

THE REPUBLIC OF PLATO



BOOK I

Socrates: I went down to the Piraeus³ yesterday with Glaucon, son of Ariston,⁴ to pray to the goddess; and, at the same time, I wanted to observe how they would put on the festival,⁵ since they were now holding it for the first time. Now, in my opinion, the procession of the native inhabitants was fine; but the one the Thracians conducted was no less fitting a show. After we had prayed and looked on, we went off toward town.

Catching sight of us from afar as we were pressing homewards, Polemarchus, son of Cephalus, ordered his slave boy to run after us and order us to wait for him. The boy took hold of my cloak from behind and said, "Polemarchus orders you to wait."

And I turned around and asked him where his master was. "He is coming up behind," he said, "just wait."

"Of course we'll wait," said Glaucon.

A moment later Polemarchus came along with Adeimantus, Glaucon's brother, Niceratus, son of Nicias, and some others—apparently from the procession. Polemarchus said, "Socrates, I guess you two are hurrying to get away to town."

"That's not a bad guess," I said.

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

"Of course."

"Well, then," he said, "either prove stronger than these men or stay here."

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"Isn't there still one other possibility . . .," I said, "our persuading you that you must let us go?"

"Could you really persuade," he said, "if we don't listen?"

"There's no way," said Glaucon.

"Well, then, think it over, bearing in mind we won't listen."

Then Adeimantus said, "Is it possible you don't know that at sunset there will be a torch race on horseback for the goddess?"

"On horseback?" I said. "That is novel. Will they hold torches and pass them to one another while racing the horses, or what do you mean?"

"That's it," said Polemarchus, "and, besides, they'll put on an all-night festival that will be worth seeing. We'll get up after dinner and go to see it; there we'll be together with many of the young men and we'll talk. So stay and do as I tell you."

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And Glaucon said, "It seems we must stay."

"Well, if it is so resolved,"^a I said, "that's how we must act."

Then we went to Polemarchus' home; there we found Lysias⁷ and Euthydemus, Polemarchus' brothers, and, in addition, Thrasymachus,⁸ the Chaldean and Charmantides, the Paeanian,⁹ and Cleitophon,¹⁰ the son of Aristonymus.

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Cephalus,¹¹ Polemarchus' father, was also at home; and he seemed very old to me, for I had not seen him for some time. He was seated on a sort of cushioned stool and was crowned with a wreath, for he had just performed a sacrifice in the courtyard. We sat down beside him, for some stools were arranged in a circle there. As soon as Cephalus saw me, he greeted me warmly and said:

"Socrates, you don't come down to us in the Piraeus very often, yet you ought to. Now if I still had the strength to make the trip to town easily, there would be no need for you to come here; rather we would come to you. As it is, however, you must come here more frequently. I want you to know that as the other pleasures, those connected with the body, wither away in me, the desires and pleasures that have to do with speeches grow the more. Now do as I say: be with these young men, but come here regularly to us as to friends and your very own kin."

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"For my part, Cephalus, I am really delighted to discuss with the very old," I said. "Since they are like men who have proceeded on a certain road that perhaps we too will have to take, one ought, in my opinion, to learn from them what sort of road it is—whether it is rough and hard or easy and smooth. From you in particular I should like to learn how it looks to you, for you are now at just the time of life the

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poets call 'the threshold of old age.'¹² Is it a hard time of life, or what have you to report of it?"

"By Zeus, I shall tell you just how it looks to me, Socrates," he said. "Some of us who are about the same age often meet together and keep up the old proverb.¹³ Now then, when they meet, most of the members of our group lament, longing for the pleasures of youth and reminiscing about sex, about drinking bouts and feasts and all that goes with things of that sort; they take it hard as though they were deprived of something very important and had then lived well but are now not even alive. Some also bewail the abuse that old age receives from relatives, and in this key they sing a refrain about all the evils old age has caused them. But, Socrates, in my opinion these men do not put their fingers on the cause. For, if this were the cause, I too would have suffered these same things insofar as they depend on old age and so would everyone else who has come to this point in life. But as it is, I have encountered others for whom it was not so, especially Sophocles. I was once present when the poet was asked by someone, 'Sophocles, how are you in sex? Can you still have intercourse with a woman?' 'Silence, man,' he said. 'Most joyfully did I escape it, as though I had run away from a sort of frenzied and savage master.' I thought at the time that he had spoken well and I still do. For, in every way, old age brings great peace and freedom from such things. When the desires cease to strain and finally relax, then what Sophocles says comes to pass in every way; it is possible to be rid of very many mad masters. But of these things and of those that concern relatives, there is one just cause: not old age, Socrates, but the character of the human beings.¹⁴ If they are orderly and content with themselves,¹⁵ even old age is only moderately troublesome; if they are not, then both age, Socrates, and youth alike turn out to be hard for that sort."

Then I was full of wonder at what he said and, wanting him to say still more, I stirred him up, saying: "Cephalus, when you say these things, I suppose that the many¹⁶ do not accept them from you, but believe rather that it is not due to character that you bear old age so easily but due to possessing great substance. They say that for the rich there are many consolations."

"What you say is true," he said. "They do not accept them. And they do have something there, but not, however, quite as much as they think; rather, the saying of Themistocles holds good. When a Seriphian abused him—saying that he was illustrious not thanks to himself but thanks to the city—he answered that if he himself had been a Seriphian he would not have made a name, nor would that man have made one

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330 a had he been an Athenian. And the same argument also holds good for those who are not wealthy and bear old age with difficulty: the decent man would not bear old age with poverty very easily, nor would the one who is not a decent sort ever be content with himself even if he were wealthy."

"Cephalus," I said, "did you inherit or did you earn most of what you possess?"

b "What do you mean, earned, Socrates?" he said. "As a money-maker, I was a sort of mean between my grandfather and my father. For my grandfather, whose namesake I am, inherited pretty nearly as much substance as I now possess, and he increased it many times over. Lysanias, my father, used it to a point where it was still less than it is now. I am satisfied if I leave not less, but rather a bit more than I inherited, to my sons here."

c "The reason I asked, you see," I said, "is that to me you didn't seem overly fond of money. For the most part, those who do not make money themselves are that way. Those who do make it are twice as attached to it as the others. For just as poets are fond of their poems and fathers of their children, so money-makers too are serious about money—as their own product; and they also are serious about it for the same reason other men are—for its use. They are, therefore, hard even to be with because they are willing to praise nothing but wealth."

"What you say is true," he said.

d "Indeed it is," I said. "But tell me something more. What do you suppose is the greatest good that you have enjoyed from possessing great wealth?"

"What I say wouldn't persuade many perhaps. For know well, Socrates," he said, "that when a man comes near to the realization that he will be making an end, fear and care enter him for things to which he gave no thought before. The tales¹⁷ told about what is in Hades—that the one who has done unjust deeds¹⁸ here must pay the penalty there—at which he laughed up to then, now make his soul twist and turn because he fears they might be true. Whether it is due to the debility of old age, or whether he discerns something more of the things in that place because he is already nearer to them, as it were—he is, at any rate, now full of suspicion and terror; and he reckons up his accounts and considers whether he has done anything unjust to anyone. Now, the man who finds many unjust deeds in his life often even wakes from his sleep in a fright as children do, and lives in anticipation of evil. To the man who is conscious in himself of no unjust deed, sweet and good hope is ever beside him—a nurse of his old age, as Pindar puts it. For, you know, Socrates, he put it charmingly when he said that whoever lives out a just and holy life

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Sweet *hopé* accompanies,
Fostering his heart, a nurse of his old age,
Hope which most of all pilots
The ever-turning opinion of mortals.

How very wonderfully well he says that. For this I count the possession of money most worth-while, not for any man, but for the decent and orderly one. The possession of money contributes a great deal to not cheating or lying to any man against one's will, and, moreover, to not departing for that other place frightened because one owes some sacrifices to a god or money to a human being. It also has many other uses. But, still, one thing reckoned against another, I wouldn't count this as the least thing, Socrates, for which wealth is very useful to an intelligent man."

"What you say is very fine!¹⁹ indeed, Cephalus," I said. "But as to this very thing, justice, shall we so simply assert that it is the truth and giving back what a man has taken from another, or is to do these very things sometimes just and sometimes unjust? Take this case as an example of what I mean: everyone would surely say that if a man takes weapons from a friend when the latter is of sound mind, and the friend demands them back when he is mad, one shouldn't give back such things, and the man who gave them back would not be just, and moreover, one should not be willing to tell someone in this state the whole truth."

"What you say is right," he said.

"Then this isn't the definition of justice, speaking the truth and giving back what one takes."

"It most certainly is, Socrates," interrupted Polemarchus, "at least if Simonides should be believed at all."

"Well, then," said Cephalus, "I hand down the argument to you, for it's already time for me to look after the sacrifices."

"Am I not the heir of what belongs to you?" said Polemarchus.²⁰

"Certainly," he said and laughed. And with that he went away to the sacrifices.²¹

"Tell me, you, the heir of the argument," I said, "what was it Simonides said about justice that you assert he said correctly?"

"That it is just to give to each what is owed," he said. "In saying this he said a fine thing, at least in my opinion."

"Well, it certainly isn't easy to disbelieve a Simonides," I said. "He is a wise and divine man. However, you, Polemarchus, perhaps know what on earth he means, but I don't understand. For plainly he doesn't mean what we were just saying—giving back to any man whatsoever something he has deposited when, of unsound mind, he demands it. And yet, what he deposited is surely owed to him, isn't it?"

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"Yes."

"But, when of unsound mind he demands it, it should under no condition be given back to him?"

"True," he said.

"Then Simonides, it seems, means something different from this sort of thing when he says that it is just to give back what is owed."

"Of course it's different, by Zeus," he said. "For he supposes that friends owe it to friends to do some good and nothing bad."

"I understand," I said. "A man does not give what is owed in giving back gold to someone who has deposited it, when the giving and the taking turn out to be bad, assuming the taker and the giver are friends. Isn't this what you assert Simonides means?"

"Most certainly."

"Now, what about this? Must we give back to enemies whatever is owed to them?"

"That's exactly it," he said, "just what's owed to them. And I suppose that an enemy owes his enemy the very thing which is also fitting: some harm."

"Then," I said, "it seems that Simonides made a riddle, after the fashion of poets, when he said what the just is. For it looks as if he thought that it is just to give to everyone what is fitting, and to this he gave the name 'what is owed.'"

"What else do you think?" he said.

"In the name of Zeus," I said, "if someone were to ask him, 'Simonides, the art²² called medicine gives what that is owed and fitting to which things?' what do you suppose he would answer us?"

"It's plain," he said, "drugs, foods and drinks to bodies."

"The art called cooking gives what that is owed and fitting to which things?"

"Seasonings to meats."

"All right. Now then, the art that gives what to which things would be called justice?"

"If the answer has to be consistent with what preceded, Socrates," he said, "the one that gives benefits and harms to friends and enemies."

"Does he mean that justice is doing good to friends and harm to enemies?"

"In my opinion."

"With respect to disease and health, who is most able to do good to sick friends and bad to enemies?"

"A doctor."

"And with respect to the danger of the sea, who has this power over those who are sailing?"

"A pilot."

"And what about the just man, in what action and with respect to what work is he most able to help friends and harm enemies?"

"In my opinion it is in making war and being an ally in battle."

"All right. However, to men who are not sick, my friend Polemarchus, a doctor is useless."

"True."

"And to men who are not sailing, a pilot."

"Yes."

"Then to men who are not at war, is the just man useless?"

"Hardly so, in my opinion."

"Then is justice also useful in peacetime?"

"It is useful."

"And so is farming, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"For the acquisition of the fruits of the earth?"

"Yes."

"And, further, is shoemaking also useful?"

"Yes."

"You would say, I suppose, for the acquisition of shoes?"

"Certainly."

"What about justice then? For the use or acquisition of what would you say it is useful in peacetime?"

"Contracts, Socrates."

"Do you mean by contracts, partnerships,²³ or something else?"

"Partnerships, of course."

"Then is the just man a good and useful partner in setting down draughts, or is it the skilled player of draughts?"²⁴

"The skilled player of draughts."

"In setting down bricks and stones, is the just man a more useful and better partner than the housebuilder?"

"Not at all."

"But in what partnership then is the just man a better partner than the harp player, just as the harp player is better than the just man when one has to do with notes?"

"In money matters, in my opinion."

"Except perhaps in using money, Polemarchus, when a horse must be bought or sold with money in partnership; then, I suppose, the expert on horses is a better partner. Isn't that so?"

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"It looks like it."

"And, further, when it's a ship, the shipbuilder or pilot is better?"

"It seems so."

"Then, when gold or silver must be used in partnership, in what case is the just man more useful than the others?"

"When they must be deposited and kept safe, Socrates."

"Do you mean when there is no need to use them, and they are left lying?"

"Certainly."

"Is it when money is useless that justice is useful for it?"

"I'm afraid so."

"And when a pruning hook must be guarded, justice is useful both in partnership and in private; but when it must be used, vine-culture."

"It looks like it."

"Will you also assert that when a shield and a lyre must be guarded and not used, justice is useful; but when they must be used, the soldier's art and the musician's art are useful?"

"Necessarily."

"And with respect to everything else as well, is justice useless in the use of each and useful in its uselessness?"

"I'm afraid so."

"Then justice, my friend, wouldn't be anything very serious, if it is useful for useless things. Let's look at it this way. Isn't the man who is cleverest at landing a blow in boxing, or any other kind of fight, also the one cleverest at guarding against it?"

"Certainly."

"And whoever is clever at guarding against disease is also cleverest at getting away with producing it?"

"In my opinion, at any rate."

"And, of course, a good guardian of an army is the very same man who can also steal the enemy's plans and his other dispositions?"

"Certainly."

"So of whatever a man is a clever guardian, he is also a clever thief?"

"It seems so."

"So that if a man is clever at guarding money, he is also clever at stealing it?"

"So the argument²⁵ indicates at least," he said.

"The just man, then, as it seems, has come to light as a kind of robber, and I'm afraid you learned this from Homer. For he admires Autolycus, Odysseus' grandfather²⁶ on his mother's side, and says he

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surpassed all men "in stealing and in swearing oaths. Justice, then, seems, according to you and Homer and Simonides, to be a certain art of stealing, for the benefit, to be sure, of friends and the harm of enemies. Isn't that what you meant?"

"No, by Zeus," he said. "But I no longer know what I did mean. However, it is still my opinion that justice is helping friends and harming enemies."

"Do you mean by friends those who seem to be good to an individual, or those who are, even if they don't seem to be, and similarly with enemies?"

"It's likely," he said, "that the men one believes to be good, one loves, while those he considers bad one hates."

"But don't human beings make mistakes about this, so that many seem to them to be good although they are not, and vice versa?"

"They do make mistakes."

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

"Certainly."

"But nevertheless it's still just for them to help the bad and harm the good?"

"It looks like it."

"Yet the good are just and such as not to do injustice?"

"True."

"Then, according to your argument, it's just to treat badly men who have done nothing unjust?"

"Not at all, Socrates," he said. "For the argument seems to be bad."

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

"This looks finer than what we just said."

"Then for many, Polemarchus—all human beings who make mistakes—it will turn out to be just to harm friends, for their friends are bad; and just to help enemies, for they are good. So we shall say the very opposite of what we asserted Simonides means."

"It does really turn out that way," he said. "But let's change what we set down at the beginning. For I'm afraid we didn't set down the definition of friend and enemy correctly."

"How did we do it, Polemarchus?"

"We set down that the man who seems good is a friend."

"Now," I said, "how shall we change it?"

"The man who seems to be, and is, good, is a friend," he said, "while the man who seems good and is not, seems to be but is not a friend. And we'll take the same position about the enemy."

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335 a "Then the good man, as it seems, will by this argument be a friend, and the good-for-nothing man an enemy?"

"Yes."

"You order us to add something to what we said at first about the just. Then we said that it is just to do good to the friend and bad to the enemy, while now we are to say in addition that it is just to do good to the friend, if he is good, and harm to the enemy, if he is bad."

335 b "Most certainly," he said. "Said in that way it would be fine in my opinion."

"Is it, then," I said, "the part of a just man to harm any human being whatsoever?"

"Certainly," he said, "bad men and enemies ought to be harmed."

"Do horses that have been harmed become better or worse?"

"Worse."

"With respect to the virtue²⁷ of dogs or to that of horses?"

"With respect to that of horses."

"And when dogs are harmed, do they become worse with respect to the virtue of dogs and not to that of horses?"

"Necessarily."

335 c "Should we not assert the same of human beings, my comrade—that that when they are harmed, they become worse with respect to human virtue?"

"Most certainly."

"But isn't justice human virtue?"

"That's also necessary."

"Then, my friend, human beings who have been harmed necessarily become more unjust."

"It seems so."

"Well, are musicians able to make men unmusical by music?"

"Impossible."

"Are men skilled in horsemanship able to make men incompetent riders by horsemanship?"

"That can't be."

335 d "But are just men able to make others unjust by justice, of all things? Or, in sum, are good men able to make other men bad by virtue?"

"Impossible."

"For I suppose that cooling is not the work of heat, but of its opposite."

"Yes."

"Nor wetting the work of dryness but of its opposite."

"Certainly."

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"Nor is harming, in fact, the work of the good but of its opposite."

"It looks like it."

"And it's the just man who is good?"

"Certainly."

"Then it is not the work of the just man to harm either a friend or anyone else, Polemarchus, but of his opposite, the unjust man."

"In my opinion, Socrates," he said, "what you say is entirely true."

"Then if someone asserts that it's just to give what is owed to each man—and he understands by this that harm is owed to enemies by the just man and help to friends—the man who said it was not wise. For he wasn't telling the truth. For it has become apparent to us that it is never just to harm anyone."

"I agree," he said.

"We shall do battle then as partners, you and I," I said, "if someone asserts that Simonides, or Bias, or Pittacus²⁸ or any other wise and blessed man said it."

"I, for one," he said, "am ready to be your partner in the battle."

"Do you know," I said, "to whom, in my opinion, that saying belongs which asserts that it is just to help friends and harm enemies?"

"To whom?" he said.

"I suppose it belongs to Periander, or Perdiccas, or Xerxes, or Ismenias the Theban,²⁹ or some other rich man who has a high opinion of what he can do."

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

"All right," I said, "since it has become apparent that neither justice nor the just is this, what else would one say they are?"

Now Thrasymachus had many times started out to take over the argument in the midst of our discussion, but he had been restrained by the men sitting near him, who wanted to hear the argument out. But when we paused and I said this, he could no longer keep quiet; hunched up like a wild beast, he flung himself at us as if to tear us to pieces. Then both Polemarchus and I got all in a flutter from fright. And he shouted out into our midst and said, "What is this nonsense that has possessed you for so long, Socrates? And why do you act like fools making way for one another? If you truly want to know what the just is, don't only ask and gratify your love of honor by refusing whatever someone answers—you know that it is easier to ask than to answer—but answer yourself and say what you assert the just to be. And see to it you don't tell me that it is the needful, or the helpful, or the profitable, or the gamful, or the advantageous; but tell me

clearly and precisely what you mean, for I won't accept it if you say such inanities."

I was astounded when I heard him, and, looking at him, I was frightened. I think that if I had not seen him before he saw me, I would have been speechless.³⁰ As it was, just when he began to be exasperated by the argument, I had looked at him first, so that I was able to answer him; and with just a trace of a tremor, I said: "Thrasy-machus, don't be hard on us. If we are making any mistake in the consideration of the arguments, Polemarchus and I, know well that we're making an unwilling mistake. If we were searching for gold we would never willingly make way for one another in the search and ruin our chances of finding it; so don't suppose that when we are seeking for justice, a thing more precious than a great deal of gold, we would ever foolishly give in to one another and not be as serious as we can be about bringing it to light. Don't you suppose that, my friend! Rather, as I suppose, we are not competent. So it's surely far more fitting for us to be pitied by you clever men than to be treated harshly."

He listened, burst out laughing very scornfully, and said, "Heracles! Here is that habitual irony of Socrates. I knew it, and I predicted to these fellows that you wouldn't be willing to answer, that you would be ironic and do anything rather than answer if someone asked you something."

"That's because you are wise, Thrasymachus," I said. "Hence you knew quite well that if you asked someone how much twelve is and in asking told him beforehand, 'See to it you don't tell me, you human being, that it is two times six, or three times four, or six times two, or four times three; I won't accept such nonsense from you'—it was plain to you, I suppose, that no one would answer a man who asks in this way. And if he asked, 'Thrasymachus, what do you mean? Shall I answer none of those you mentioned before? Even if it happens to be one of these, shall I say something other than the truth, you surprising man? Or what do you mean?'—what would you say to him in response?"

"Very well," he said, "as if this case were similar to the other."

"Nothing prevents it from being," I said. "And even granting that it's not similar, but looks like it is to the man who is asked, do you think he'll any the less answer what appears to him, whether we forbid him to or not?"

"Well, is that what you are going to do?" he said. "Are you going to give as an answer one of those I forbid?"

"I shouldn't be surprised," I said, "if that were my opinion upon consideration."

"What if I could show you another answer about justice besides all these and better than they are?" he said. "What punishment do you think you would deserve to suffer?"

"What else than the one it is fitting for a man who does not know to suffer?" I said. "And surely it is fitting for him to learn from the man who knows. So this is what I think I deserve to suffer."

"That's because you are an agreeable chap!" he said. "But in addition to learning, pay a fine in money too."

"When I get some," I said.

"He has some," said Glaucon. "Now, for money's sake, speak, Thrasymachus. We shall all contribute for Socrates."³¹

"I certainly believe it," he said, "so that Socrates can get away with his usual trick; he'll not answer himself, and when someone else has answered he gets hold of the argument and refutes it."

"You best of men," I said, "how could a man answer who, in the first place, does not know and does not profess to know; and who, in the second place, even if he does have some supposition about these things, is forbidden to say what he believes by no ordinary man? It's more fitting for you to speak; for you are the one who says he knows and can tell. Now do as I say; gratify me by answering and don't begrudge your teaching to Glaucon here and the others."

After I said this, Glaucon and the others begged him to do as I said. And Thrasymachus evidently desired to speak so that he could win a good reputation, since he believed he had a very fine answer. But he kept up the pretense of wanting to prevail on me to do the answering. Finally, however, he conceded and then said:

"Here is the wisdom of Socrates; unwilling himself to teach, he goes around learning from others, and does not even give thanks to them."

"When you say I learn from others," I said, "you speak the truth, Thrasymachus; but when you say I do not make full payment in thanks, you lie. For I pay as much as I can. I am only able to praise. I have no money. How eagerly I do so when I think someone speaks well, you will well know as soon as you have answered; for I suppose you will speak well."

"Now listen," he said. "I say that the just is nothing other than the advantage of the stronger.³² Well, why don't you praise me? But you won't be willing."

"First I must learn what you mean," I said. "For, as it is, I don't yet understand. You say the just is the advantage of the stronger. What ever do you mean by that, Thrasymachus? You surely don't assert such a thing as this: if Polydamas, the parricratiast,³³ is stronger than we are

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338 d and beef is advantageous for his body, then this food is also advantageous and just for us who are weaker than he is."

"You are disgusting, Socrates," he said. "You take hold of the argument in the way you can work it the most harm."

"Not at all, best of men," I said. "Just tell me more clearly what you mean."

"Don't you know," he said, "that some cities are ruled tyrannically, some democratically, and some aristocratically?"

"Of course."

"In each city, isn't the ruling group master?"

"Certainly."

"And each ruling group sets down laws for its own advantage; a democracy sets down democratic laws; a tyranny, tyrannic laws; and the others do the same. And they declare that what they have set down—their own advantage—is just for the ruled, and the man who departs from it they punish as a breaker of the law and a doer of unjust deeds. This, best of men, is what I mean: in every city the same thing is just, the advantage of the established ruling body. It surely is master; so the man who reasons rightly concludes that everywhere justice is the same thing, the advantage of the stronger."

"Now, I said, 'I understand what you mean. Whether it is true or not, I'll try to find out. Now, you too answer that the just is the advantageous, Thrasymachus—although you forbade me to give that answer. Of course, for the stronger' is added on to it."

"A small addition, perhaps," he said.

"It isn't plain yet whether it's a big one. But it is plain that we must consider whether what you say is true. That must be considered, because, while I too agree that the just is something of advantage, you add to it and assert that it's the advantage of the stronger, and I don't know whether it's so."

"Go ahead and consider," he said.

"That's what I'm going to do," I said. "Now, tell me: don't you say though that it's also just to obey the rulers?"

"I do."

"Are the rulers in their several cities infallible, or are they such as to make mistakes too?"

"By all means," he said, "they certainly are such as to make mistakes too."

"When they put their hands to setting down laws, do they set some down correctly and some incorrectly?"

"I suppose so."

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"Is that law correct which sets down what is advantageous for themselves, and that one incorrect which sets down what is disadvantageous?—Or, how do you mean it?"

"As you say."

"But whatever the rulers set down must be done by those who are ruled, and this is the just?"

"Of course."

"Then, according to your argument, it's just to do not only what is advantageous for the stronger but also the opposite, what is disadvantageous."

"What do you mean?" he said.

"What you mean, it seems to me. Let's consider it better. Wasn't it agreed that the rulers, when they command the ruled to do something, sometimes completely mistake what is best for themselves, while it is just for the ruled to do whatever the rulers command? Weren't these things agreed upon?"

"I suppose so," he said.

"Well, then," I said, "also suppose that you're agreed that it is just to do what is disadvantageous for those who are the rulers and the stronger, when the rulers unwillingly command what is bad for themselves, and you assert it is just to do what they have commanded. In this case, most wise Thrasymachus, doesn't it necessarily follow that it is just for the others to do the opposite of what you say? For the weaker are commanded to do what is doubtless disadvantageous for the stronger."

"Yes, by Zeus, Socrates," said Polemarchus, "most clearly."

"If it's you who are to witness for him, Polemarchus," said Cleitophon interrupting.

"What need is there of a witness?" he said. "Thrasymachus himself agrees that the rulers sometimes command what is bad for themselves and that it is just for the others to do these things."

"That's because Thrasymachus set down that to do what the rulers bid is just, Polemarchus."

"And because, Cleitophon, he also set down that the advantage of the stronger is just. Once he had set both of these principles down, he further agreed that sometimes the stronger order those who are weaker and are ruled to do what is to the disadvantage of the stronger. On the basis of these agreements, the advantage of the stronger would be no more just than the disadvantage."

"But," said Cleitophon, "he said that the advantage of the stronger is what the stronger believes to be his advantage. This is what

340 b must be done by the weaker, and this is what he set down as the just."

"That's not what was said," said Polemarchus.

"It doesn't make any difference, Polemarchus," I said, "if Thrasymachus says it that way now, let's accept it from him. Now tell me, Thrasymachus, was this what you wanted to say the just is, what seems to the stronger to be the advantage of the stronger, whether it is advantageous or not? Shall we assert that this is the way you mean it?"

"Not in the least," he said. "Do you suppose that I call a man who makes mistakes 'stronger' at the moment when he is making mistakes?"

"I did suppose you to mean this," I said, "when you agreed that the rulers are not infallible but also make mistakes in some things."

"That's because you're a sycophant⁵⁴ in arguments, Socrates," he said. "To take an obvious example, do you call a man who makes mistakes about the sick a doctor because of the very mistake he is making? Or a man who makes mistakes in calculation a skilled calculator, at the moment he is making a mistake, in the very sense of his mistake? I suppose rather that this is just our manner of speaking—the doctor made a mistake, the calculator made a mistake, and the grammarian—"

But I suppose that each of these men, insofar as he is what we address him as, never makes mistakes. Hence, in precise speech, since you too speak precisely, none of the craftsmen makes mistakes. The man who makes mistakes makes them on account of a failure in knowledge and is in that respect no craftsman. So no craftsman, wise man, or ruler makes mistakes at the moment when he is ruling, although everyone would say that the doctor made a mistake and the ruler made a mistake. What I answered you earlier, then, you must also take in this way. But what follows is the most precise way: the ruler, insofar as he is a ruler, does not make mistakes; and not making mistakes, he sets down what is best for himself. And this must be done by the man who is ruled. So I say the just is exactly what I have been saying from the beginning, to do the advantage of the stronger."

"All right, Thrasymachus," I said, "so in your opinion I play the sycophant?"

"You most certainly do," he said.

"Do you suppose I ask as I asked because I am plotting to do harm⁵⁵ to you in the argument?"

"I don't suppose," he said, "I know it well. But it won't profit you. You won't get away with doing harm unnoticed and, failing to get away unnoticed, you won't be able to overpower me in the argument."

"Nor would I even try, you blessed man," I said. "But, so that the same sort of thing doesn't happen to us again, make it clear whether

you meant by the ruler and stronger the man who is such only in common parlance or the man who is such in precise speech, whose advantage you said a moment ago it will be just for the weaker to serve because he is stronger?

"The one who is the ruler in the most precise sense," he said, "do harm to that and play the sycophant, if you can—I ask for no favors—but you won't be able to."

"Do you suppose me to be so mad," I said, "as to try to shave a lion and play the sycophant with Thrasymachus?"

"At least you tried just now," he said, "although you were a nonentity at that too."

"Enough of this," I said. "Now tell me, is the doctor in the precise sense, of whom you recently spoke, a money-maker or one who cares for the sick? Speak about the man who is really a doctor."

"One who cares for the sick," he said.

"And what about the pilot? Is the man who is a pilot in the correct sense a ruler of sailors or a sailor?"

"A ruler of sailors."

"I suppose it needn't be taken into account that he sails in the ship, and he shouldn't be called a sailor for that. For it isn't because of sailing that he is called a pilot but because of his art and his rule over sailors."

"True," he said.

"Is there something advantageous for each of them?"

"Certainly."

"And isn't the art," I said, "naturally directed toward seeking and providing for the advantage of each?"

"Yes, that is what it is directed toward."

"And is there then any advantage for each of the arts other than to be as perfect as possible?"

"How do you mean this question?"

"Just as," I said, "if you should ask me whether it's enough for a body to be a body or whether it needs something else, I would say: 'By all means, it needs something else. And the art of medicine has now been discovered because a body is defective,²⁸ and it won't do for it to be like that. The art was devised for the purpose of providing what is advantageous for a body. Would I seem to you to speak correctly in saying that or not?"

"You would," he said.

"And what about medicine itself, is it or any other art defective, and does it need some supplementary virtue? Just as eyes need sight and ears hearing and for this reason an art is needed that will consider and provide what is advantageous for them, is it also the case that there

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342 a is some defect in the art itself and does each art have need of another art that considers its advantage, and does the art that considers it need in its turn another of the same kind, and so on endlessly? Or does each consider its own advantage by itself? Or does it need neither itself nor another to consider what is advantageous for its defect? Is it that there is no defect or error present in any art, and that it isn't fitting for an art to seek the advantage of anything else than that of which it is the art, and that it is itself without blemish or taint because it is correct so long as it is precisely and wholly what it is? And consider this in that precise sense. Is it so or otherwise?"

"That's the way it looks," he said.

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

"Yes," he said.

"Nor does horsemanship consider the advantage of horsemanship, but of horses. Nor does any other art consider its own advantage—for it doesn't have any further need to—but the advantage of that of which it is the art."

"It looks that way," he said.

"But, Thrasymachus, the arts rule and are masters of that of which they are arts."

He conceded this too, but with a great deal of resistance.

"Then, there is no kind of knowledge that considers or commands the advantage of the stronger, but rather of what is weaker and ruled by it."

He finally agreed to this, too, although he tried to put up a fight about it. When he had agreed, I said:

"Then, isn't it the case that the doctor, insofar as he is a doctor, considers or commands not the doctor's advantage, but that of the sick man? For the doctor in the precise sense was agreed to be a ruler of bodies and not a money-maker. Wasn't it so agreed?"

He assented.

"And was the pilot in the precise sense agreed to be a ruler of sailors and not a sailor?"

"It was agreed."

"Then such a pilot and ruler will consider or command the benefit not of the pilot, but of the man who is a sailor and is ruled."

He assented with resistance.

"Therefore, Thrasymachus," I said, "there isn't ever anyone who holds any position of rule, insofar as he is ruler, who considers or commands his own advantage rather than that of what is ruled and of which he himself is the craftsman; and it is looking to this and what is

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advantageous and fitting for it that he says everything he says and does everything he does."

When we came to this point in the argument and it was evident to everyone that the argument about the just had turned around in the opposite direction, Thrasymachus, instead of answering, said, "Tell me, Socrates, do you have a wet nurse?"

"Why this?" I said. "Shouldn't you answer instead of asking such things?"

"Because," he said, "you know she neglects your sniveling nose and doesn't give it the wiping you need, since it's her fault you do not even recognize sheep or shepherd."

"Because of what, in particular?" I said.

"Because you suppose shepherds or cowherds consider the good of the sheep or the cows and fatten them and take care of them looking to something other than their masters' good and their own; and so you also believe that the rulers in the cities, those who truly rule, think about the ruled differently from the way a man would regard sheep; and that night and day they consider anything else than how they will benefit themselves. And you are so far off about the just and justice, and the unjust and injustice, that you are unaware that justice and the just are really someone else's good, the advantage of the man who is stronger and rules, and a personal harm to the man who obeys and serves. Injustice is the opposite, and it rules the truly simple and just; and those who are ruled do what is advantageous for him who is stronger, and they make him whom they serve happy but themselves not at all. And this must be considered, most simple Socrates: the just man everywhere has less than the unjust man. First, in contracts, when the just man is a partner of the unjust man, you will always find that at the dissolution of the partnership the just man does not have more than the unjust man, but less. Second, in matters pertaining to the city, when there are taxes, the just man pays more on the basis of equal property, the unjust man less; and when there are distributions, the one makes no profit, the other much. And, further, when each holds some ruling office, even if the just man suffers no other penalty, it is his lot to see his domestic affairs deteriorate from neglect, while he gets no advantage from the public store, thanks to his being just; in addition to this, he incurs the ill will of his relatives and his acquaintances when he is unwilling to serve them against what is just. The unjust man's situation is the opposite in all of these respects. I am speaking of the man I just now spoke of, the one who is able to get the better³⁷ in a big way. Consider him, if you want to judge how much more to his private advantage the unjust is than the just. You will learn most easily of all if

you turn to the most perfect injustice, which makes the one who does injustice most happy, and those who suffer it and who would not be willing to do injustice, most wretched. And that is tyranny, which by stealth and force takes away what belongs to others, both what is sacred and profane, private and public, not bit by bit, but all at once. When someone does some part of this injustice and doesn't get away with it, he is punished and endures the greatest reproaches—temple robbers, kidnappers, housebreakers,³⁸ defrauders, and thieves are what they call those partially unjust men who do such evil deeds. But when someone, in addition to the money of the citizens, kidnaps and enslaves them too, instead of these shameful names, he gets called happy and blessed, not only by the citizens but also by whomever else hears that he has done injustice entire. For it is not because they fear doing unjust deeds, but because they fear suffering them, that those who blame injustice do so. So, Socrates, injustice, when it comes into being on a sufficient scale, is mightier, freer, and more masterful than justice; and, as I have said from the beginning, the just is the advantage of the stronger, and the unjust is what is profitable and advantageous for oneself."

When Thrasymachus had said this, he had it in mind to go away, just like a bathman,³⁹ after having poured a great shower of speech into our ears all at once. But those present didn't let him and forced him to stay put and present an argument for what had been said. And I, too, on my own begged him and said:

"Thrasymachus, you demonic man, do you toss in such an argument, and have it in mind to go away before teaching us adequately or finding out whether it is so or not? Or do you suppose you are trying to determine a small matter and not a course of life on the basis of which each of us would have the most profitable existence?"

"What? Do I suppose it is otherwise?" said Thrasymachus.

"You seemed to," I said, "or else you have no care for us and aren't a bit concerned whether we shall live worse or better as a result of our ignorance of what you say you know. But, my good man, make an effort to show it to us—it wouldn't be a bad investment for you to do a good deed for so many as we are. I must tell you that for my part I am not persuaded; nor do I think injustice is more profitable than justice, not even if one gives it free rein and doesn't hinder it from doing what it wants. But, my good man, let there be an unjust man, and let him be able to do injustice, either by stealth or by fighting out in the open; nevertheless, he does not persuade me that this is more profitable than justice. And perhaps, someone else among us—and not only

I—also has this sentiment. So persuade us adequately, you blessed man, that we don't deliberate correctly in having a higher regard for justice than injustice."

"And how," he said, "shall I persuade you? If you're not persuaded by what I've just now said, what more shall I do for you? Shall I take the argument and give your soul a forced feeding?"⁴⁰

"By Zeus, don't you do it," I said. "But, first, stick to what you said, or if you change what you set down, make it clear that you're doing so, and don't deceive us. As it is, Thrasmachus, you see that—still considering what went before—after you had first defined the true doctor, you later thought it no longer necessary to keep a precise guard over the true shepherd. Rather you think that he, insofar as he is a shepherd, fattens the sheep, not looking to what is best for the sheep, but like a guest who is going to be feasted, to good cheer, or in turn, to the sale, like a money-maker and not a shepherd. The shepherd's art surely cares for nothing but providing the best for what it has been set over. For that the art's own affairs be in the best possible way is surely adequately provided for so long as it lacks nothing of being the shepherd's art. And, similarly, I for my part thought just now that it is necessary for us to agree that every kind of rule, insofar as it is rule, considers what is best for nothing other than for what is ruled and cared for, both in political and private rule. Do you think that the rulers in the cities, those who truly rule, rule willingly?"

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

"But, Thrasmachus," I said, "what about the other kinds of rule? Don't you notice that no one wishes to rule voluntarily, but they demand wages as though the benefit from ruling were not for them but for those who are ruled? Now tell me this much: don't we, at all events, always say that each of the arts is different on the basis of having a different capacity? And don't answer contrary to your opinion, you blessed man, so that we can reach a conclusion."

"Yes," he said, "this is the way they differ."

"And does each of them provide us with some peculiar⁴¹ benefit and not a common one, as the medical art furnishes us with health, the pilot's art with safety in sailing, and so forth with the others?"

"Certainly."

"And does the wage-earner's art furnish wages? For this is its power. Or do you call the medical art the same as the pilot's art? Or, if you wish to make precise distinctions according to the principle you set down, even if a man who is a pilot becomes healthy because sailing on the sea is advantageous to him, nonetheless you don't for that reason call what he does the medical art?"

"Surely not," he said.

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"Nor do you, I suppose, call the wage-earner's art the medical art, even if a man who is earning wages should be healthy?"

"Surely not," he said.

"And, what about this? Do you call the medical art the wage-earner's art, even if a man practicing medicine should earn wages?"

He said that he did not.

"And we did agree that the benefit of each art is peculiar?"

"Let it be," he said.

"Then whatever benefit all the craftsmen derive in common is plainly derived from their additional use of some one common thing that is the same for all."

"It seems so," he said.

"And we say that the benefit the craftsmen derive from receiving wages comes to them from their use of the wage-earner's art in addition."

He assented with resistance.

"Then this benefit, getting wages, is for each not a result of his own art; but, if it must be considered precisely, the medical art produces health, and the wage-earner's art wages; the housebuilder's art produces a house and the wage-earner's art, following upon it, wages; and so it is with all the others: each accomplishes its own work and benefits that which it has been set over. And if pay were not attached to it, would the craftsman derive benefit from the art?"

"It doesn't look like it," he said.

"Does he then produce no benefit when he works for nothing?"

"I suppose he does."

"Therefore, Thrasmachus, it is plain by now that no art or kind of rule provides for its own benefit, but, as we have been saying all along, it provides for and commands the one who is ruled, considering his advantage—that of the weaker—and not that of the stronger. It is for just this reason, my dear Thrasmachus, that I said a moment ago that no one willingly chooses to rule and get mixed up in straightening out other people's troubles; but he asks for wages, because the man who is to do anything fine by art never does what is best for himself nor does he command it, insofar as he is commanding by art, but rather what is best for the man who is ruled. It is for just this reason, as it seems, that there must be wages for those who are going to be willing to rule—either money, or honor, or a penalty if he should not rule."

"What do you mean by that, Socrates?" said Glaucon. "The first two kinds of wages I know, but I don't understand what penalty you mean and how you can say it is a kind of wage."

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"I do indeed," he said.

"How could I not want it?" he said.

"Now," I said, "if we should speak at length against him, setting speech against speech, telling how many good things belong to being just, and then he should speak in return, and we again, there'll be need

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"Most certainly," he said.

"Which way do you like?" I said.

"The latter," he said.

"Come now, Thrasymachus," I said, "answer us from the beginning. Do you assert that perfect injustice is more profitable than justice when it is perfect?"

"I most certainly do assert it," he said, "and I've said why."

"Well, then, how do you speak about them in this respect? Surely you call one of them virtue and the other vice?"

Of course,

"That's likely, you agreeable man," he said, "when I also say that injustice is profitable and justice isn't."

"What then?"

"The opposite," he said.

"Is justice then vice?"

"No but very high-minded innocence

110, but very much indeed innocent.

"No, rather good counsel."

"Are the unjust in your opinion good as well as prudent, Thrasymachus?"

"Yes, those who can do injustice perfectly," he said, "and are able to subjugate cities and tribes of men to themselves. You, perhaps, suppose I am speaking of cutpurses. Now, such things, too, are profitable," he said, "when one gets away with them; but they aren't worth mentioning compared to those I was just talking about."

"As to that," I said, "I'm not unaware of what you want to say. But I wondered about what went before, that you put injustice in the name of virtue and wisdom, and justice among their opposites?"

"But I do indeed set them down as such."²⁹

"That's already something more solid, my comrade," I said, "and but I do indeed set them down as such."

It is no longer easy to know what one should say. For you had set it in justice—down as profitable but had nevertheless agreed that it is viciousness or shameful, as do some others, we would have something to say, speaking according to customary usage. But as it is, plainly you'll say that injustice is fair and mighty, and, since you also dared to set it down in the camp of virtue and wisdom, you'll set down to its account that it is just and profitable.

count all the other things which we used to set down as belonging to the just."

"Your divination is very true," he said.

"But nonetheless," I said, "one oughtn't to hesitate to pursue the consideration of the argument as long as I understand you to say what you think. For, Thrasymachus, you seem really not to be joking now, but to be speaking the truth as it seems to you."

"And what difference does it make to you," he said, "whether it seems so to me or not, and why don't you refute the argument?"

"No difference," I said. "But try to answer this in addition to the other things: in your opinion would the just man be willing to get the better of the just man in anything?"

"Not at all," he said. "Otherwise he wouldn't be the urbane innocent he actually is."

"And what about this: would he be willing to get the better of the just action?"

"Not even of the just action," he said.

"And does he claim he deserves to get the better of the unjust man, and believe it to be just, or would he not believe it to be so?"

"He'd believe it to be just," he said, "and he'd claim he deserves to get the better, but he wouldn't be able to."

"That," I said, "is not what I am asking, but whether the just man wants, and claims he deserves, to get the better of the unjust and not of the just man?"

"He does," he said.

"And what about the unjust man? Does he claim he deserves to get the better of the just man and the just action?"

"How could it be otherwise," he said, "since he claims he deserves to get the better of everyone?"

"Then will the unjust man also get the better of the unjust human being and action, and will he struggle to take most of all for himself?"

"That's it."

"Let us say it, then, as follows," I said, "the just man does not get the better of what is like but of what is unlike, while the unjust man gets the better of like and unlike?"

"What you said is very good," he said.

"And," I said, "is the unjust man both prudent and good, while the just man is neither?"

"That's good too," he said.

"Then," I said, "is the unjust man also like the prudent and the good, while the just man is not like them?"

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"How," he said, "could he not be like such men, since he is such as they, while the other is not like them."

"Fine. Then is each of them such as those to whom he is like?"

"What else could they be?" he said.

"All right, Thrasymachus. Do you say that one man is musical and that another is unmusical?"

"I do."

"Which is prudent and which thoughtless?"

"Surely the musical man is prudent and the unmusical man thoughtless."

"Then, in the things in which he is prudent, is he also good, and in those in which he is thoughtless, bad?"

"Yes."

"And what about a medical man? Is it not the same with him?"

"It is the same."

"Then, you best of men, is any musical man who is tuning a lyre in your opinion willing to get the better of another musical man in tightening and relaxing the strings, or does he claim he deserves more?"

"Not in my opinion."

"But the better of the unmusical man?"

"Necessarily," he said.

"And what about a medical man? On questions of food and drink, would he want to get the better of a medical man or a medical action?"

"Surely not."

"But the better of what is not medical?"

"Yes."

"Now, for every kind of knowledge and lack of knowledge, see if in your opinion any man at all who knows chooses voluntarily to say or do more than another man who knows, and not the same as the man who is like himself in the same action."

"Perhaps," he said, "it is necessarily so."

"And what about the ignorant man? Would he not get the better of both the man who knows and the man who does not?"

"Perhaps."

"The man who knows is wiser?"

"I say so."

"And the wise man is good?"

"I say so."

"Then the man who is both good and wise will not want to get the better of the like, but of the unlike and opposite?"

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"It seems so," he said.
 "But the bad and unlearned will want to get the better of both the like and the opposite?"
 "It looks like it."
 "Then, Thrasmachus," I said, "does our unjust man get the better of both like and unlike? Weren't you saying that?"
 "I was," he said.
 "And the just man will not get the better of like but of unlike?"
 "Yes."
 "Then," I said, "the just man is like the wise and good, but the unjust man like the bad and unlearned."
 "I'm afraid so."
 "But we were also agreed that each is such as the one he is like."

"We were."
 "Then the just man has revealed himself to us as good and wise, and the unjust man unlearned and bad."
 Now, Thrasmachus did not agree to all of this so easily as I tell it now, but he dragged his feet and resisted, and he produced a wonderful quantity of sweat, for it was summer. And then I saw what I had not yet seen before—Thrasmachus blushing. At all events, when we had come to complete agreement about justice being virtue and wisdom, and injustice both vice and lack of learning, I said, "All right, let that be settled for us; but we did say that injustice is mighty as well. Or don't you remember, Thrasmachus?"

"I remember," he said. "But even what you're saying now doesn't satisfy me, and I have something to say about it. But if I should speak, I know well that you would say that I am making a public harangue. So then, either let me say as much as I want; or, if you want to keep on questioning, go ahead and question, and, just as with old wives who tell tales, I shall say to you, 'All right,' and I shall nod and shake my head."

"Not, in any case, contrary to your own opinion," I said.

"To satisfy you," he said, "since you won't let me speak. What else do you want?"
 "Nothing, by Zeus," I said, "but if that's what you are going to do, go ahead and do it. And I'll ask questions."

"Then ask."

"I ask what I asked a moment ago so that we can in an orderly fashion make a thorough consideration of the argument about the character of justice as compared to injustice. Surely it was said that injustice is more powerful and mightier than justice. But now," I said,

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"if justice is indeed both wisdom and virtue, I believe it will easily come to light that it is also mightier than injustice, since injustice is lack of learning—no one could still be ignorant of that. But, Thrasmachus, I do not desire it to be so simply considered, but in this way: would you say that a city is unjust that tries to enslave other cities unjustly, and has reduced them to slavery, and keeps many enslaved to itself?"

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

"I understand," I said, "that this argument was yours, but I am considering this aspect of it: will the city that becomes stronger than another have this power without justice, or is it necessary for it to have this power with justice?"

"If," he said, "it's as you said a moment ago, that justice is wisdom—with justice. But if it's as I said—with injustice."

"I am full of wonder, Thrasmachus," I said, "because you not only nod and shake your head, but also give very fine answers."

"It's because I am gratifying you," he said.

"It's good of you to do so. But gratify me this much more and tell me: do you believe that either a city, or an army, or pirates, or robbers, or any other tribe which has some common unjust enterprise would be able to accomplish anything, if its members acted unjustly to one another?"

"Surely not," he said.

"And what if they didn't act unjustly? Wouldn't they be more able to accomplish something?"

"Certainly," he said.

"For surely, Thrasmachus, it's injustice that produces factions, hatreds, and quarrels among themselves, and justice that produces unanimity and friendship. Isn't it so?"

"Let it be so, so as not to differ with you."

"And it's good of you to do so, you best of men. Now tell me this: if it's the work of injustice, wherever it is, to implant hatred, then, when injustice comes into being, both among free men and slaves, will it not also cause them to hate one another and to form factions, and to be unable to accomplish anything in common with one another?"

"Certainly."

"And what about when injustice comes into being between two? Will they not differ and hate and be enemies to each other and to just men?"

"They will," he said.

"And if, then, injustice should come into being within one man,

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you surprising fellow, will it lose its power or will it remain undiminished?"

"Let it remain undiminished," he said.

"Then does it come to light as possessing a power such that, wherever it comes into being, be it in a city, a clan, an army, or whatever else, it first of all makes that thing unable to accomplish anything together with itself due to faction and difference, and then it makes that thing an enemy both to itself and to everything opposite and to the just? Isn't it so?"

"Certainly."

"And then when it is in one man, I suppose it will do the same thing which it naturally accomplishes. First it will make him unable to act, because he is at faction and is not of one mind with himself, and, second, an enemy both to himself and to just men, won't it?"

"Yes."

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

"Let it be," he said.

"Then the unjust man will also be an enemy to the gods, Thrasymachus, and the just man a friend."

"Feast yourself boldly on the argument," he said, "for I won't oppose you, so as not to irritate these men here."

"Come, then," I said, "fill out the rest of the banquet for me by answering just as you have been doing. I understand that the just come to light as wiser and better and more able to accomplish something, while the unjust can't accomplish anything with one another—for we don't speak the complete truth about those men who we say vigorously accomplished some common object with one another although they were unjust; they could never have restrained themselves with one another if they were completely unjust, but it is plain that there was a certain justice in them which caused them at least not to do injustice to one another at the same time that they were seeking to do it to others; and as a result of this they accomplished what they accomplished, and they pursued unjust deeds when they were only half bad from injustice, since the wholly bad and perfectly unjust are also perfectly unable to accomplish anything—I say that I understand that these things are so and not as you set them down at first. But whether the just also live better than the unjust and are happier, which is what we afterwards proposed for consideration, must be considered. And now, in my opinion, they do also look as though they are, on the basis of what we have said. Nevertheless, this must still be considered better: for the argument is not about just any question, but about the way one should live."

"Well, go ahead and consider," he said.

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"I shall," I said. "Tell me, in your opinion is there some work that belongs to a horse?"

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"Yes."
"Would you take the work of a horse or of anything else whatsoever to be that which one can do only with it, or best with it?"

"I don't understand," he said.

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

"Surely not."

"And what about this? Could you hear with anything other than ears?"

"By no means."

"Then wouldn't we justly assert that this is the work of each?"

"Certainly."

"And what about this: You could cut a slip from a vine with a dagger or a leather-cutter or many other things?"

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"Of course."

"But I suppose you could not do as fine a job with anything other than a pruning knife made for this purpose."

"True."

"Then shall we take this to be its work?"

"We shall indeed."

"Now I suppose you can understand better what I was asking a moment ago when I wanted to know whether the work of each thing is what it alone can do, or can do more finely than other things."

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"Yes, I do understand," he said, "and this is, in my opinion, the work of each thing."

"All right," I said, "does there seem to you also to be a virtue for each thing to which some work is assigned? Let's return again to the same examples. We say that eyes have some work?"

"They do."

"Is there then a virtue of eyes, too?"

"A virtue, too."

"And what about ears? Wasn't it agreed that they have some work?"

"Yes."

"And do they have a virtue, too?"

"Yes, they do."

"And what about all other things? Aren't they the same?"

"They are."

"Stop for a moment. Could eyes ever do a fine job of their work if

they did not have their proper virtue but, instead of the virtue, vice?"

"How could they?" he said. "For you probably mean blindness instead of sight."

"Whatever their virtue may be," I said. "For I'm not yet asking that, but whether their work, the things to be done by them, will be done well with their proper virtue, and badly with vice."

"What you say is true," he said.

"Will ears, too, do their work badly when deprived of their virtue?"

"Certainly."

"Then, shall we include everything else in the same argument?"

"In my opinion, at least."

"Come, let's consider this now: is there some work of a soul that you couldn't ever accomplish with any other thing that is? For example, managing, ruling, and deliberating, and all such things—could we justly attribute them to anything other than a soul and assert that they are peculiar to it?"

"To nothing else."

"And, further, what about living? Shall we not say that it is the work of a soul?"

"Most of all," he said.

"Then, do we say that there is also some virtue of a soul?"

"We do."

"Then, Thrasymachus, will a soul ever accomplish its work well if deprived of its virtue, or is that impossible?"

"Impossible."

"Then a bad soul necessarily rules and manages badly while a good one does all these things well."

"Necessarily."

"Didn't we agree that justice is virtue of soul, and injustice, vice?"

"We did so agree."

"Then the just soul and the just man will have a good life, and the unjust man a bad one."

"It looks like it," he said, "according to your argument."

"And the man who lives well is blessed and happy, and the man who does not is the opposite."

"Of course."

"Then the just man is happy and the unjust man wretched."

"Let it be so," he said.

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354 a "But it is not profitable to be wretched; rather it is profitable to be happy."

"Of course."

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

"Let that," he said, "be the fill of your banquet at the festival of Bendis,⁴⁵ Socrates."

"I owe it to you, Thrasymachus," I said, "since you have grown gentle and have left off being hard on me. However, I have not had a fine banquet, but it's my own fault, not yours. For in my opinion, I am just like the gluttons who grab at whatever is set before them to get a taste of it, before they have in proper measure enjoyed what went before. Before finding out what we were considering at first—what the just is—I let go of that and pursued the consideration of whether it is vice and lack of learning, or wisdom and virtue. And later, when in its turn an argument that injustice is more profitable than justice fell in my way, I could not restrain myself from leaving the other one and going after this one, so that now as a result of the discussion I know nothing. So long as I do not know what the just is, I shall hardly know whether it is a virtue or not and whether the one who has it is unhappy or happy."

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BOOK II

Now, when I had said this, I thought I was freed from argument. But after all, as it seems, it was only a prelude. For Glaucon is always most courageous in everything, and so now he didn't accept Thrasymachus' giving up but said, "Socrates, do you want to seem to have persuaded us, or truly to persuade us, that it is in every way better to be just than unjust?"

"I would choose to persuade you truly," I said, "if it were up to me."

"Well, then," he said, "you're not doing what you want. Tell me, is there in your opinion a kind of good that we would choose to have not because we desire its consequences, but because we delight in it for its own sake—such as enjoyment and all the pleasures which are harmless and leave no after effects other than the enjoyment in having them?"

"In my opinion, at least," I said, "there is a good of this kind."

"And what about this? Is there a kind we like both for its own sake and for what comes out of it, such as thinking and seeing and being healthy? Surely we delight in such things on both accounts."

"Yes," I said.

"And do you see a third form¹ of good, which includes gymnastic exercise, medical treatment when sick as well as the practice of medicine, and the rest of the activities from which money is made? We

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357 *c* would say that they are drudgery but beneficial to us; and we would not choose to have them for themselves but for the sake of the wages and whatever else comes out of them."

d "Yes, there is also this third," I said, "but what of it?"

"In which of them," he said, "would you include justice?"

358 *a* "I, for my part, suppose," I said, "that it belongs in the finest kind, which the man who is going to be blessed should like both for itself and for what comes out of it."

"Well, that's not the opinion of the many," he said, "rather it seems to belong to the form of drudgery, which should be practiced for the sake of wages and the reputation that comes from opinion;² but all by itself it should be fled from as something hard."

"I know this is the popular opinion," I said, "and a while ago justice, taken as being such, was blamed by Thrasymachus while injustice was praised. But I, as it seems, am a poor learner."

b "Come, now," he said, "hear me too, and see if you still have the same opinion. For it looks to me as though Thrasymachus, like a snake, has been charmed more quickly than he should have been; yet to my way of thinking there was still no proof about either. For I desire to hear what each is and what power it has all alone by itself when it is in

c the soul—dismissing its wages and its consequences. So I shall do it this way, if you too consent: I'll restore Thrasymachus' argument, and first I'll tell what kind of thing they say justice is and where it came from, second, that all those who practice it do so unwillingly, as necessary but not good; third, that it is fitting that they do so, for the

life of the unjust man is, after all, far better than that of the just man, as they say. For, Socrates, though that's not at all my own opinion, I am at a loss: I've been talked deaf by Thrasymachus and countless others, while the argument on behalf of justice—that it is better than in-

d justice—I've yet to hear from anyone as I want it. I want to hear it extolled all by itself, and I suppose I would be most likely to learn that from you. That's the reason why I'll speak in vehement praise of the unjust life, and in speaking I'll point out to you how I want to hear you, in your turn, blame injustice and praise justice. See if what I'm saying is what you want."

"Most of all," I said, "What would an intelligent man enjoy talking and hearing about more again and again?"

e "What you say is quite fine," he said. "Now listen to what I said I was going to tell first—what justice is and where it came from."

"They say that doing injustice is naturally good, and suffering injustice bad, but that the bad in suffering injustice far exceeds the good in doing it; so that, when they do injustice to one another and suffer it

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and taste of both, it seems profitable—to those who are not able to escape the one and choose the other—to set down a compact among themselves neither to do injustice nor to suffer it. And from there they began to set down their own laws and compacts and to name what the law commands lawful and just. And this, then, is the genesis and being of justice; it is a mean between what is best—doing injustice without paying the penalty—and what is worst—suffering injustice without being able to avenge oneself. The just is in the middle between these two, cared for not because it is good but because it is honored due to a want of vigor in doing injustice. The man who is able to do it and is truly a man would never set down a compact with anyone not to do injustice and not to suffer it. He'd be mad. Now the nature of justice is this and of this sort, and it naturally grows out of these sorts of things. So the argument goes.

"That even those who practice it do so unwillingly, from an incapacity to do injustice, we would best perceive if we should in thought do something like this: give each, the just man and the unjust, license to do whatever he wants, while we follow and watch where his desire will lead each. We would catch the just man red-handed going the same way as the unjust man out of a desire to get the better; this is what any nature naturally pursues as good, while it is law³ which by force perverts it to honor equality. The license of which I speak would best be realized if they should come into possession of the sort of power that it is said the ancestor of Gyges,⁴ the Lydian, once got. They say he was a shepherd toiling in the service of the man who was then ruling Lydia. There came to pass a great thunderstorm and an earthquake; the earth cracked and a chasm opened at the place where he was pasturing. He saw it, wondered at it, and went down. He saw, along with other quite wonderful things about which they tell tales, a hollow bronze horse. It had windows; peeping in, he saw there was a corpse inside that looked larger than human size. It had nothing on except a gold ring on its hand; he slipped it off and went out. When there was the usual gathering of the shepherds to make the monthly report to the king about the flocks, he too came, wearing the ring. Now, while he was sitting with the others, he chanced to turn the collet of the ring to himself, toward the inside of his hand; when he did this, he became invisible to those sitting by him, and they discussed him as though he were away. He wondered at this, and, fingering the ring again, he twisted the collet toward the outside; when he had twisted it, he became visible. Thinking this over, he tested whether the ring had this power, and that was exactly his result: when he turned the collet inward, he became invisible, when outward, visible. Aware of this, he immediately contrived to

be one of the messengers to the king. When he arrived, he committed adultery with the king's wife and, along with her, set upon the king and killed him. And so he took over the rule.

"Now if there were two such rings, and the just man would put one on, and the unjust man the other, no one, as it would seem, would be so adamant as to stick by justice and bring himself to keep away from what belongs to others and not lay hold of it, although he had license to take what he wanted from the market without fear, and to go into houses and have intercourse with whomever he wanted, and to slay or release from bonds whomever he wanted, and to do other things as an equal to a god among humans. And in so doing, one would act no differently from the other, but both would go the same way. And yet, someone could say that this is a great proof that no one is willingly just but only when compelled to be so. Men do not take it to be a good for them in private, since wherever each supposes he can do injustice, he does it. Indeed, all men suppose injustice is far more to their private profit than justice. And what they suppose is true, as the man who makes this kind of an argument will say, since if a man were to get hold of such license and were never willing to do any injustice and didn't lay his hands on what belongs to others, he would seem most wretched to those who were aware of it, and most foolish too, although they would praise him to each others' faces, deceiving each other for fear of suffering injustice. So much for that.

"As to the judgment itself about the life of these two of whom we are speaking, we'll be able to make it correctly if we set the most just man and the most unjust in opposition; if we do not, we won't be able to do so. What, then, is this opposition? It is as follows: we shall take away nothing from the injustice of the unjust man nor from the justice of the just man, but we shall take each as perfect in his own pursuit. So, first, let the unjust man act like the clever craftsmen. An outstanding pilot or doctor is aware of the difference between what is impossible in his art and what is possible, and he attempts the one, and lets the other go; and if, after all, he should still trip up in any way, he is competent to set himself aright. Similarly, let the unjust man also attempt unjust deeds correctly, and get away with them, if he is going to be extremely unjust. The man who is caught must be considered a poor chap. For the extreme of injustice is to seem to be just when one is not. So the perfectly unjust man must be given the most perfect injustice, and nothing must be taken away; he must be allowed to do the greatest injustices while having provided himself with the greatest reputation for justice. And if, after all, he should trip up in anything, he has the power to set himself aright; if any of his unjust deeds should come to light, he is

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capable both of speaking persuasively and of using force, to the extent that force is needed, since he is courageous and strong and since he has provided for friends and money. Now, let us set him down as such, and put beside him in the argument the just man in his turn, a man simple and noble, who, according to Aeschylus,⁵ does not wish to seem, but rather to be, good. The seeming must be taken away. For if he should seem just, there would be honors and gifts for him for seeming to be such. Then it wouldn't be plain whether he is such for the sake of the just or for the sake of the gifts and honors. So he must be stripped of everything except justice, and his situation must be made the opposite of the first man's. Doing no injustice, let him have the greatest reputation for injustice, so that his justice may be put to the test to see if it is softened by bad reputation and its consequences. Let him go unchanged till death, seeming throughout life to be unjust although he is just, so that when each has come to the extreme—the one of justice, the other of injustice—they can be judged as to which of the two is happier."

"My, my," I said, "my dear Glaucon, how vigorously you polish up each of the two men—just like a statue—for their judgment."

"As much as I can," he said. "With two such men it's no longer hard, I suppose, to complete the speech by a description of the kind of life that awaits each. It must be told, then. And if it's somewhat rustically told, don't suppose that it is I who speak, Socrates, but rather those who praise injustice ahead of justice. They'll say that the just man who has such a disposition will be whipped; he'll be racked; he'll be bound; he'll have both his eyes burned out; and, at the end, when he has undergone every sort of evil, he'll be crucified and know that one shouldn't wish to be, but to seem to be, just. After all, Aeschylus' saying applies far more correctly to the unjust man. For really, they will say, it is the unjust man, because he pursues a thing dependent on truth and does not live in the light of opinion, who does not wish to seem unjust but to be unjust,

Reaping a deep furrow in his mind
From which trusty plans bear fruit.⁶

First, he rules in the city because he seems to be just. Then he takes in marriage from whatever station he wants and gives in marriage to whomever he wants; he contracts and has partnerships with whomever he wants, and, besides benefiting himself in all this, he gains because he has no qualms about doing injustice. So then, when he enters contests, both private and public, he wins and gets the better of his enemies. In getting the better, he is wealthy and does good to friends and harm to

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362 *c* enemies. To the gods he makes sacrifices and sets up votive offerings, adequate and magnificent, and cares for the gods and those human beings he wants to care for far better than the just man. So, in all likelihood, it is also more appropriate for him to be dearer to the gods than is the just man. Thus, they say, Socrates, with gods and with humans, a better life is provided for the unjust man than for the just man."

d When Glaucon had said this, I had it in mind to say something to it, but his brother Adeimantus said in his turn, "You surely don't believe, Socrates, that the argument has been adequately stated?" "Why not?" I said.

"What most needed to be said has not been said," he said.

"Then," I said, "as the saying goes, 'let a man stand by his brother.'⁷ So, you too, if he leaves out anything, come to my defense. And yet, what he said was already enough to bring me to my knees and make it impossible to help out justice."

e And he said, "Nonsense. But still hear this too. We must also go through the arguments opposed to those of which he spoke, those that praise justice and blame injustice, so that what Glaucon in my opinion wants will be clearer. No doubt, fathers say to their sons and exhort them, as do all those who have care of anyone, that one must be just. However, they don't praise justice by itself but the good reputations that come from it; they exhort their charges to be just so that, as a result of the opinion, ruling offices and marriages will come to the one who seems to be just, and all the other things that Glaucon a moment ago attributed to the just man as a result of his having a good reputation. And these men tell even more of the things resulting from the opinions. For by throwing in good reputation with the gods, they can tell of an inexhaustible store of goods that they say gods give to the holy. And in this way they join both the noble Hesiod and Homer.

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The former says that for the just the gods make the oaks

Bear acorns on high, and bees in the middle,
And the fleecy sheep heavily laden with wool!⁸

b and many other very good things connected with these. And the other has pretty much the same to tell, as when he says,

As for some blameless king who in fear of the gods
Upholds justice, the black earth bears
Barley and wheat, the trees are laden with fruit,
The sheep bring forth without fail, and the
sea provides fish.⁹

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And Musaeus and his son give the just even headier goods than these from the gods. In their speech they lead them into Hades and lay them

down on couches; crowning them, they prepare a symposium of the holy, and they then make them go through the rest of time drunk, in the belief that the finest wage of virtue is an eternal drunk.¹⁰ Others extend the wages from the gods yet further than these. For they say that a holy and oath-keeping man leaves his children's children and a whole tribe behind him. So in these and like ways they extol justice. And, in turn, they bury the unholy and unjust in mud in Hades and compel them to carry water in a sieve; and they bring them into bad reputation while they are still alive. Thus, those penalties that Glaucon described as the lot of the just men who are reputed to be unjust, these people say are the lot of the unjust. But they have nothing else to say. This then is the praise and blame attached to each.

"Furthermore, Socrates, consider still another form of speeches about justice and injustice, spoken in prose¹¹ and by poets. With one tongue they all chant that moderation and justice are fair, but hard and full of drudgery, while intemperance and injustice are sweet and easy to acquire, and shameful only by opinion and law. They say that the unjust is for the most part more profitable than the just; and both in public and in private, they are ready and willing to call happy and to honor bad men who have wealth or some other power and to dishonor and overlook those who happen in some way to be weak or poor, although they agree they are better than the others. But the most wonderful of all these speeches are those they give about gods and virtue. They say that the gods, after all, allot misfortune and a bad life to many good men too, and an opposite fate to opposite men. Beggar priests and diviners go to the doors of the rich man and persuade him that the gods have provided them with a power based on sacrifices and incantations. If he himself, or his ancestors, has committed some injustice, they can heal it with pleasures and feasts; and if he wishes to ruin some enemies at small expense, he will injure just and unjust alike with certain evocations and spells. They, as they say, persuade the gods to serve them. And they bring the poets forward as witnesses to all these arguments about vice, and they present it as easy, saying that,

Vice in abundance is easy to choose,
The road is smooth and it lies very near,
While the gods have set sweat before virtue,
And it is a long road, rough and steep.¹²

And they use Homer as a witness to the perversion of the gods by human beings because he too said:

The very gods can be moved by prayer too.
With sacrifices and gentle vows and

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The odor of burnt and drink offerings, human beings turn them aside with their prayers,
When someone has transgressed and made a mistake.¹³

And they present a babble of books by Musaeus and Orpheus, offspring of the Moon and the Muses, as they say, according to whose prescriptions they busy themselves about their sacrifices. They persuade not only private persons, but cities as well, that through sacrifices and pleasurable games there are, after all, deliverances and purifications from unjust deeds for those still living. And there are also rites for those who are dead. These, which they call initiations,¹⁴ deliver us from the evils in the other place; while, for those who did not sacrifice, terrible things are waiting.

"My dear Socrates," he said, "with all these things being said—of this sort and in this quantity—about virtue and vice and how human beings and gods honor them, what do we suppose they do to the souls of the young men who hear them? I mean those who have good natures and have the capacity, as it were, to fly to all the things that are said and gather from them what sort of man one should be and what way one must follow to go through life best. In all likelihood he would say to himself, after Pindar, will I 'with justice or with crooked deceits scale the higher wall' where I can fortify myself all around and live out my life? For the things said indicate that there is no advantage in my being just, if I don't also seem to be, while the labors and penalties involved are evident. But if I'm unjust, but have provided myself with a reputation for justice, a divine life is promised. Therefore, since the wise make plain to me, 'the seeming overpowers even the truth'¹⁵ and is the master of happiness, one must surely turn wholly to it. As facade and exterior I must draw a shadow painting¹⁶ of virtue all around me, while behind it I must trail the wily and subtle fox of the most wise Archilochus.¹⁷ But, says someone, 'it's not always easy to do bad and get away with it unnoticed.' 'Nothing great is easy,' we'll say. 'But at all events, if we are going to be happy we must go where the tracks of the arguments lead. For, as to getting away with it, we'll organize secret societies and clubs; and there are teachers of persuasion who offer the wisdom of the public assembly and the court. On this basis, in some things we'll persuade and in others use force; thus we'll get the better and not pay the penalty.' But it surely isn't possible to get away from the gods or overpower them. 'But, if there are no gods, or if they have no care for human things, why should we care at all about getting away? And if there are gods and they care, we know of them or have heard of them from nowhere else than the laws¹⁸ and the poets who have given genealogies; and these are the very sources of our being told that they are such as to be persuaded and perverted by sacrifices, sooth-

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ing vows, and votive offerings. Either both things must be believed or neither. If they are to be believed, injustice must be done and sacrifice offered from the unjust acquisitions. For if we are just, we won't be punished by the gods. That is all. And we'll refuse the gains of injustice. But if we are unjust, we shall gain and get off unpunished as well, by persuading the gods with prayers when we transgress and make mistakes.' But in Hades we'll pay the penalty for our injustices here, either we ourselves or our children's children.' 'But, my dear, will say the man who calculates, 'the initiations and the delivering gods have great power, as say the greatest cities and those children of gods who have become poets and spokesmen of the gods and reveal that this is the case.'

"Then, by what further argument could we choose justice before the greatest injustice? For, if we possess it with a counterfeited seemly exterior, we'll fare as we are minded with gods and human beings both while we are living and when we are dead, so goes the speech of both the many and the eminent. After all that has been said, by what device, Socrates, will a man who has some power—of soul, money, body or family—be made willing to honor justice and not laugh when he hears it praised? So, consequently, if someone can show that what we have said is false and if he has adequate knowledge that justice is best, he undoubtedly has great sympathy for the unjust and is not angry with them; he knows that except for someone who from a divine nature cannot stand doing injustice or who has gained knowledge and keeps away from injustice, no one else is willingly just; but because of a lack of courage, or old age, or some other weakness, men blame injustice because they are unable to do it. And that this is so is plain. For the first man of this kind to come to power is the first to do injustice to the best of his ability. And there is no other cause of all this than that which gave rise to this whole argument of his and mine with you, Socrates. We said, 'You surprising man, of all you who claim to be praisers of justice—beginning with the heroes¹⁹ at the beginning (those who have left speeches) up to the human beings of the present—there is not one who has ever blamed injustice or praised justice other than for the reputations, honors, and gifts that come from them. But as to what each itself does with its own power when it is in the soul of a man who possesses it and is not noticed by gods and men, no one has ever, in poetry or prose, adequately developed the argument that the one is the greatest of evils a soul can have in it, and justice the greatest good. For if all of you had spoken in this way from the beginning and persuaded us, from youth onwards, we would not keep guard over each other for fear injustice be done, but each would be his own best guard, afraid that in doing injustice he would dwell with the greatest evil.'

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