"The man," I said, "who is tyrannical but doesn't live out his life as a private citizen—who has the bad luck to have some misfortune furnish him with the means of becoming a tyrant."

"From what's been said before," he said, "I'd infer that you're telling the truth."

"Yes," I said, "but we shouldn't just suppose things like this; we should examine them very carefully with an argument of this kind. After all, the inquiry concerns the greatest thing there is: the good life and the bad."

"Quite right," he said.

"Then see whether there's anything in what I say. I think we need to get an idea of it 578d by examining the matter from the following."

"From what?"

"From each of the private citizens in cities who are rich and own many slaves. They have this much in common with tyrants: they rule over many. The difference is in the tyrant's numbers."

"Yes, that's the difference."

"Now you know that these men feel secure and aren't afraid of their household slaves?"

"What would they be afraid of?"

"Nothing," I said. "But do you see the reason?"

"Yes: the whole city comes to the aid of each individual citizen." 578e

"Well said," I said. "But what if some god were to lift one man who owns fifty slaves or even more out of the city—him and his wife and children—and set him down in a wilderness along with the rest of his property and his household slaves, where no free man would be coming to help him? What sort of fear, and how much, do you think he'd be in, for himself and his children and his wife, that they might be killed by the slaves?"

"Utter terror," he said, "I'd think."

579a "Wouldn't he be forced before long to fawn on some of those very slaves, make them lots of promises and set them free when there was no need to, and so turn out to be a flatterer of his own servants?"

"He'd have no choice," he said, "or else he'd be killed."

"And what if the god also settled many other neighbors in a ring around him," I said, "people who wouldn't tolerate anyone claiming to be master of another, and who, if they ever caught such a person, would punish him with the most extreme punishments?" 579b

"I think he'd be in still worse trouble," he said, "hemmed in on every side by nothing but enemies."

"And isn't that the kind of prison the tyrant is bound in, being by nature the sort of person we've described, full of fears and passions of every kind? Greedy as his soul is, he alone of everyone in the city can't travel abroad anywhere, or go to see the festivals that other free men long to see. Instead he lives mostly shut up in his house, like a woman, 579c envying the other citizens too if any of them goes abroad and sees something good."

"Absolutely," he said.

"So the man who is badly governed within himself—the tyrannical man, whom you just now judged the most wretched—reaps a still larger harvest of such evils when he doesn't live out his life as a private citizen but is forced by some chance to be a tyrant, and tries to rule others when he can't control himself. It's as if a man whose body was sick and had no control over itself were forced to spend his life not in private but competing 579d and fighting against other bodies."

"Socrates," he said, "your comparison is perfectly apt, and perfectly true."

"Then, my dear Glaucon," I said, "isn't his condition utterly wretched? And doesn't the man who rules as tyrant have an even harder life than the one you judged to have the hardest?"

"Absolutely," he said.

"So in truth, whatever anyone may think, the real tyrant is really a slave, given over to the most abject fawning and ser-

vitude, 579e a flatterer of the worst of men. Far from satisfying his appetites in any way at all, he is plainly in want of most things and truly poor, if one knows how to look at a soul as a whole. All his life he is full of fear, filled with convulsions and pains—if he really does resemble the condition of the city he rules. And he does resemble it, doesn't he?"

"Very much so," he said.

580a "And on top of this we'll also attribute to the man what we said earlier: that he is bound to be, and through his rule to become even more than before, envious, untrustworthy, unjust, friendless, impious, a host and nurse to every kind of badness; and that as a result of all this he is, first, supremely unfortunate himself, and then makes those near him like himself."

"No one with any sense," he said, "will contradict you."

"Come then," I said. "Now, just as the judge of the final round 580b declares his verdict, you too decide who in your opinion is first in happiness, who second, and the others in order—there are five of them: the kingly, the timocratic, the oligarchic, the democratic, the tyrannical."

"The judgment's easy," he said. "I rank them like choruses, in the order they came on stage, in excellence and badness, and in happiness and its opposite."[3]

"Then shall we hire a herald," I said, "or shall I proclaim it myself: that the son of Ariston has judged the best and most just man to be the happiest, 580c and that this is the most kingly man, who rules as king over himself; and that the worst and most unjust man is the most wretched, and that this happens to be the man who, being most tyrannical, is most completely a tyrant over himself and over the city?"

"Consider it proclaimed," he said.

"And shall I add to the proclamation," I said, "'whether or not all men and gods notice what they are'?"

"Add it," he said.[4]

3 At Athenian dramatic festivals, judges ranked the competing choruses.

4 Ariston's name echoes *aristos*, "best"—hence the pun on "the best and most just man."

THREE KINDS OF PLEASURE

Socrates matches three kinds of pleasure to the soul's three parts and judges the philosopher's best.

SOCRATES "Well then," I said, "that would be our first proof. 580d Now look at this second one and see if you think there's anything in it."

"What is it?"

"Since the soul of each individual," I said, "is divided in three, just as the city was divided into three classes, it will admit, I think, of another proof as well."

"What is it?"

"This. Since there are three parts, there appear to me to be three kinds of pleasure too, one proper to each; and likewise three kinds of desire and of rule."

"What do you mean?" he said.

"One part, we said, was that with which a person learns, and another that with which he feels anger. The third, because it takes so many forms, we couldn't call by any one name 580e of its own, so we named it after the biggest and strongest thing in it.

"We called it the appetitive part because of the intensity of its appetites for food and drink and sex and everything that goes with them; and we also called it money-loving, since it's above all by means of money that 581a appetites like these are fulfilled."

"And rightly so," he said.

"So if we also said that its pleasure and its love are for profit, wouldn't that be the best way to pin it down under a single heading in our argument, so that it would be clear to us what we meant whenever we spoke of this part of the soul? And wouldn't we be right to call it money-loving and profit-loving?"

"I think so, anyway," he said.

"And what about the spirited part? Don't we say it's always wholly set on control and victory and good repute?" 581b

"Very much so."

"So if we called it victory-loving and honor-loving, would that be apt?"

"Most apt."

"And as for the part with which we learn, it's obvious to everyone that it is always wholly straining to know the truth of how things are, and that of the three it cares least about money and reputation."

"By far."

"Then would we be right to call it learning-loving and wisdom-loving?"

"Of course."

"And in some people's souls," I said, "it is 581c this part that rules, while in others it's one of the other two, whichever it happens to be?"

"That's right," he said.

"And that's why we say there are also three primary kinds of people: the philosophic, the victory-loving, the profit-loving?"

"Exactly."

"And three kinds of pleasure too, one underlying each of them?"

"Certainly."

"Now you know," I said, "that if you were to ask three such people in turn which of these lives is the most pleasant, each would praise his own above the rest? The 581d moneymaker will say that, compared with making a profit, the pleasure of being honored or of learning is worth nothing, unless it makes him some money?"

"True," he said.

"And what about the honor-lover?" I said. "Doesn't he regard the pleasure that comes from money as rather vulgar, and the pleasure of learning, except insofar as learning brings honor, as so much smoke and nonsense?"

"That's how it is," he said.

"And the philosopher," I said, "what should we suppose he thinks of the other 581e pleasures, compared with the pleasure of knowing the truth as it is, and of always being in some such

state as he goes on learning? Doesn't he think they fall far short of that pleasure? And doesn't he call them necessary in the literal sense, since he'd have no need of any of them if necessity didn't require it?"

"We can be sure of that," he said.

"Then since the pleasures of each type, and their very lives, are in dispute—not over which way of living is finer or more shameful, or better or worse, but over which is actually 582a more pleasant and less painful—how could we know which of them is speaking most truly?"

"I can't really say," he said.

"Well, look at it this way. By what should things be judged if they're to be judged well? Isn't it by experience and understanding and reason? Or could anyone have a better criterion than these?"

"How could he?" he said.

"Consider, then. Of the three men, which has the most experience of all the pleasures we mentioned? Does the profit-lover, by learning what truth itself is like, seem to you to have more experience of the 582b pleasure of knowing than the philosopher has of the pleasure of profit?"

"There's a great difference," he said. "The philosopher can't help tasting the other pleasures, starting in childhood. But the profit-lover, when he learns the nature of the things that are, has no need to taste this pleasure and find out how sweet it is, or to gain experience of it; in fact, even if he were eager to, it wouldn't be easy."

"So the philosopher far surpasses the profit-lover," I said, "in experience of both pleasures." 582c

"Far more, certainly."

"And what about the honor-lover? Does the philosopher have less experience of the pleasure of being honored than the honor-lover has of the pleasure of understanding?"

"Well, honor," he said, "comes to all of them, if each accomplishes what he has set out to do—the rich man is honored by many, and so are the brave man and the wise one—so all of them

have experience of what the pleasure of being honored is like. But what pleasure there is in beholding what is, no one but the philosopher can have tasted." 582d

"So as far as experience goes," I said, "he's the best judge of the three."

"By far."

"And he alone will have gained his experience together with understanding."

"Certainly."

"Moreover, the instrument by which things must be judged belongs not to the profit-lover or the honor-lover, but to the philosopher."

"What instrument?"

"We said, I think, that they must be judged by means of arguments. Didn't we?"

"Yes."

"And arguments are above all his instrument."

"Of course."

"Now if the things under 582e judgment were best judged by wealth and profit, what the profit-lover praised and disparaged would necessarily be the truest."

"Quite necessarily."

"And if by honor and victory and courage, wouldn't it be what the honor-lover and victory-lover praised?"

"Clearly."

"But since it's by experience and understanding and reason?"

"Then necessarily," he said, "what the philosopher and lover of reason praises is truest."

583a "So of the three pleasures, the pleasure of the part of the soul with which we learn would be the most pleasant, and the life of the one among us in whom this part rules would be the most pleasant?"

"How could it not be?" he said. "The man of understanding, at any rate, speaks with authority when he praises his own life."

"And which life," I said, "and which pleasure does the judge put second?"

"Clearly the warrior's, the honor-lover's, since it's closer to his own than the moneymaker's is."

"And last, it seems, the profit-lover's."

"Of course," he said. 583b

TRUE AND FALSE PLEASURE

Socrates argues that only the philosopher's pleasures are true and pure, calculating the king 729 times happier.

SOCRATES "So that makes two in a row, and twice the just man has beaten the unjust. Now for the third, Olympic-style, to Zeus the Savior and Olympian: note that, apart from the pleasure of the man of understanding, the pleasure of the others isn't wholly true or pure, but a kind of shadow-painting, as I think I've heard from one of the wise. And yet this would be the greatest and most decisive of the falls."

"By far. But what do you mean?" 583c

"I'll find it out," I said, "if I search while you answer."

"Ask away, then," he said.[5]

"Tell me, then," I said. "Don't we say that pain is the opposite of pleasure?"

"Certainly."

"And that there is such a thing as feeling neither enjoyment nor pain?"

"There is."

"Lying in the middle between the two—a kind of calm of the soul with respect to them? Or isn't that how you'd put it?"

"That's how," he said.

"Now do you remember," I said, "what sick people say when they're ill?"

"What?"

"That nothing, it turns out, is more pleasant than being healthy, but that 583d before they fell ill they hadn't noticed it was the most pleasant thing."

5 The third libation at a feast was poured to Zeus the Savior; and a wrestler won by throwing his opponent three times.

"I remember," he said.

"And you hear people in severe pain saying that nothing is more pleasant than for the pain to stop?"

"I do."

"And I think you notice people in many other situations like these, where, when they're in pain, it's not feeling pain, and the calm that comes with it, that they praise as most pleasant—not enjoyment."

"Yes," he said, "because at such times, perhaps, calm does become pleasant and welcome." 583e

"And so when someone stops enjoying himself," I said, "the calm after pleasure will be painful."

"Perhaps," he said.

"So what we said just now lay between the two—the calm—will at times be both, pain and pleasure."

"It seems so."

"But can what is neither become both?"

"I don't think so."

"And further, pleasure and pain, when they arise in the soul, are both a kind of motion, aren't they?"

"Yes."

"And didn't what is neither painful nor pleasant turn out just now to be a calm, lying in the middle between these two?"

"It did."

"Then how can it be right to think that not being in pain is pleasant, or that not enjoying oneself is distressing?"

"It can't."

584a "So it isn't so," I said. "Rather, the calm at such times appears pleasant beside what is painful, and painful beside what is pleasant, and there's nothing sound in these appearances as regards the truth about pleasure; it's a kind of sorcery."

"So the argument indicates, at any rate," he said. 584b

"Then look at pleasures that don't come out of pains," I said, "so that you won't happen to suppose, in the present case, that it's the nature of things for pleasure to be the cessation of pain, and pain the cessation of pleasure."

"Where are these," he said, "and which pleasures do you mean?"

"There are many others," I said, "but consider especially, if you like, the pleasures of smell. These arise suddenly, with no prior pain, and are of extraordinary intensity, and when they stop they leave no pain behind."

"Very true," he said. 584c

"Then let's not be persuaded that release from pain is pure pleasure, or that release from pleasure is pain."

"No, let's not."

"And yet," I said, "the so-called pleasures that reach the soul through the body—pretty much the most numerous and the greatest of them—are of this kind: releases of some sort from pain."

"Yes, they are."

"And the anticipatory pleasures and pains that arise from expecting these things beforehand are the same way?"

"The same." 584d

"Now do you know," I said, "what they're like, and what they most resemble?"

"What?" he said.

"Do you think," I said, "that in nature there is an up, a down, and a middle?"

"I do."

"Then do you think that someone being carried from down below to the middle would think anything other than that he was being carried up? And standing in the middle and looking back at where he'd been carried from, would he think he was anywhere but up, never having seen what is truly up?"

"By Zeus," he said, "I don't think such a person would think anything else." 584e

"And if he were carried back again," I said, "he'd think he was being carried down, and he'd be right?"

"Of course."

"And he'd go through all this because he has no experience of what is truly up and middle and down?"

"Clearly."

"Then would you be surprised if people without experience of truth, just as they hold unsound opinions about many other things, are also so disposed toward pleasure and pain and what lies between them that when they're carried to the [585a] painful, they think truly and really are in pain; but when they're carried from pain to the middle, they firmly believe they're arriving at fulfillment and pleasure? Like people who, having no experience of white, look at gray against black, they look at painlessness against pain and are deceived, having no experience of pleasure."

"By Zeus," he said, "I wouldn't be surprised—I'd be much more surprised if it weren't so."

"Well, think of it this way," I said. "Aren't hunger and thirst and the [585b] like kinds of emptiness in the condition of the body?"

"Of course."

"And aren't ignorance and folly, in turn, emptiness in the condition of the soul?"

"Very much so."

"And the one who takes in food and the one who acquires understanding are both filled?"

"Of course."

"And is the truer filling with what has less being, or with what has more?"

"Clearly with what has more."

"Then which kinds of things do you think have a greater share in pure being: things like bread and drink and relish and all nourishment, or the kind that consists of true opinion and knowledge and understanding and, [585c] in sum, all excellence? Judge it this way. What is bound up with what is always the same, and immortal, and with truth, and is itself of that sort and comes to be in something of that sort—does that seem to you to have more being than what is bound up with what is never the same, and mortal, and is itself of that sort and comes to be in something of that sort?"

"What is bound up with what is always the same," he said, "is far superior."

"Then does the being of what is always the same have any more share in being than in knowledge?"

"Not at all."

"What about truth?"

"Not in that either."

"And if it had less share in truth, wouldn't it have less in being too?"

"Necessarily." 585d

"So in general, don't the kinds of things that serve the care of the body have less share in truth and being than those that serve the care of the soul?"

"Much less."

"And don't you think the same holds of the body itself compared with the soul?"

"I do."

"And isn't what is filled with things that have more being, and has more being itself, more really filled than what is filled with things that have less being and has less being itself?"

"Of course."

"So if being filled with what suits one's nature is pleasant, then what is more really filled, and with things that have more being, would make one more 585e really and truly enjoy a true pleasure; while what takes in things that have less being would be less truly and less securely filled, and would get a share of a less trustworthy and less true pleasure."

"Quite necessarily," he said.

586a "So those without experience of understanding and excellence, who are always busy with feasting and the like, are carried down, it seems, and then back up as far as the middle, and they wander this way all their lives. They've never passed beyond this to what is truly up—never looked up at it or been carried there—never been filled with what really is, and never tasted secure and pure pleasure. Instead, like cattle, always looking down, heads bent to the ground and to their tables, they

graze, fattening themselves and mating; [586b] and in their greed for more of these things they kick and butt one another with horns and hooves of iron, and kill each other because they can never be satisfied, since they don't fill the real part of themselves, the part that can hold them, with things that are real."

"Socrates," said Glaucon, "you're describing the life of the many exactly, like an oracle."

"Then aren't they bound to live with pleasures mixed with pains—phantoms of true pleasure, shadow-paintings, [586c] colored by being set beside one another, so that each seems intense—and to breed mad passions for themselves in the foolish, and to be fought over, just as Stesichorus says the phantom of Helen was fought over by the men at Troy, in ignorance of the truth?"

"Something like that," he said, "is quite inevitable."[6]

"And what about the spirited part? Isn't the same sort of thing bound to happen to anyone who gives it full play—through envy prompted by love of honor, or violence prompted by love of victory, or anger prompted by bad temper— [586d] pursuing his fill of honor and victory and anger without reasoning or understanding?"

"The same sort of thing," he said, "is bound to happen with this part too."

"Well then," I said, "may we confidently say that even the desires connected with the profit-loving and victory-loving parts, if they follow knowledge and reason and pursue with them the pleasures that the part with understanding directs them to, will obtain the truest pleasures, so far as they can obtain true ones, [586e] since they follow truth—and the pleasures that are their own, if what is best for each thing is also most its own?"

"It certainly is most its own," he said.

"So when the whole soul follows the philosophic part and isn't in conflict with itself, each part can do its own work in every other respect and be just, and in particular each can enjoy

6 Stesichorus, a Sicilian poet of the sixth century BC, wrote that only a phantom of Helen went to Troy, while she herself stayed in Egypt.

its own pleasures, the best pleasures and, so far as possible, the 587a truest."

"Exactly."

"But when one of the other parts gains control, the result is that it can't find its own pleasure, and it compels the other parts to pursue a pleasure that is alien to them and not true."

"That's so," he said.

"And wouldn't what stands furthest from philosophy and reason be most likely to produce such effects?"

"By far."

"And isn't what stands furthest from reason what stands furthest from law and order?"

"Clearly."

"And didn't the erotic and 587b tyrannical desires turn out to stand furthest off?"

"By far."

"And the kingly and orderly ones least far?"

"Yes."

"Then the tyrant, I think, will stand furthest from true pleasure, the pleasure that is his own, and the king least far."

"Necessarily."

"And so the tyrant will live most unpleasantly," I said, "and the king most pleasantly."

"Quite necessarily."

"Then do you know," I said, "how much more unpleasantly the tyrant lives than the king?"

"I will if you tell me," he said.

"There are three pleasures, it seems: one genuine and two 587c bastard. The tyrant has gone beyond the bastard ones to the far side, fleeing law and reason, and lives with certain slavish pleasures as his bodyguard. Just how much worse off he is isn't at all easy to say, except perhaps this way."

"How?" he said.

"The tyrant stood third from the oligarchic man, I think, since the democratic man was between them."

"Yes."

"Then if what we said before is true, the phantom of pleasure he lives with would also be third from the oligarch's in point of truth?"

"That's right."

"And the oligarchic man in turn is third from the kingly one, if [587d] we count the aristocratic and the kingly as the same."

"Yes, third."

"So the tyrant stands removed from true pleasure," I said, "by a number that is three times three."

"It seems so."

"Then the phantom of tyrannical pleasure, it seems," I said, "would be a plane figure, as measured by the number of its length."

"Exactly."

"And by squaring and then raising to the third dimension, it's clear how great a distance separates him."

"It's clear," he said, "to someone good at calculating, anyway."

"So if someone turns it around and says how far the king [587e] stands from the tyrant in truth of pleasure, he'll find, when the multiplication is complete, that the king lives seven hundred and twenty-nine times more pleasantly, and the tyrant more painfully by that same distance."

"What a staggering calculation you've heaped up," he said, "of the difference [588a] between the two men, the just and the unjust, in pleasure and pain!"

"And yet it's a true number," I said, "and one that fits their lives, if days and nights and months and years fit them."

"They certainly do," he said.[7]

THE MANY-HEADED BEAST

Socrates pictures the soul as a many-headed beast, a lion and a man to show injustice never pays.

SOCRATES "So if the good and just man beats the bad and unjust man by that much in pleasure, won't he beat him by an

incalculably greater margin in grace of life, and in beauty and excellence?"

"Incalculably greater, by Zeus," he said. 588b

"Well then," I said, "since we've reached this point in the argument, let's take up again what was said at the start, which brought us here. It was said, I think, that injustice pays for someone who is completely unjust but has a reputation for justice. Or wasn't that how it was put?"

"It certainly was."

"Then let's talk with the man who said it," I said, "now that we've agreed on the power that doing injustice and doing just things each have."

"How?" he said.

"By molding an image of the soul in words, so that the one who said those things will see what he was saying." 588c

"What sort of image?" he said.

"One like the creatures the old stories say existed," I said, "such as the Chimera, Scylla and Cerberus, and a great many others in which several shapes are said to have grown together into one."

"Yes, so they say," he said.

"Then mold a single shape of a many-colored, many-headed beast, with a ring of heads of tame and wild animals, which it can change and grow out of itself, all of them." 588d [8]

"That's a job for a skilled sculptor," he said. "Still, since words are easier to mold than wax and the like, consider it molded."

"Now mold one other shape, a lion's, and one of a human being. Let the first be by far the largest, and the second second."

"Those are easier," he said, "and they're molded."

"Now join the three into one, so that they somehow grow together with one another."

"They're joined," he said.

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7 9 cubed is 729, roughly the number of days and nights in a year—hence Socrates' closing remark.

8 The Chimera was part lion, part goat, part serpent; Scylla, a sea monster with dogs' heads; Cerberus, the many-headed dog guarding Hades.

"Now mold around them on the outside the image of one of them, the human being, so that to anyone who can't see what's inside, but sees only the 588e outer shell, it looks like a single creature, a human being."

"It's molded around them," he said.

"Then let's tell whoever says it pays this human being to do wrong, and that doing just things doesn't benefit him, that he is saying nothing other than this: that it pays him to feast the many-sided beast and make it strong, and the lion and all that belongs to the lion too, while he starves 589a the human being and makes him weak, so that he gets dragged wherever either of the other two leads; and that he shouldn't accustom them to one another or make them friends, but leave them to bite each other and fight and devour one another."

"Yes," he said, "that's exactly what someone who praises doing wrong would be saying."

"And on the other hand, someone who says that just things pay would say that we must do and say whatever will give the human being within the fullest 589b mastery over the whole person. He'll take charge of the many-headed creature like a farmer, nurturing and taming the gentle parts and preventing the wild ones from growing, making the lion's nature his ally; and caring for them all in common, making them friends with one another and with himself, that's how he'll raise them. Isn't that so?"

"Yes, that's exactly what someone who praises justice says."

"So in every way the one who praises just things would be telling the truth, 589c and the one who praises unjust things would be lying. Whether you look at it with an eye to pleasure, or to good reputation, or to benefit, the praiser of justice speaks the truth, while the one who finds fault with it says nothing sound, and doesn't even know what he's finding fault with."

"No," he said, "it seems to me he doesn't, not in any way."

"Then let's persuade him gently—he isn't going wrong willingly—by asking him: 'My dear fellow, wouldn't we say that what custom counts as fine and shameful came to be so for reasons like these? The fine is what puts the bestial parts of our nature

under 589d the human being, or rather perhaps under the divine; the shameful is what enslaves the gentle to the wild.' Will he agree, or what?"

"He will," he said, "if he takes my advice."

"Is there anyone, then," I said, "whom it profits, on this account, to take gold unjustly, if what happens is something like this: in taking the gold he at the same time enslaves the best part of himself 589e to the most wicked? If taking gold meant enslaving his son or daughter, and to savage and wicked men at that, it wouldn't profit him, however much he got for it. But if he enslaves the most divine part of himself to the most godless and foul, and feels no pity, isn't he wretched? Isn't he taking a bribe of gold for a far 590a more terrible ruin than Eriphyle did when she accepted the necklace in return for her husband's life?"[9]

"Far more terrible," said Glaucon. "I'll answer for him."

"And don't you think licentiousness has long been condemned for reasons like these, because in someone like that the terrible thing, that great and many-formed creature, is let loose more than it should be?"

"Clearly," he said.

"And aren't stubbornness and bad temper condemned when the lion-like and 590b snake-like part grows and is strung too tight, out of tune?"

"Certainly."

"And aren't luxury and softness condemned for slackening and loosening this same part, when they produce cowardice in it?"

"Of course."

"And flattery and servility? Aren't they condemned when someone puts this same part, the spirited part, under the mob-like beast, and lets it be dragged through the mud for the sake of money and that beast's insatiable greed, training it from youth to become an ape instead of a lion?" 590c

"Very much so," he said.

9 Bribed with a necklace, Eriphyle persuaded her husband Amphiaraus to join the expedition of the Seven against Thebes, where he died.

"And why do you think manual labor and handicraft bring reproach? Shall we say it's for any reason other than that the best part in someone is naturally weak, so that he can't rule the creatures inside him, but only serve them, and can learn nothing but how to flatter them?"

"So it seems," he said.

"So isn't this why, in order that someone like that may also be ruled by the same sort of thing that rules the best person, we say he must be the slave of that best person, 590d the one who has the divine ruling within himself? It isn't that we think he should be ruled to the slave's harm, as Thrasymachus thought about those who are ruled. It's that it is better for everyone to be ruled by what is divine and wise—ideally having it as his own within himself, but otherwise set over him from outside—so that, as far as possible, we may all be alike and friends, steered by the same thing."

"Yes, and rightly," he said. 590e

"And the law, too," I said, "makes it clear that this is what it wants, since it is the ally of everyone in the city.

"So does our rule over children. We don't let them be free until we have set up a constitution in them, as in a city, and, having nurtured the best part 591a in them with the corresponding part in us, have put in place a similar guardian and ruler within them to take its place. Only then do we set them free."

"Yes, it makes that clear," he said.

"Then how, Glaucon, and on what argument, shall we say that it profits a person to do wrong, or be licentious, or do something shameful, when it will make him worse, even if he gains more money or some other kind of power?"

"In no way," he said.

"And how could it profit him to do wrong without being caught, and not pay the penalty? 591b Doesn't the one who escapes detection become even worse, while in the one who is caught and punished the bestial part is lulled to sleep and tamed, and the gentle part set free? And doesn't his whole soul, settling into its best nature, acquire a more valuable condition—gaining

moderation and justice together with understanding—than a body does when it gains strength and beauty together with health, more valuable by as much as the soul is more valuable than the body?"

"Absolutely," he said. 591c

THE CITY WITHIN

Socrates says the wise man lives by the city within himself, then begins the charge against poetry.

SOCRATES "So a person with sense will direct all his efforts to this as long as he lives, won't he? First he'll value the studies that will make his soul like this, and think little of the rest."

"Clearly," he said.

"Next," I said, "far from handing over the condition and nourishment of his body to bestial, irrational pleasure and living with his face turned that way, he won't even look to health, or make it his priority to be strong or healthy or good-looking, unless 591d he's also going to become moderate as a result. He'll always be seen tuning the harmony in his body for the sake of the concord in his soul."

"Absolutely," he said, "if he really means to be a true musician."

"And the order and concord in acquiring money too?" I said. "Will he be dazzled by what the many call happiness, and increase the mass of his wealth without limit, taking on limitless troubles?"

"I don't think so," he said. 591e

"Instead," I said, "he'll keep his eyes on the constitution within himself, and guard against disturbing anything in it through having too much property or too little. Steering in this way, he'll add to his property and spend from it as far as he can."

"Quite so," he said.

592a "And as for honors, too, he'll keep his eyes on the same thing. He'll gladly share in and taste those he thinks will make

him better, and he'll avoid, in private and in public, any he thinks would undo the condition he has."

"Then he won't be willing to take part in politics," he said, "if that's what he cares about."

"By the dog," I said, "he certainly will, in his own city at least —though perhaps not in his native country, unless some divine chance comes about."

"I understand," he said. "You mean in the city we've just been founding in our discussion, the one that exists in words, since I don't think it exists anywhere [592b] on earth."

"But perhaps," I said, "a pattern of it is laid up in heaven for anyone who wants to see it and, seeing it, to found a city within himself. It makes no difference whether it exists anywhere, or ever will. He would take part in the affairs of that city alone, and of no other."

"That's likely," he said.

Book X

Poetry, and the myth of Er.

SOCRATES [595a] "And in fact," I said, "there are many other things about our city that make me think we were founding it in exactly the right way, but I say so not least when I think about poetry."

"What about it?" he said.

"That we refused to admit any of it that is imitative. That it must not be admitted at all is even clearer now, it seems to me, since we've distinguished the parts of the soul from one [595b] another."

"What do you mean?"

"Just between ourselves—you won't denounce me to the tragic poets and all the other imitators—all such things seem to be a corruption of the minds of those who hear them, unless they have as an antidote the knowledge of what these things really are."

"What exactly are you thinking of," he said, "when you say that?"

"I'll have to say it," I said, "even though a certain love and reverence for Homer that I've had since I was a child holds me back from speaking. For he seems [595c] to have been the first teacher and leader of all these fine tragic poets. Still, no man should be honored above the truth, so, as I say, I must speak."

"Certainly," he said.

"Listen, then—or rather, answer."

"Ask."

"Could you tell me what imitation in general is? I don't quite understand myself what it's supposed to be."

"So I suppose I'm going to understand it!" he said.

THE THREE BEDS

Socrates uses a god's, a carpenter's and a painter's bed to show imitation is far from truth.

SOCRATES "That wouldn't be strange at all," I said, "since people with duller sight often see things before those with sharper [596a] sight."

"That's so," he said, "but with you here I wouldn't even have the nerve to say anything that occurs to me. You look for yourself."

"Then shall we begin our inquiry from here, following our usual method? We usually posit, I think, a single form for each set of many things to which we give the same name. Or don't you follow?"

"I follow."

"Then let's take now whichever of the many you like. For example, if [596b] you like, there are many beds and tables."

"Of course."

"But there are only two forms for these pieces of furniture, one of bed and one of table."

"Yes."

"And aren't we also accustomed to say that the craftsman of each of them looks toward the form when he makes the beds, or the tables, that we use, and likewise with everything else? For surely no craftsman makes the form itself. How could he?"

"He couldn't."

"Now see what you'd call this craftsman." [596c]

"Which one?"

"The one who makes everything that each of the individual craftsmen makes."

"That's a clever and amazing man you're talking about."

"Not yet—soon you'll say so even more. This same craftsman can make not only every piece of furniture; he also makes everything that grows from the earth, and produces all living things, himself included, and besides these he produces earth and heaven and gods and everything in heaven and everything in Hades beneath the earth." 596d

"That's a truly amazing sophist you're describing," he said.

"Don't you believe me?" I said. "Tell me, do you think there couldn't be such a craftsman at all? Or that in one way someone could become the maker of all these things, but in another way couldn't? Don't you see that you yourself could make all these things, in a way?"

"And what way is that?" he said.

"It isn't difficult," I said. "It can be done in many ways and quickly—quickest of all, I suppose, if you're willing to take a mirror and 596e carry it around everywhere. You'll quickly make the sun and the things in the heavens, quickly the earth, quickly yourself and the other animals and furniture and plants and everything we were just talking about."

"Yes," he said, "things that appear, but not things that really are."

"Good," I said. "You've come to the argument just where you should. The painter too, I think, is one of these craftsmen, isn't he?"

"Of course."

"But you'll say, I think, that what he makes isn't true. And yet in a way the painter too makes a bed, doesn't he?"

"Yes," he said, "he too makes a bed that appears."

"What about the bed-maker? Weren't you just saying that he doesn't make the form, which we say is what a bed is, but a particular bed?"

"I was."

597a "Then if he doesn't make what a bed is, he wouldn't be making what is, but something like what is, which is not what is. And if anyone said that the work of the bed-maker or any other

craftsman completely is, he'd probably be saying something untrue?"

"He would," he said, "at least in the view of those who spend their time on arguments like these."

"Then let's not be surprised if this too turns out to be something dim compared with the truth." 597b

"No, let's not."

"Then do you want us," I said, "to use these very examples to look for this imitator, and find out what he is?"

"If you like," he said.

"Well, these beds turn out to be of three kinds. One is the one in nature, which I think we'd say a god made. Or who else?"

"No one else, I think."

"And one the carpenter makes."

"Yes," he said.

"And one the painter makes, right?"

"Let's say so."

"So painter, bed-maker, god: these three are in charge of three kinds of bed."

"Yes, three." 597c

"Now the god, whether because he didn't want to or because some necessity compelled him not to make more than one bed in nature, made only one, the very one that is what a bed is. Two or more such beds were never produced by the god, and never will be."

"Why is that?" he said.

"Because," I said, "if he made just two, one again would appear whose form they would both have, and that would be what a bed is, not the two."

"Right," he said. 597d

"The god knew this, I think, and wanted to be the real maker of a bed that really is, not the maker of some particular bed, nor some particular bed-maker. So he produced it by nature as one."

"That seems likely."

"Then shall we call him its nature-maker, or something like that?"

"That would be fair," he said, "since he has made both this and everything else by nature."

"And what about the carpenter? Isn't he a craftsman of beds?"

"Yes."

"And is the painter too a craftsman and maker of such a thing?"

"Not at all."

"Then what will you say he is, with respect to a bed?" 597e

"It seems to me," he said, "that the most reasonable thing to call him is an imitator of what those others are craftsmen of."

"Very well," I said. "So you call the one whose product is at the third remove from nature an imitator?"

"Certainly," he said.

"Then this will be true of the tragic poet too, if he's an imitator: he is by nature third from the king and the truth, and so are all the other imitators."

"Probably."

"Well, we've agreed about the imitator. But tell me this about 598a the painter: does he seem to you to try to imitate each thing itself in nature, or the works of craftsmen?"

"The works of craftsmen," he said.

"As they are, or as they appear? You still have to settle that."

"What do you mean?" he said.

"This: if you look at a bed from the side, or straight on, or from any angle, does it differ at all from itself? Or does it not differ at all, but only appear different? And the same with other things?"

"That's it," he said. "It appears different, but doesn't differ at all." 598b

"Then consider this very point. What is painting aimed at in each case? At imitating what is, as it is, or what appears, as it appears? Is it an imitation of appearance, or of truth?"

"Of appearance," he said.

"Then imitation is surely far from the truth, and that, it seems, is why it can produce everything: because it grasps just a small part of each thing, and that part is an image. The painter,

for example, we say, will paint us a shoemaker, a carpenter, and the other craftsmen, [598c] without understanding anything about their crafts. And still, if he's a good painter, he could paint a carpenter, show it from a distance, and deceive children and foolish people into thinking it really is a carpenter."

"Of course."

"But here, my friend, is what I think we should bear in mind about all such things. Whenever someone reports to us about a person, that he's met someone who knows all the crafts and everything else that each individual knows, and there's nothing he doesn't know [598d] more precisely than anyone, we should reply that he's a simple-minded fellow who, it seems, has met some charlatan and imitator and been fooled into thinking him all-wise, because he himself can't tell knowledge from ignorance and imitation."

"Very true," he said.

HOMER AND THE POETS ON TRIAL

Socrates argues that Homer and the tragic poets lack knowledge and feed the soul's worse part.

SOCRATES "Then after this," I said, "we must examine tragedy and its leader, Homer, since we hear some [598e] people say that these poets know all the crafts, and all human affairs that bear on excellence and badness, and divine affairs too. For a good poet, they say, if he's going to write well about whatever he writes about, must know it when he writes, or else he won't be able to write.

"So we must examine whether these people have met imitators like these and been deceived, and when they see their works [599a] fail to notice that they are at the third remove from what is, and easy to produce without knowing the truth—since what they produce are appearances, not things that are—or whether there's something in what they say, and good poets really do know about the things the many think they speak well about."

"We certainly must examine it," he said.

"Then do you think that if someone could make both—the thing to be imitated and the image—he would let himself take image-making seriously, and put it at the forefront of 599b his life as the best thing he had?"

"I don't."

"Rather, if he truly had knowledge, I think, of the things he imitates, he'd be far more serious about real deeds than about imitations of them, and would try to leave behind many fine deeds as memorials of himself, and would be more eager to be the one praised than the one praising."

"I think so," he said. "The honor and the benefit aren't equal."

"About other things, then, let's not demand an account from Homer 599c or any other poet by asking whether any of them was a doctor and not just an imitator of doctors' talk—which poet, old or new, is said to have made anyone healthy, as Asclepius did, or what students of medicine he left behind, as Asclepius left his descendants. And let's not ask them about the other crafts either, but let that go. But about the greatest and finest things Homer undertakes to speak of—wars and generalship and the government of cities, and 599d the education of human beings—it's surely fair to question him and ask: 'Dear Homer, if you are not third from the truth where excellence is concerned, a craftsman of images, which is how we defined an imitator, but second, and could recognize what practices make people better or worse in private and in public, tell us which city was better governed because of you, as Sparta was because of Lycurgus, and many 599e cities, great and small, because of many others?[1] "'What city credits you with having been a good lawgiver and having benefited them? Italy and Sicily credit Charondas, and we credit Solon. But who credits you?' Will he be able to name one?"[2]

"I don't think so," said Glaucon. "At any rate, not even the Homeridae claim it."

1 Lycurgus was the legendary lawgiver credited with founding Sparta's constitution.

2 Charondas of Catana was a lawgiver for Greek cities in Sicily and southern Italy.

"Well, is any war in Homer's day remembered as having been fought well under his command or on his advice?"

"None."

"Then are many clever inventions for the crafts or other practical activities attributed to him, of the kind you'd expect from a wise man at work, as they are to Thales of Miletus and Anacharsis the Scythian?"

"Nothing like that at all."[3]

600a "Well, if not in public, is Homer said to have been, while he lived, a leader in education for particular people in private, who loved him for his 600b company and handed down to those after them a Homeric way of life? Pythagoras, for instance, was especially loved for this himself, and his successors even now call their way of life Pythagorean and seem somehow to stand out among other people."

"Nothing like that is said about him either," he said. "As for Creophylus, Socrates, Homer's companion, his education might prove even more laughable than his name, if what's said about Homer is true. For they say Homer was badly neglected by 600c him in his own day, while he was alive."[4]

"Yes, that's what they say," I said. "But do you think, Glaucon, that if Homer had really been able to educate people and make them better, since he'd have had knowledge of these things and not just the ability to imitate them, he wouldn't have gained many companions and been honored and loved by them? Protagoras of Abdera, Prodicus of Ceos, and a great many others can convince their contemporaries, by spending time with them in private, 600d that they won't be able to manage their household or their city unless these men supervise their education; and they're loved so intensely for this wisdom that their companions all but carry them around on their heads. Would Homer's contemporaries, then, if he had been able to help people toward

3 The Homeridae were a guild of reciters of Homer who claimed descent from him. Thales and Anacharsis were proverbial sages credited with practical inventions.

4 Creophylus of Samos, an early epic poet, was said to be Homer's friend; his name sounds like "of the meat tribe."

excellence, have let him, or Hesiod, go around reciting poems? Wouldn't they have clung to them more than to gold and 600e forced them to stay at home with them, or, if they couldn't persuade them, followed them around themselves wherever they went, until they'd had enough education?"[5]

"I think what you say is entirely true, Socrates," he said.

"Then shall we take it that all poets, starting with Homer, are imitators of images of excellence and of the other things they write about, and don't grasp the truth? Just as we were saying a moment ago, the painter will make what looks like a shoemaker, 601a though he himself understands nothing about shoemaking, to people who don't understand it either, but judge by colors and shapes?"

"Certainly."

"In the same way, I think, we'll say that the poet uses words and phrases to paint on the colors of each of the crafts, though he himself understands nothing but how to imitate, so that to others like him, who judge by the words, it seems that if someone speaks about shoemaking in meter and rhythm and harmony, he speaks very well—or about generalship, or about anything 601b else. So great is the spell these things naturally have. For when the poets' works are stripped of their musical colors and spoken on their own, I think you know how they look. You've surely seen it."

"I have," he said.

"Aren't they," I said, "like the faces of people who are young but not beautiful, as they look when their bloom has left them?"

"Exactly," he said.

"Come, then, consider this. The maker of the image, the imitator, we say, understands nothing about what is, only about what appears. Isn't 601c that so?"

"Yes."

"Then let's not leave it half said, but look at it properly."

"Go on," he said.

5 Protagoras and Prodicus were well-known sophists of the fifth century BC who taught for fees.

"A painter, we say, will paint reins and a bit?"

"Yes."

"But a leatherworker and a smith will make them?"

"Certainly."

"Now does the painter understand what the reins and the bit should be like? Or doesn't even the one who makes them, the smith or the leatherworker, understand it, but only the one who knows how to use them, the horseman?"

"Very true."

"And won't we say it's like this with everything?"

"How?" 601d

"That for each thing there are these three crafts: one that will use it, one that will make it, and one that will imitate it?"

"Yes."

"And aren't the excellence, beauty, and correctness of each piece of equipment, each living thing, and each action related to nothing but the use for which each was made, or for which it is naturally suited?"

"That's so."

"So it's entirely necessary that the user of each thing be the most experienced with it, and that he tell the maker how well or badly the thing he uses performs in use. A pipe-player, for example, 601e reports to the pipe-maker about the pipes that serve him in his playing, and will prescribe how they should be made, and the maker will serve him."

"Of course."

"So the one who knows reports on good and bad pipes, and the other, trusting him, will make them?"

"Yes."

"So about the same piece of equipment, the maker will have correct belief about its fineness and badness, because he associates with the one who knows and is compelled 602a to listen to him, while the user will have knowledge."

"Certainly."

"And the imitator? Will he have knowledge, from using them, of whether the things he paints are fine and correct or not? Or

correct opinion, through being compelled to associate with the one who knows and being told how he should paint them?"

"Neither."

"So the imitator will neither know nor have correct opinion about the things he imitates, as to their fineness or badness."

"It seems not."

"Then the imitator in poetry would be in a charming state of wisdom about the things he writes about!"

"Hardly." 602b

"Still, he'll go on imitating anyway, without knowing in what way each thing is bad or good. Instead, it seems, he'll imitate whatever appears fine to the many, who know nothing."

"What else?"

"Well, it seems we're fairly well agreed on these points: that the imitator knows nothing worth mentioning about the things he imitates, that imitation is a kind of play and not a serious business, and that those who take up tragic poetry, in iambic or epic verse, are all imitators to the highest possible degree."

"Certainly." 602c

"Now, by Zeus," I said, "isn't this imitating concerned with something at the third remove from the truth? Isn't that so?"

"Yes."

"Then on what sort of part of a human being does it exert the power it has?"

"What sort of part are you asking about?"

"This sort. The same magnitude, I suppose, doesn't look equal to us through our sight when it's near and when it's far away."

"No, it doesn't."

"And the same things look bent and straight when we view them in water and out of it, and concave and convex too, because sight is misled in turn by colors; and every sort of confusion of this kind is clearly 602d present in our soul. It's this weakness in our nature that shadow-painting exploits, and it falls short of nothing in sorcery; so do conjuring and the many other tricks like it."

"True."[6]

"Well, haven't measuring, counting and weighing turned out to be the most welcome helpers against these things, so that what rules in us isn't what appears bigger or smaller or more or heavier, but what has calculated and measured, or even weighed?"

"Of course." 602e

"And that, surely, would be the work of the reasoning part in the soul."

"Yes, it would be that part's."

"Yet often, when this part has measured and indicates that some things are bigger or smaller than others, or equal, the opposite appears to it at the same time about the same things."

"Yes."

"Now didn't we say that it's impossible for the same thing to hold opposite opinions about the same things at the same time?"

"And we were right to say it."

"Then the part of the soul that forms opinions contrary to the measurements can't be the same as the part that forms them in accordance with the measurements."

"No, it can't."

"But the part that trusts measurement and calculation would be the best part of the soul."

"Of course."

"So the part opposed to it would be one of the inferior things in us."

"Necessarily."

603a "This, then, is what I wanted us to agree on when I said that painting, and imitation as a whole, produces its own work far from the truth, and that it keeps company with the part of us 603b that is far from understanding, and is its companion and friend for no healthy or true purpose."

"Absolutely," he said.

6 Shadow-painting (skiagraphia) used contrasts of light and shade to create an illusion of depth that works only when seen from a distance.

"So imitation, an inferior thing mating with an inferior thing, breeds inferior offspring."

"So it seems."

"Is that true only of the kind that concerns sight," I said, "or also of the kind that concerns hearing, which we call poetry?"

"Probably that kind too," he said.

"Then let's not rely only on the likelihood drawn from painting," I said. "Let's go on to that very part of the mind 603c with which poetic imitation keeps company, and see whether it's inferior or worth taking seriously."

"We must."

"Let's set it out like this. Imitation, we say, imitates human beings performing actions, forced or voluntary, who think that as a result of their actions they have fared well or badly, and who in all of this feel either pain or pleasure. Was there anything besides these?"

"Nothing."

"Then in all these situations is a person of one mind with himself? 603d Or, just as with sight he was at odds with himself and held opposite opinions within himself about the same things at the same time, is he also at odds and at war with himself in his actions? But I'm reminded that we don't need to reach agreement on this now. In our earlier discussion we agreed well enough on all of it: that our soul is full of countless oppositions of this kind occurring at the same time."

"Rightly," he said.

"Yes, rightly," I said. "But what we left out then, I think we now 603e have to go through."

"What's that?" he said.

"A decent man," I said, "who meets with a misfortune like losing a son, or anything else he values most, will bear it more easily than others. We said that then too, I think."

"Certainly."

"Now let's look at this: will he feel no grief at all, or is that impossible, and will he instead somehow be moderate in the face of pain?"

"The second is closer to the truth," he said.

"Now tell me this about him. Do you think he'll fight and resist his pain more when he's seen by his peers, or when he's alone by himself in solitude?"

604a "Far more, I suppose," he said, "when he's seen."

"But when he's alone, I think, he'll dare to say many things he'd be ashamed for anyone to hear, and do many things he wouldn't want anyone to see him doing."

"That's so," he said.

"Now what urges him to resist is reason and law, 604b and what drags him toward grief is the feeling itself?"

"True."

"And when there are opposite pulls in a person about the same thing at the same time, we say there must be two things in him."

"Of course."

"And isn't one of them ready to obey the law, wherever the law leads?"

"How do you mean?"

"The law says, I suppose, that it's finest to stay as calm as possible in misfortunes and not be upset. It isn't clear what is good or bad in such things; taking it hard gets you nowhere; nothing 604c human is worth great seriousness; and grieving gets in the way of the thing that ought to come to our aid as quickly as possible in these circumstances."

"Gets in the way of what?" he said.

"Of deliberating about what has happened," I said, "and, as with a throw of the dice, arranging one's affairs in light of how things have fallen, in whatever way reason judges best. We shouldn't be like children who've taken a knock, clutching the sore spot and wasting our time howling. We should always train the soul to turn as 604d quickly as possible to healing and to setting right what has fallen and is sick, doing away with lament through medicine."

"That would certainly be the most correct way to deal with misfortunes," he said.

"And the best part of us, we say, is willing to follow this reasoning."

"Clearly."

"And the part that leads us to dwell on the memory of our suffering and to lamentation, and can never get enough of them—won't we say it's irrational, idle, and a friend of cowardice?"

"We will." 604e

"Now the fretful part offers plenty of varied material for imitation. But the sensible and calm character, always much the same as itself, is neither easy to imitate nor, when imitated, easy to understand—especially for a festival crowd, all sorts of people gathered in theaters. The imitation is of a state of feeling that's foreign to them."

"Absolutely."

605a "Clearly, then, the imitative poet isn't naturally drawn toward that part of the soul, and his wisdom isn't geared to pleasing it, if he's going to win a good name among the many. He's drawn toward the fretful and varied character, because it's easy to imitate."

"Clearly."

"So now we'd be justified in taking hold of him and setting him beside the painter as his counterpart. He resembles the painter in producing things that are inferior with respect to truth; and he's like him in this too, that he keeps company with 605b a part of the soul that is likewise inferior, and not with the best part. And so we'd at last be justified in refusing to admit him into a city that is going to be well governed, because he arouses this part of the soul, nourishes it, and by making it strong destroys the reasoning part—just as happens in a city when someone makes bad men powerful and hands the city over to them, and ruins the better sort. In the same way we'll say that the imitative poet sets up a bad constitution privately in each person's soul, gratifying its senseless part, 605c which can't tell bigger from smaller but thinks the same things are now big, now small. He makes mere images, and stands very far from the truth."

"Certainly."

"But we haven't yet made the gravest accusation against it. Its ability to corrupt even decent people, with very few exceptions, is surely quite terrible."

"How could it not be, if it really does that?"

"Listen and consider. When the best of us hear Homer, or one of the other tragic poets, imitating 605d one of the heroes in mourning, drawing out a long speech of lamentation, or singing and beating their breasts, you know that we enjoy it. We give ourselves up to it and follow along, sharing the suffering, and we earnestly praise as a good poet whoever puts us most in that state."

"I know. Of course."

"But when a sorrow of our own comes to one of us, you notice that we pride ourselves on the opposite—on being able to keep calm 605e and endure it—on the grounds that this is a man's part, and what we praised back then a woman's."

"I notice," he said.

"Then is this praise right," I said, "when we see a man of a kind we wouldn't think fit to be ourselves, and would be ashamed to be, and instead of being disgusted we enjoy it and praise him?"

"No, by Zeus," he said, "that doesn't seem reasonable."

"No," I said, "especially if you look at it this way."

"How?"

606a "If you consider that the part of us held down by force in our own misfortunes, which has been hungering to weep and wail to its heart's content and be satisfied, since by nature it desires these things, is the very part that the poets fill up and gratify. And the naturally best part of us, because it hasn't been adequately educated by reason or habit, relaxes its guard over 606b this mournful part. It's watching someone else's sufferings, after all, and there's nothing shameful for itself in praising and pitying another man who claims to be good but grieves out of season. Rather, it thinks it gains something—the pleasure—and wouldn't accept being deprived of it by despising the whole

poem. For only a few, I think, are capable of reckoning that what we enjoy from others' experiences necessarily carries over into our own. Once you've nourished the pitying part and made it strong on those, it isn't easy to hold it down in your own sufferings." 606c

"Very true," he said.

"And doesn't the same argument apply to the laughable? If there are jokes you'd be ashamed to make yourself, but you hear them in comic imitation, or even in private, and enjoy them hugely instead of hating them as base, aren't you doing the same as with pity? The part of you that wanted to play the clown, which you held down with reason for fear of being thought a buffoon, you now let loose; and having made it lively there, you're often carried away without noticing in your own life, so that you turn into a comic poet yourself."

"Very much so," he said. 606d

"And as for sex and anger and all the desires, pains and pleasures in the soul, which we say accompany our every action, poetic imitation has the same effect on us. It nourishes them by watering them when they ought to dry up, and sets them up as our rulers when they ought to be ruled, so that we may become better and happier rather than worse and more wretched."

"I can't say otherwise," he said. 606e

"Then, Glaucon," I said, "when you meet admirers of Homer who say that this poet educated Greece, and that for managing human affairs and educating people in them he deserves to be taken up and studied, and that one should arrange one's whole life by following this poet, 607a you should love and welcome them as people who are as good as they're able to be, and agree that Homer is the most poetic of poets and the first of the tragedians. But you should know that the only poetry we can admit into our city is hymns to the gods and praises of good people.

"If you admit the honeyed Muse in lyric or epic verse, pleasure and pain will be kings in your city instead of law and the reasoning that the community has always judged best."

"Very true," he said. 607b

THE ANCIENT QUARREL

Socrates notes the ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry and invites poetry to defend itself.

SOCRATES "Let that be our defense, then," I said, "now that we've come back to the subject of poetry: that we had good reason, back then, to send it out of the city, being what it is. The argument compelled us. And let's tell it further, so that it doesn't convict us of harshness and boorishness, that there's an ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry. There's 'the yelping dog that bays at its master,' and 'great in the empty chatter of fools,' 607c and 'the mob of the overwise that holds sway,' and 'the subtle thinkers who are beggars after all,' and countless other signs of their old opposition. All the same, let it be said that if poetry aimed at pleasure, and imitation, have any argument to offer why they should exist in a well-governed city, we'd be glad to take them back, since we're well aware of being charmed by it ourselves. But it isn't right to betray what seems to be true.[7] "Aren't you charmed by it too, my friend, 607d especially when you view it through Homer?"

"Very much."

"Then isn't it right for it to come back on these terms, once it has made its defense in lyric or some other meter?"

"Certainly."

"And we'd surely also let its champions who aren't poets themselves, but lovers of poetry, speak on its behalf in prose, and show that it's not only pleasant but also beneficial to constitutions and to human life. We'll listen kindly. 607e We'll gain, surely, if it turns out to be not only pleasant but beneficial."

"How could we not gain?" he said.

"But if not, my dear friend, then we'll be like people who've once fallen in love with someone and, if they decide the love isn't beneficial, keep away from it, by force but keep away all the

7 The phrases quoted are from unknown poets mocking philosophers; their sources are lost.

same. Because of the love for such poetry bred in us by our upbringing in 608a fine constitutions, we'll be glad for it to prove as good and as true as possible. But as long as it can't make its defense, we'll listen to it while chanting this argument of ours to ourselves as a counter-charm, taking care not to fall back into the childish love that most people have. So we'll chant that such poetry mustn't be taken seriously, as though it grasped the truth and were a serious thing; the listener should be on guard 608b against it, fearing for the constitution within himself, and should hold to what we've said about poetry."

"I agree completely," he said.

"Yes," I said, "for the contest is great, my dear Glaucon, great —greater than it seems—the contest over becoming good or bad. So it isn't worth being carried away by honor or money or any office, or by poetry either, into neglecting justice and the rest of excellence."

"I agree with you," he said, "from what we've gone through; and I think anyone else would too." 608c

"And yet," I said, "we haven't gone through the greatest rewards of excellence, the prizes set out for it."

"You're talking about something of extraordinary size," he said, "if there are others greater than those we've mentioned."

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

Socrates argues the soul is immortal because its own evil, injustice, cannot destroy it.

SOCRATES "What could be great in a short time?" I said. "This whole span from childhood to old age would surely be short compared with all time."

"It's nothing at all," he said.

"Well then? Do you think an immortal thing should be concerned with so short a 608d time, and not with all time?"

"I do," he said. "But what are you getting at?"

"Haven't you realized," I said, "that our soul is immortal and never perishes?"

He looked at me in amazement and said, "No, by Zeus, I haven't. Can you really argue that?"

"I'd be doing wrong if I couldn't," I said. "And I think you could too. There's nothing difficult about it."

"There is for me," he said. "But I'd be glad to hear this not-difficult thing from you."

"Then listen," I said.

"Just go ahead," he said.

"You call some things good and some bad?" I said.

"I do." 608e

"Do you think about them the way I do?"

"What way?"

"That what destroys and corrupts is always the bad, and what preserves and benefits is the good."

"I do," he said.

"And what about this? Do you say there's something bad and something good for each thing? For example, for the eyes 609a eye disease, for the whole body sickness, for grain blight, rot for wood, rust for bronze and iron—and, as I say, for nearly everything an evil and disease of its own that belongs to its nature?"

"I do," he said.

"And when one of these attaches itself to something, doesn't it make the thing it attaches to bad, and in the end dissolve and destroy it completely?"

"Of course."

"So each thing is destroyed by its own innate evil and badness; or if that doesn't destroy it, nothing else could 609b corrupt it. For the good would never destroy anything, nor would what is neither bad nor good."

"How could they?" he said.

"So if we find something that has an evil that makes it bad, but which can't dissolve and destroy it, won't we know at once that a thing of that nature can't be destroyed?"

"That seems likely," he said.

"Well then," I said, "isn't there something that makes the soul bad?"

"Very much so," he said. "All the things we were just going through: injustice, 609c intemperance, cowardice and ignorance."

"Then does any of these dissolve and destroy it? And be careful that we're not deceived into thinking that when an unjust and foolish person is caught doing wrong, he has been destroyed by injustice, since injustice is the soul's badness. Look at it this way instead. Just as the body's badness, which is disease, wastes and ruins a body and brings it to the point of not being a body at all, so all the things we were just talking about 609d arrive at not being through their own evil, which attaches itself to them, settles in them and corrupts them. Isn't that so?"

"Yes."

"Come on, then, and consider the soul in the same way. Do the injustice and other badness present in it, by being present and attaching themselves, corrupt it and make it waste away until they bring it to death and separate it from the body?"

"Not at all," he said.

"And yet it's unreasonable," I said, "that the badness of something else should destroy a thing, while its own badness doesn't."

"It's unreasonable." 609e

"Consider, Glaucon," I said, "that we don't think a body should be destroyed by the badness of foods either, whatever badness belongs to the foods themselves, whether staleness or rottenness or anything else.

"But if the badness of the foods themselves produces in the body a badness of the body, we'll say that, by way of them, the body was destroyed by its own evil, which is disease. But 610a we'll never accept that the body, which is one thing, is destroyed by the badness of foods, which are another—by an alien evil that has not produced in it the evil that belongs to it."

"Again, you're quite right," he said.

"By the same argument, then," I said, "unless a badness of the body produces in the soul a badness of the soul, let's never

accept that the soul is destroyed by an alien evil without its own particular badness, one thing by the evil of another."

"That makes sense," he said.

"So either let's refute these claims and show we're wrong, or, 610b as long as they stand unrefuted, let's never say that the soul is ever any the more destroyed by fever or any other disease, or by having one's throat cut, not even if someone chops the whole body into the tiniest pieces—not until someone shows that because of these things happening to the body the soul itself becomes more unjust and more unholy. When an alien evil arises in something else, but the evil that belongs to each thing doesn't arise in it, 610c let's not allow anyone to say that the soul or anything else is destroyed."

"But certainly," he said, "no one will ever show that the souls of the dying become more unjust because of death."

"But if someone," I said, "dares to come to grips with the argument and say that a dying man does become worse and more unjust, so as to avoid being forced to admit that souls are immortal, we'll surely claim, if what he says is true, that injustice is fatal to whoever has it, like a disease, and that those who catch it die of 610d it, since it kills by its own nature—those who have most of it more quickly, those who have less more slowly. It wouldn't be as it is now, when the unjust die because of it at the hands of others who punish them."

"By Zeus," he said, "then injustice won't look so very terrible after all, if it's going to be fatal to whoever catches it—it would be a release from troubles. No, I think it'll turn out to be quite the opposite: 610e it kills others, if it can, while making its possessor very much alive—and not only alive but wide awake. That's how far, it seems, it has pitched its tent from being fatal."

"You're right," I said. "For when a thing's own badness, its own evil, isn't enough to kill and destroy the soul, an evil appointed for the destruction of something else will hardly destroy the soul or anything else, except what it's appointed for."

"Hardly," he said, "as seems likely."

"So since it isn't destroyed by any evil at all, 611a whether its own or alien, clearly it must always be. And if it always is, it's immortal."

"Necessarily," he said.

"Let that be so, then," I said. "And if it is, you realize that the souls would always be the same ones. They couldn't become fewer, since none is destroyed, nor again more numerous. For if any immortal thing were to increase, you know it would come from the mortal, and everything would end up immortal."

"That's true."

"But," I said, "let's not believe that—the argument won't 611b allow it—nor again that in its truest nature the soul is the sort of thing that's full of much variety, unlikeness and difference within itself."

"What do you mean?" he said.

"It isn't easy," I said, "for something to be everlasting if it's composed of many parts and not put together in the finest way, as the soul appeared to us just now."

"No, it isn't likely."

"Well, that the soul is immortal, both our recent argument and the others would compel us to accept. But to see what it is really like, we mustn't look at it maimed, 611c as we do now, by its partnership with the body and by other evils. We must study it adequately, with reasoning, as it is when it becomes pure. Then one will find it far more beautiful, and will make out more clearly justice and injustice and everything we've now gone through. "What we've said about it is true of how it appears at present. But we've seen it in a condition like that of the 611d sea-god Glaucus. Those who see him can no longer easily make out his original nature, because some of the old parts of his body have been broken off, others crushed and completely maimed by the waves, while other things have grown onto him—shells, seaweed and rocks—so that he looks more like any beast than what he was by nature. That's the condition we see the soul in

too, beset by countless evils. But we have to look over there, Glaucon."[8]

"Where?" he said. 611e

"At its love of wisdom. We have to consider what it grasps and what company it longs for, since it's akin to the divine and immortal and to what always is; and what it would become if it followed that wholly and were carried by this impulse out of the sea it's in now, and had the rocks 612a and shells knocked off it—all that earthy, rocky, wild growth that now encrusts it because it feasts on earth, at those banquets people call happy.

"Then one could see its true nature, whether it has many forms or one, or in what way it is and how. But for now, I think, we've given a fair account of what it undergoes and the forms it takes in human life."

"Absolutely," he said.

"Well," I said, "haven't we cleared away the other objections in our argument, 612b without praising the rewards and reputations of justice, as you said Hesiod and Homer do? We've found that justice itself is the best thing for the soul itself, and that the soul must do what is just whether it has the ring of Gyges or not, and the cap of Hades on top of such a ring."

"Very true," he said.[9]

THE REWARDS OF JUSTICE

Socrates restores to justice the rewards it earns from gods and humans during life.

SOCRATES "Then, Glaucon," I said, "surely no one can now object if, in addition to those, we also give back to justice and the rest 612c of excellence their rewards, as many and as great as they provide for the soul from human beings and gods, both while a person is still alive and after he has died?"

"Absolutely," he said.

8 Glaucus was a fisherman who became a sea-god; he was imagined as encrusted with shells and seaweed.

9 The cap of Hades, like the ring of Gyges in Book II, made its wearer invisible.

"Then will you give me back what you borrowed in the argument?"

"What exactly?"

"I granted you that the just man should seem unjust and the unjust man just. You asked for it: even if it wasn't possible for these things to escape the notice of gods and men, still it had to be granted for the sake of the argument, so that justice itself could be judged against injustice itself. 612d Or don't you remember?"

"I'd be doing wrong," he said, "if I didn't."

"Well, since they've been judged," I said, "I ask for it back on behalf of justice: that we too agree that she is regarded by gods and men as she actually is, so that she can also carry off the prizes of victory, which she gains from seeming and gives to those who have her. After all, she has been shown to give the good things that come from being just, and not to deceive those who truly take hold of her." 612e

"What you ask is just," he said.

"Then first," I said, "will you give back this: that the gods, at least, aren't deceived about what each of the two men is really like?"

"We will," he said.

"And if they aren't deceived, one would be loved by the gods and the other hated, as we agreed at the beginning."

"That's so."

"And won't we agree that for the one the gods love, everything that comes from the gods 613a comes in the best possible way, unless some unavoidable evil was his from an earlier wrong?"

"Certainly."

"So this is how we must think of the just man: whether he falls into poverty or illness or any other of the things that seem bad, it will end in something good for him, in life or even in death. For the gods never neglect anyone who is eager to become just and, by practicing 613b excellence, to become as like a god as a human being can."

"It's likely," he said, "that a man like that isn't neglected by the one he resembles."

"And mustn't we think the opposite of all this about the unjust man?"

"Very much so."

"Such, then, would be the prizes of victory that the just man receives from the gods."

"In my opinion, at any rate," he said.

"And what about the rewards from human beings?" I said. "Isn't this how things are, if we're to state the truth? Don't clever but unjust people do just what runners do who run the outward leg well but not the return? They spring off sharply at first, but by the end 613c they're a laughingstock, trotting off uncrowned with their ears drooping onto their shoulders. But real runners reach the finish, take the prizes and are crowned. Isn't it generally the same with just people too? Toward the end of each undertaking, each association, and of life itself, they earn a good name and carry off the prizes from their fellow human beings."

"Very much so."

"Then will you put up with my saying about them what you yourself said 613d about the unjust? For I'm going to say that the just, once they're older, hold office in their own city if they want to, marry from whatever family they want, and give their children in marriage to whomever they please. Everything you said about those others, I now say about these. And about the unjust, in turn, I'll say that most of them, even if they escape notice while they're young, are caught at the end of the race and made a laughingstock; and as they grow old they're wretched and abused by foreigners 613e and citizens alike. They're whipped, and suffer the things you called crude—and you were right—then they'll be racked and burned. Imagine you've heard me say that they suffer all of that. But see whether you'll put up with what I'm saying."

"Certainly," he said. "What you say is just."

"Then these," I said, "would be the prizes, wages, and gifts that come to the just man while he's alive, from gods 614a and

human beings, in addition to those good things that justice itself provided."

"And fine and secure ones they are," he said.

"Yet these are nothing," I said, "in number or in size, compared with what awaits each of the two after death. We should hear about those, so that each of them may receive in full the hearing the argument owes him." 614b

"Please tell us," he said. "There aren't many things I'd rather hear."

THE MYTH OF ER

Socrates tells of Er, who returns from death to describe judgment, the choice of lives and rebirth.

SOCRATES Well, it isn't a tale for Alcinous that I'll tell you, I said, but the tale of a stalwart man: Er, son of Armenius, a Pamphylian by birth. He was once killed in war. When the dead were taken up on the tenth day, already decaying, he was taken up intact; and he was brought home to be buried, and on the twelfth day, as he lay on the pyre, he came back to life. Once revived, he told what he had seen there. He said that when his soul had gone out of him, it traveled 614c with many others, and they came to an uncanny place, where there were two openings in the earth next to each other, and two more in the heaven above, facing them.[10] Between these sat judges. Whenever they had given their verdict, they ordered the just to take the road to the right and upward through the heaven, with tokens of the judgments fastened on their fronts, and the unjust to take the road to the left and downward, these too wearing on their backs tokens of everything they 614d had done. When he himself came forward, they told him that he was to be a messenger to human beings about what was there, and they instructed him to listen to and watch everything in the place. So he saw, on this side,

10 The "tale for Alcinous" is Odysseus' long story of his wanderings, told at the court of King Alcinous in the *Odyssey*, including a visit to the dead; Plato puns on *alkimos*, "stalwart."

souls departing through one opening of heaven and one of earth, once they had been judged; and at the other two, souls coming up out of the earth full of grime and dust, and other souls coming down out of 614e heaven, clean. The souls that kept arriving looked as if they had come from a long journey. They went off gladly to the meadow and camped there as if at a festival. Those who knew each other exchanged greetings, and the ones who had come from the earth asked the others about things up there, while the ones from heaven asked about what had happened to them.

They told each other their stories, the one group 615a grieving and weeping as they recalled how many things, and what kinds, they had suffered and seen on their journey under the earth—the journey lasted a thousand years—while those from heaven, in turn, told of delights and of sights of unimaginable beauty. To tell it all, Glaucon, would take a long time. But the sum of it, he said, was this. For all the wrongs they had ever done anyone, and for every person each had wronged, they had paid the penalty for them all in turn, ten times over for each. That is, once every hundred 615b years, since that is the length of a human life, so that they might pay back ten times the crime. For example, if some had caused many deaths, by betraying cities or armies, or had thrown people into slavery or shared the blame for some other ill-treatment, they received ten times the pain for each of these. And again, if they had done good deeds and had been just and pious, they received their due reward 615c in the same proportion. About those who died as soon as they were born, or lived only a short time, he said other things not worth recording. For impiety and piety toward gods and parents, and for murder by one's own hand, he described still greater repayments.

He said he was there when one soul asked another where Ardiaeus the Great was. This Ardiaeus had been tyrant of some city in Pamphylia a thousand years before that time. He had killed his aged father 615d and his elder brother, and had committed many other unholy acts besides, so it was said. The one who

was asked, he said, replied: "He hasn't come, and he never will come here. This too was one of the terrible sights we saw. When we were near the mouth, about to go up, having gone through everything else, we suddenly caught sight of him and others—most of them, pretty well, were tyrants, though there were also some private individuals who had 615e committed great crimes. They thought they were about to go up, but the mouth wouldn't admit them; it bellowed whenever one of those who were so incurably bad, or who hadn't paid a sufficient penalty, tried to go up.

"At that point," he said, "some savage men, fiery to look at, who were standing by and understood the sound, seized some of them and led them off. But Ardiaeus and others they bound 616a hand and foot and head, threw them down and flayed them, and dragged them off the road, carding them on thorn bushes, and explaining to each group that passed by why they were being taken away, and that they were going to be thrown into Tartarus." There, he said, of the many fears of every kind they had felt, this one surpassed them all: that the sound might come for each of them as he went up; and each went up most gladly when it stayed silent. Such, then, were the judgments and punishments, 616b and the rewards were their counterparts.[11] When each group had spent seven days in the meadow, they had to get up and move on on the eighth, and on the fourth day they came to a place from which they could see, from above, a straight light stretched through the whole of heaven and earth, like a column, most like the rainbow, but brighter and purer. They reached it after going on another day's journey, and there, at 616c the middle of the light, they saw the ends of its bonds stretched from heaven—for this light was what bound heaven together, holding the whole revolving vault together like the undergirding ropes of triremes. And from the ends was stretched the spindle of Necessity, by which all the revolutions are turned. Its shaft and its hook were of adamant, and its whorl was a blend of this

11 Tartarus is the deepest pit of the underworld, where the worst offenders are punished.

and other kinds of material.[12] The 616d nature of the whorl was this. Its shape was like the ones here, but from what he said we must picture it like this: as if inside one large whorl, hollowed out right through, there lay another smaller one of the same kind, fitting into it, the way nesting pots fit into one another; and so on with a third and a fourth and four more. For there were eight whorls in all, set inside one another, 616e showing their rims as circles from above and forming the continuous back of a single whorl around the shaft; and the shaft was driven right through the middle of the eighth. The first and outermost whorl had the widest circular rim; the sixth's was second; the fourth's third; the eighth's fourth; the seventh's fifth; the fifth's sixth; the third's seventh; and the second's eighth.[13]

The rim of the largest was spangled; that of the seventh was brightest; that of 617a the eighth took its color from the seventh shining on it; those of the second and fifth were like each other, yellower than those; the third had the whitest color; the fourth was reddish; and the sixth was second in whiteness. The spindle as a whole turned around with a single motion, but within the whole as it revolved, the seven inner circles revolved slowly in the opposite direction to the whole. Of these the eighth went fastest; second, and together 617b with one another, came the seventh, sixth and fifth; third in speed, as it appeared to them, the fourth went with its counter-revolution; fourth was the third, and fifth the second. And the spindle turned on the knees of Necessity. On top of each of its circles, up above, stood a Siren, carried around with it and uttering a single sound, a single note; and from all eight together there sounded a single harmony. Three others sat around it, 617c at equal distances, each on a throne: the daughters of Necessity, the Fates, dressed in white, with garlands on their heads—Lachesis, Clotho and Atropos—singing to the Sirens' harmony, Lachesis of what has been,

12 A hand spindle for spinning wool: a shaft with a hook at the top, weighted near the bottom by a disk called the whorl.

13 The eight whorls are usually understood as, from outermost inward, the fixed stars, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Venus, the sun, and the moon.

Clotho of what is, and Atropos of what is to be. Clotho, touching the outer revolution of the spindle with her right hand, helped turn it, pausing from time to time; Atropos did the same to the inner ones with her left; and Lachesis 617d touched each in turn with either hand. So when they arrived, they had to go straight to Lachesis.[14] A spokesman first arranged them in order; then he took lots and patterns of lives from the knees of Lachesis, climbed up onto a high platform, and said:

"This is the word of Lachesis, maiden daughter of Necessity. Souls of a day, here begins another cycle of mortal kind, one that ends in death. 617e No guardian spirit will be allotted to you; you will choose your guardian spirit. Let the one who draws the first lot be first to choose a life, to which he will be bound by necessity. Excellence has no master: each will have more or less of it as he honors or dishonors it. The blame is the chooser's; god is blameless."

Having said this, he threw the lots out among them all, and each picked up the one that fell beside him—except Er, whom he didn't allow to; and whoever picked one up could see what number he had drawn.

618a After this he set the patterns of lives on the ground in front of them, far more of them than there were souls present. They were of every kind: lives of all the animals, and all human lives as well. Among them were tyrannies, some lasting to the end, others collapsing midway and ending in poverty, exile and beggary. There were also lives of men of repute, some for their looks and beauty and for strength 618b and prowess in contests generally, others for their birth and the excellences of their ancestors; and lives of men without repute on these same counts; and likewise lives of women. But the ordering of the soul was not included in them, because a soul necessarily becomes different according to the life it chooses. All the other things were mixed with one another and with wealth and poverty, some with sickness, some with health, and some were in between. That, it

14 The Fates' names mean roughly "Allotter" (Lachesis), "Spinner" (Clotho) and "Unturnable" (Atropos).

seems, my dear Glaucon, is where the whole danger lies for a human being; and that's why each of us must take the utmost 618c care to neglect all other studies and to seek and learn this one, in the hope that he may be able to learn and discover from somewhere who will make him able and knowledgeable enough to tell a good life from a bad one, and always and everywhere to choose the better one among those available. He must take into account all the things we've just discussed, both combined with one another and taken separately, and how they bear on the excellence of a life. He must know what beauty mixed with poverty or with wealth does, and 618d with what condition of soul it produces evil or good; and what good birth and low birth, private life and public office, strength and weakness, quickness and slowness at learning, and all such things, both those that belong to the soul by nature and those that are acquired, produce when blended with one another. Then from all of them he will be able to reason out his choice, looking to the nature of the soul, between the worse and the better 618e life, calling worse the one that will lead the soul toward becoming more unjust, and better the one that leads it toward becoming more just. Everything else he will let go. For we have seen that for the living and the dead alike, this is the best choice.

One must hold this opinion as firmly as adamant 619a when one goes to Hades, so as to be undazzled there too by wealth and such evils; so as not to plunge into tyrannies and other such pursuits, committing many incurable evils and suffering still greater ones oneself; but to know always to choose the life in the middle among such things, and to shun the extremes on either side, both in this life, as far as possible, and in all the life that follows. For that's how 619b a human being becomes happiest.

And so the messenger from that world reported that on that occasion the spokesman spoke as follows: "Even for the one who comes last, if he chooses with understanding and lives with effort, there is laid up a life worth being content with, not a bad one. Let the first to choose not be careless, nor the last lose heart."

When he had said this, Er said, the one who had drawn the first lot went straight up and chose the greatest tyranny. Out of folly and greed he chose it without examining everything adequately, and 619c he failed to notice that it held his fate: to eat his own children, and other evils. When he examined it at leisure, he beat his breast and lamented his choice, not abiding by the spokesman's warning; for he didn't blame himself for his misfortunes, but chance and guardian spirits and anything rather than himself. He was one of those who had come from heaven, having lived his previous life in a well-ordered constitution, 619d sharing in excellence by habit, without philosophy. One might even say that those who had come from heaven were not the fewest among those caught out in this way, since they were untrained in hardship. But most of those from the earth, having suffered hardships themselves and seen others suffer, didn't make their choices in a rush. That is why most of the souls exchanged evil for good and good for evil—and also because of the luck of the lot. For if someone, whenever he came into life here, always pursued philosophy soundly, 619e and his lot for choosing didn't fall among the last, it seems likely from what was reported from there that he would not only be happy here, but would also travel the road from here to there and back again not underground and rough, but smooth and through the heavens.

For this, he said, was a spectacle worth seeing: how each 620a of the souls chose its life. It was pitiful to see, and laughable, and amazing. For the most part they chose according to the habits of their former life. He said he saw the soul that had once been Orpheus' choosing the life of a swan: out of hatred for womankind, because of the death it had suffered at women's hands, it didn't want to be conceived and born of a woman. He saw the soul of Thamyras choosing a nightingale's life; and he also saw a swan changing over to choose a human life, and other musical animals doing likewise. 620b The soul that drew the twentieth lot chose the life of a lion. It was the soul of Ajax son of Telamon, which shunned becoming a human being, remembering the

judgment over the arms. Next came Agamemnon's; this one too, out of hostility to the human race because of what it had suffered, took an eagle's life in exchange.[15] Atalanta's soul had drawn a lot in the middle, and when it caught sight of the great honors of a male athlete, it couldn't pass them by, but took them. After 620c her he saw the soul of Epeius son of Panopeus going into the nature of a craftswoman. Far off, among the last, he saw the soul of the clown Thersites putting on an ape. As chance would have it, the soul of Odysseus had drawn the very last lot of all and came up to choose. Remembering its former labors, it had recovered from its love of honor, and it went around for a long time looking for the life of a private man who kept out of affairs. With difficulty it found one lying somewhere, disregarded 620d by the others, and when it saw it, it said it would have done the same even if it had drawn first, and chose it gladly. And from the other beasts, likewise, some went into human beings and into one another, the unjust changing into wild ones and the just into tame ones, and there were mixtures of every kind.[16]

When all the souls had chosen their lives, they went up to Lachesis in the order of their lots. She sent with each the guardian spirit it had chosen, as protector 620e of its life and fulfiller of what it had chosen. This spirit first led the soul to Clotho, under her hand as she turned the whirling spindle, ratifying the fate it had drawn and chosen. After touching her, the spirit led the soul on to Atropos' spinning, making what had been spun irreversible.

From there, without turning back, they went under the throne of 621a Necessity. When they had passed through it, and the others had too, they all traveled to the plain of Lethe through terrible, stifling heat; for it was bare of trees and of everything the earth grows. So, as evening was coming on, they camped by

15 Orpheus was torn apart by women; Thamyras was a bard blinded for challenging the Muses. Ajax lost the contest for Achilles' armor to Odysseus, and Agamemnon was murdered by his wife on his return from Troy.

16 Atalanta was a huntress famed for her speed; Epeius built the wooden horse at Troy; Thersites is the ugly, jeering soldier of the *Iliad*.

the river of Unheeding, whose water no vessel can hold. All of them had to drink a certain measure of the water, and those not saved by understanding drank more than the measure; and each, as he drank, 621b forgot everything. After they had gone to sleep and it was midnight, there was thunder and an earthquake, and suddenly they were carried up from there, one this way, one that, to their birth, shooting like stars.[17] He himself had been prevented from drinking the water. Yet by what path and in what way he came back into his body he didn't know; but suddenly he opened his eyes and saw himself at dawn, lying on the pyre.

And so, Glaucon, the tale was saved and not lost, 621c and it could save us too, if we're persuaded by it; and we'll cross the river of Lethe safely and not defile our souls. But if we're persuaded by me, believing that the soul is immortal and able to endure every evil and every good, we'll always keep to the upward road and pursue justice with understanding in every way, so that we may be friends to ourselves and to the gods, both while we remain here and when we carry off the prizes 621d of justice, like victors going around collecting their winnings; and so that both here and on the thousand-year journey we have described, we may fare well.

17 Lethe means "forgetfulness."